

**Minutes of the
XCVI BFUG Board meeting
Vaduz, Liechtenstein
4th of November 2025**

List of participants

Country/Organisation	Name	Last Name	Participation
Liechtenstein, BFUG Co-Chair	Eva	Meirer	In person
Liechtenstein, BFUG Co-chair	Belgin	Amann	In person
Denmark, BFUG Co-chair	Anita	Damsgaard Jensen	In person
Romania, BFUG Vice-chair	Cristina	Ghitulica	In person
Poland, Outgoing BFUG Co-chair	Magdalena	Maciejewska	In person
Norway, Incoming BFUG Co-chair	Julie	Park	In person
Cyprus, Incoming BFUG Co-chair	Kyriacos	Charalambous	In person
European Commission	Kinga	Szuly	In person
ESU	Daciana	Pop	In person
EUA, Co-chair of the Task force on establishing the long-term EHEA Secretariat	Michael	Gaebel	In person
EURASHE	Jakub	Grodecki	In person
Council of Europe	Catherine	Dolgova Dreyer	Online
EHEA Secretariat (Head)	Horia	Onita	In person
EHEA Secretariat	Lilia	Parhomenco	In person
EHEA Secretariat	Alexandrina	Druta	In person
WG on Monitoring (Austria)	Helga	Posset	In person
WG on Fundamental Values (Romania)	Cezar Mihai	Haj	Online
WG on Internationalisation and Mobility (The Netherlands)	Arthur	Belle	In person
CG on Global Policy Dialogue (Italy)	Elisa	Petrucci	In person
Task Force on the Future of Bologna (Belgium – Flemish Community)	Liesbeth	Hens	In person
ENQA (Guest, speaking for point 7)	Anna	Gover	Online

The outgoing BFUG Co-chair from Albania and the representative from the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group sent their apologies.

Meeting started at 8:30 CET.

1. Welcome and introduction

The Liechtensteiner BFUG co-chairs opened the meeting by welcoming members in Vaduz and thanking everyone for their good cooperation. They mentioned that since joining the Bologna

Process in 2001, the higher education system in Liechtenstein had been continuously striving to align with the key commitments and objectives of Bologna Process. They also underlined the importance of the Bologna Process for the development of higher education systems in the member countries. The Danish BFUG Co-Chair thanked the hosts and invited everyone to the upcoming BFUG meeting in Copenhagen in December.

The Romanian BFUG Vice-Chair reiterated the extensive and important agenda for both the Board and the BFUG, mentioning topics such as the ESG, ECTS, and the monitoring framework. She thanked everyone for their cooperation and informed that by the next BFUG meeting the ministry would designate a new Vice-Chair in consideration of her recent election as President of ENQA. She expressed her eagerness to continue working with BFUG members in this new capacity.

The Polish Outgoing BFUG Co-Chair congratulated everyone for their work, recalled key discussions from the BFUG meeting in Poland and regretted the absence of their Albanian co-chairs from the meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda

Documents: [Agenda of the Meeting](#)

The Liechtensteiner BFUG co-chair opened the floor for remarks on the agenda. With no questions raised, the agenda was adopted with no changes and the minutes of the XCIV BFUG Board meeting in Albania acknowledged.

3. Information from EHEA Secretariat

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 3 1 Updates Drafting Committee](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 96 3 2 EHEA Secretariat Presentation](#)

The Head of the EHEA Secretariat (HoS) gave a presentation reflecting on developments since the last BFUG meeting in Warsaw. He noted that the rhythm of meetings had been in line with the Terms of Reference, with several in-person meetings well distributed geographically across Europe. The HoS also informed Board members on the additional coordination meetings organised by the Secretariat, the Procedure for organising meetings, the overall situation of meeting minutes, as well as the tracking of participation rates. In the case of 11 BFUG members, he noted that their representatives missed three consecutive meetings in the working structures and would be notified by the upcoming BFUG meeting. The HoS informed that the Secretariat had received 39 national action plans (NAPs) and produced various compilations, as well as an analysis of the actions listed by BFUG members for each key commitment, proving a close relationship between the aggregated priorities in the NAPs and the topical priorities of the TPGs. The Secretariat also prepared a comparative analysis between the 2024 edition of the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR) and the NAPs, considering the role of the NAPs to address implementation gaps. Finally, the HoS reminded everyone of the EHEA newsletter and gave updates on the internal work of the Secretariat and supporting Erasmus+ project, mentioning an upcoming Conference on enhancing knowledge-sharing and a small-scale study on the impact of the Bologna Process to be commissioned in preparation for the Conference.

The Secretariat also referenced a note prepared on the establishment of the Drafting Committee for the next Ministerial Conference, which should start its work in January 2026. The HoS noted that the consultative members proposed ESU as their representative, to be agreed by the BFUG in Copenhagen.

The Austrian WG on Monitoring Co-Chair thanked the Secretariat for their work and commended the progress and activities undertaken. She raised a question regarding the EHEA website, asking whether it would be fully functional by the time of the BFUG meeting in Copenhagen. The HoS responded that the new website was not yet fully functional, as the data transfer process had not been completed and the work on securely migrating the archive had been more complicated than expected, with a desire to fix the issues and present a draft by the upcoming BFUG meeting. The Secretariat added that before making the website publicly available, the plan would be to circulate the draft version to the BFUG members for feedback.

Upon a suggestion from the Italian CG GPD Co-chair, the Secretariat confirmed that the attendance rates for the meetings of the working structures would also be circulated to the co-chairs of the working structures. The Vice-chair added that representatives in working structures should normally consult with and report to BFUG members, which unfortunately had not always been the case.

4. Updates on the organisation of the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 4 1 Updates Ministerial Conference and GPF](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 96 4 2 Save the date Ministerial Conference and GPF](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 86 4 3 List of countries GPF \(distributed via e-mail\)](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 86 4 4 List of organisations GPF \(distributed via e-mail\)](#)

The Vice-chair provided updates regarding the organisation of the next Ministerial Conference and GPF. She presented the Save-the-date and informed that the list of countries and organisations invited to the GPF was drawn up based on previous editions and discussed within the CG on GPD. The Vice-chair proposed that the lists be adopted by the BFUG in Copenhagen while acknowledging that some additions might also be possible at a later stage. Finally, the Vice-Chair asked for the support of BFUG members to confirm the names of their ministers and contact information for the save-the-dates before the upcoming BFUG meeting.

The Flemish TF on FoB Co-Chair suggested reviewing the list to clarify which offices of UNESCO would be invited to attend. She also asked whether more U.S.-based organisation apart from the Lumina Foundation could be invited and if those having missed several Forums consecutively had still been kept on the list.

The Italian CG GPD Co-chair clarified that organisations were suggested also considering the thematic relevance rather than simply geographical balance, with the intention of the group to engage more stakeholders and involve them in topic-oriented discussions. The Vice Chair also expressed their hope to maintain interest in the event with the support of the CG on CPD and stakeholder organisations, while also mentioning the possibility of organizing a meeting with ambassadors in Bucharest to promote the Conference.

Upon a question from EUA, supported by EURASHE, the Vice-chair confirmed that the hosts would analyse whether the non-EHEA delegations could be expanded to more than two delegates, allowing the participation of university and student representatives as well.

In the case of EHEA delegations, the Austrian WG on Monitoring Co-Chair mentioned that a five-member delegation of five was challenging in the past, particularly for co-chairs of working structures. The Danish BFUG Co-chair considered that in such cases the hosts could allow extensions rather than influencing general rules, whereas the Vice-Chair agreed to consult the

BFUG to confirm whether an exception could be arranged. On this topic, the Flemish TF on FoB Co-chair proposed adding in the invitation letter that each delegation should include the BFUG member.

To a remark by the Dutch WG on IM Co-chair that it should be up to each country to decide the composition, considering the commitment in the Rules of Procedure to include a student and a HEI representative as a recommendation, the HoS, ESU and EUA insisted that composition rules were agreed by ministers as mandatory.

The Liechtensteiner co-chair concluded by noting that the Board acknowledged the documents and that the lists of countries and organisations would remain open for feedback until the 10th of November.

5. Reporting from the BFUG working structures

5.1 WG on Monitoring

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.1 1 Monitoring 1 Proposal of Structure and Indicators](#)

[Board DK LI 96 5.1 Monitoring 2 Draft Guidelines Narrative Text](#)

The Austrian Co-Chair of the Working Group on Monitoring reported that the structure of the BPIR had been agreed in the previous BFUG, and further work was undertaken on the indicators. She noted that the co-chairs of the WG organized a meeting with the co-chairs of other relevant working structures and individual coordination meetings with the co-chairs of the WGs on IM and FV. Additional information was expected from the TPG D on Social Dimension, while the indicators on FV would be later presented by the WG on FV. Whereas Eurydice would collect the de jure data on FV, the decision on what to be included in the BPIR and in the NewFav reports respectively would be taken at a later stage. Finally, the Austrian WG co-chair presented the novelty of introducing narrative text prepared by the working structures and focusing on EHEA level developments in the field, with Guidelines prepared by the WG on Monitoring.

The Council of Europe suggested retaining the information on the European Qualification Passport for Refugees, recalling that its importance was recognized by ministers in the Tirana Communiqué. The European Commission also reminded of the relevance of the BPIR in the EU accession process in the field of higher education, stressing the importance of retaining relevant system-level indicators. In reply, the Austrian WG co-chair confirmed that scorecard indicators would allow tracking developments both at EHEA level and for individual member states.

5.2 WG on Fundamental Values

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.2 FV 1 Indicators for Monitoring](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.2 FV 2 Presentation](#)

The Romanian Co-chair of the WG on Fundamental Values gave updates on the list of indicators, noting that all feedback received from the WG on Monitoring and the WG on FV had been incorporated and thus the document would be sent to the BFUG for approval. He clarified that the de jure data would be collected through the standard procedure for the BPIR, with an additional questionnaire sent by the WG on FV. The Romanian WG co-chair explained that national operators were proposed based on the profile presented to the BFUG and previous collaborations, with their role limited to pre-filling the questionnaires and thus support the public authorities. However, if the proposed national operator was not supported by the BFUG

representative, they are invited to propose any new name fitting the profile and the independence requirement. Finally, he informed about other activities such as the platform for collecting input from the academic community and a website promoting FV across EHEA.

On the same issue and answering questions from EUA, the Romanian WG co-chair noted that where multiple experts were listed in the table, they should be considered alternative proposals in case of refusals, as the proposed experts had not been contacted prior to the BFUG agreement. Regarding the indicators, he explained that the group started from the indicators used in BPIR 2024 and the statements adopted by ministers and, in cooperation with the WG on Monitoring, made several modifications. The Romanian WG co-chair added that since the indicators had already gone through three rounds of consultations, the indicators should be sent directly to the BFUG, while questionnaire questions could be still clarified if needed.

Supported by the Flemish TF FoB Co-chair, the European Commission cautioned against including only de jure indicators in BPIR, as legal frameworks do not necessarily reflect actual practice and the BPIR might be eventually used as argument in cases where FV are not respected. The Flemish TF FoB Co-chair inquired about the list of experts, noting that it included a diverse range of stakeholders with potentially different views. The Council of Europe (CoE) further expressed concern about the selection process of experts, noting that the names were proposed without prior consent and exemplified by the CoE processes which either imply governmental nominations or open calls. The HoS confirmed that, following the CoE's suggestion, the list of experts will be removed from the website, to ensure that the names are not publicly displayed.

The Romanian WG co-chair responded that the differing perspectives would be addressed through training sessions, which would ensure consistency in how data is used and reported. He also agreed with the EC and hoped that apart from the de jure indicators, the WG on Monitoring would also take de facto data from the WG on FV report into the BPIR. Pertaining to the CoE's point, he noted that the approach taken was the most careful one since the expert should be independent, and an open call could have implied not receiving applications from countries where the situation on FV might be sensitive. He also recalled that the BFUG itself requested to be consulted on the list of operators and in some cases asking for the expert's acceptance before proposing the name to the BFUG might have caused the expert issues with their government.

The Italian CG GPD Co-chair found it unclear how the project and the BFUG interlinked with each other and suggested to better divide the work between the two, clarifying that the results of the project might not necessarily be included in the BPIR. On a different note, the European Commission asked how the WG planned to respond if countries object to the nominated operators and the Dutch WG on IM co-chair inquired whether the public authorities could override the opinions of the independent expert.

The Romanian WG co-chair replied that if BFUG representatives object to specific experts, replacements would be sought based on the criteria and, at a last resort, no operator would be appointed. The national operators would be responsible for pre-filling the data based on official sources, while ministry representatives would review, adjust if necessary, and validate the final content. In case of unclarity, the project would cross-check the sources as had been always done for BPIR.

5.3 WG on Internationalisation and Mobility

**Documents: BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.3 IM Draft Note on Terminology
BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.3 IM 2 Presentation**

The Dutch Co-Chair of the WG on IM gave an update on the group's progress, informing the Board that a revised draft of the Note on Terminology would be presented for the first time at the next BFUG meeting, incorporating the feedback received during the WG meeting which had taken place one week before in The Hague. He explained that the purpose of the Note on Terminology is to enhance conceptual clarity in the field of internationalisation and learning mobility, selecting across widely used definitions those most suitable for the EHEA context or, where necessary, designing new ones. The Dutch Co-chair added that whereas the Note would be descriptive, the Action Plan on IM designed in parallel, and which could determine updates to the Note, would focus on normative and operational elements as well as political objectives. The Working Group would continue to align its work with other ongoing initiatives, including the European Commission's forthcoming study on balanced and inclusive mobility (expected in early 2026), the revision of the ECTS Users' Guide, and the preparation of the BPIR, which also contains a glossary. Upon a question from the European Commission, the Dutch WG co-chair clarified that the Note would be annexed to the Action Plan, which in turn should be annexed to the Communiqué.

EUA emphasised the practical importance of the Note on Terminology in ensuring a shared understanding of key terms across the EHEA. The Austrian WG on Monitoring Co-Chair highlighted the importance of ensuring that the glossary definitions do not contradict widely accepted terms already used within the EHEA. The EC also noted that some relevant definitions are still missing, such as automatic recognition, and pointed to the negotiation of the new Erasmus+ Regulation which might also entail a revised set of definitions in the Programme.

The HoS suggested that the EHEA Secretariat organises a coordination meeting among the main authors of the document to be adopted in 2027 – namely the ESG, European Approach, ECTS User's Guide, Action Plan on IM and BPIR, to ensure terminological coherence across all key EHEA reference documents, which was supported by the Danish BFUG Co-Chair.

5.4 CG on Global Policy Dialogue

Documents: BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.4 GPD Presentation

The Italian Co-Chair of the CG on GPD presented an update on the group's recent work and forthcoming activities. In describing the group's methodology, the Italian CG Co-Chair explained that a topic-based approach has been adopted, working horizontally across thematic areas rather than vertically by geographical region. The CG's work focused on the Bologna key commitments, lifelong learning and micro-credentials, recognition of refugees' qualifications the right to education and the social dimension, while digitalisation and artificial intelligence were treated as transversal themes. The Italian CG Co-Chair informed about the recent in-person meeting organised in Bucharest in conjunction with the SPHERE Bologna Symposium and incorporating a PLA on recognition and QA. She further reported on the launch of the call for volunteers for the drafting group of the Global Policy Statement, with EUA volunteering on the spot during the Board meeting.

Upon a question from the Vice Chair, the Italian CG Co-chair explained that external partners would not participate directly in the drafting of the Statement but be regularly consulted during the process through coordination meetings. She added that the CG would aim to involve external partners early in the process, so they are aware of the Forum's content before receiving formal invitations. The Vice-Chair suggested that final versions of the Global Policy Statement

also be circulated among all invited countries and organisations to enhance ownership and engagement before the Global Policy Forum, with the Italian CG Co-chair confirming this intended practice.

EUA explained the SPHERE initiative and its successful impact in promoting the Bologna Process in Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East, thanking the CG for their cooperation.

5.5 TF on the Future of Bologna

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.5 Interconnectedness EHEA-VET-ERA 04.11.2025](#)

The Flemish TF Co-Chair apologised for not having circulated the document to the Board ahead of the meeting, inviting Board members to submit feedback in writing. She presented the proposal of the TF to conduct a debate on ‘interconnectedness’ at the upcoming BFUG, understood as the various ways in which higher education is embedded within the broader tertiary education landscape. The Belgian TF Co-chair outlined the rationale for choosing the topic and the structure of the debate as envisaged in the paper, focusing on the EHEA interconnectedness with VET and ERA. Through the chosen topic, the Task Force would aim to examine whether the existing Bologna tools and procedures sufficiently accommodate the evolving cooperation between HE and VET, including dual or hybrid models, and to identify potential barriers that might need to be addressed. She also referenced the recent Henning declaration within the Copenhagen Process, which further called for strengthening the relation between VET with HE. Pertaining to the interconnection between the EHEA and the ERA, the TF would aim to understand why previous coordination efforts had failed and explore what steps could be taken towards stronger collaboration between education, research, and innovation by 2030. The planned format for the Copenhagen BFUG meeting would include two hours incorporating two rounds of breakout discussions of forty minutes each, concluding with a plenary to identify next steps and concrete follow-up actions.

The EHEA Secretariat suggested engaging with the European Commission on both topics, as well as asking for a liaison with the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) to understand their perspective, as DG RTD had also been recently working on the link with higher education. The Secretariat also saw links between the discussion on interconnectedness and the desire of the EC to expand the scope of the ECTS User’s Guide. EURASHE supported exploring the interface between applied research and education, aiming to strengthen links between policy areas. Referring to dual and hybrid education models, he considered that various examples of integrated tertiary system exist at national level, without being sufficiently showcased or explored at European level. EURASHE also pointed to a forthcoming study on lifelong learning and student-centred education, due to be completed by the BFUG meeting in Ireland, which would provide further insight on how HE supports lifelong learning and keep the topic alive at the BFUG level.

EUA emphasised the importance of maintaining sufficient time for substantive discussion and suggested that one of the themes could be addressed in Copenhagen and the other at the following BFUG meeting in Nicosia. However, the TF preferred to keep both themes for the meeting in Copenhagen. The Danish BFUG Co-Chair concluded by confirming that the Secretariat would review the draft BFUG agenda to ensure sufficient time for the Task Force’s session and noted the possibility of skipping the 15 minutes of separate reporting time for the Task Force.

5.6 Bologna Implementation Coordination Group

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 5.6 BICG Presentation 27.10.2025](#)

The EHEA Secretariat sent the apologies of the EUA BICG Co-chair which could not attend the Board. The HoS proceeded to summarize the key points discussed in recent BICG meetings and outlined the BICG's main activities, including the drafting and dissemination of a template for National Action Plans, the preparation of templates for Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs) work plans, and the analysis of priorities from TPGs to inform and adjust their work plans. All TPGs were active in organizing meetings and were supported by Erasmus+ projects. While there was a high correspondence between NAPs and TPG action plans, not all countries with priorities in thematic areas were members of the respective TPGs. The HoS drew attention to the issue of self-certification of National Qualifications Frameworks with QF-EHEA, noting that at least six countries were expected to submit these reports without a structure in place to analyse these reports since the National Correspondents' group had been discontinued.

The Head of the EHEA Secretariat also noted a concerning trend of decreasing ministry participation in TPGs. In this sense, he noted that despite initial efforts to increase ministry engagement at the start of the working cycle, participation had continuously declined. On a final note, he informed about the proposal of the BICG to include a session focusing on implementation tools, the thematic peer group methodology and the possible revision and expansion of key commitments in the BFUG meeting in Cyprus. The Vice-Chair noted that TPG composition should ideally include one ministry and one stakeholder representative to ensure national perspectives were properly represented, with EUA and the Italian CG Co-chair asking whether the peer approach methodology for supporting implementation was still fit-for-purpose or, if the objectives had been achieved, whether a different method should be pursued.

Supported by the Italian CG Co-chair, the HoS added that in practice in many instances TPGs focus on enhancement and peer support in new trends rather than key commitment implementation, which may ask whether the objectives of the TPGs changed since 2018. He also noted that some TPG members supposed to discuss implementation had not even been aware of their countries' national action plans.

5.7 Task Force on establishing a long-term Secretariat

Documents: [see here](#)

The EUA Co-chair of the TF on establishing a long-term EHEA Secretariat provided a summary of the work carried out so far, noting that after the Call for expressions of interest five applications had been received. The review of these applications had commenced alongside discussions on the broader conceptualisation of the long-term Secretariat, including legal form and governance structure. Additional clarifications had been requested from all applicants to ensure completeness of information, and the TF organised an information session with the BFUG members. An additional facility had been provided to BFUG members to ask questions to applicants through a dedicated form. The EUA TF Co-chair outlined two objectives of the discussion in the BFUG, namely, to discuss the concept of the long-term Secretariat in preparation for a decision in Nicosia, including governance and funding, and to shortlist three applicants. He emphasised that the TF would provide a comparative assessment table and highlight strengths and weaknesses, and consider, if possible, presenting a set of scores agreed by the TF based on the individual reviews. In the end, the EUA TF co-chair highlighted that the BFUG should conduct the shortlisting themselves based on a secret ballot.

The Danish BFUG Co-Chair agreed with the proposal of not discussing applications individually in Copenhagen and suggested to clarify to BFUG members that they are expected to vote on this matter at the meeting. The Vice-Chair expressed concern regarding the process and the deviation from the established Terms of Reference adopted by the BFUG, which stipulated that the TF should propose a shortlist themselves based on the criteria adopted in the Call. Supported by the Flemish TF FoB co-chair, Austrian WG on Monitoring Co-chair, the European Commission and the Council of Europe, the Vice-Chair called for increased transparency and clarity on how the criteria adopted in the Call should lead to the shortlist and respecting the Terms of Reference agreed by the BFUG. The Vice-chair also added that the procedure should not be changed during the process but, in any case, any deviation from the established procedure should be clearly presented to the BFUG and subject to approval to avoid procedural objections later in the process.

Supported by the Council of Europe, the Flemish TF FoB Co-Chair also requested that the TF match each application with the criteria adopted by the BFUG, so that BFUG members could make informed selections. The Council of Europe also sought more clarity from the TF on the governance structures, as well as membership eligibility in the case of establishing associations, particularly for consultative members and international organisations. On the latter point and with further discussions considered necessary, the EUA TF co-chair informed that the TF had seen the association as probably the most feasible and advantageous legal form, allowing BFUG members and in principle consultative members to become member.

The EUA TF co-chair recalled that the Task Force's role as an expert committee would preclude them from taking decisions on shortlisting, whereas the TF would provide comparative tables including detailed review results, strengths, weaknesses, and potential issues for each application. He added that discussions in Copenhagen should focus on governance, membership, financing, and hosting arrangements rather than the Go/No-Go decision. Supported by the Austrian WG on Monitoring Co-Chair, the European Commission stressed the need for unequivocal guidance from the Task Force on how each application meets the selection criteria, thus avoiding decisions being influenced primarily by issues such as cost considerations. The Austrian WG Co-Chair requested a structured ranking with aggregated results for each application, noting that the Task Force's role of proposing a shortlist does not impede on the capacity of the BFUG to take a decision.

The EUA TF Co-chair informed of the challenges of applying a consistent scoring system yet confirmed that the TF would try to prepare a scoring for all applications by the BFUG. He noted that a compromise might be an opinion of the TF including some proposals, however in any case the BFUG would have to decide, and a ballot might be necessary at the BFUG in Copenhagen irrespective of whether the TF would propose a shortlist or not.

Supported by the Flemish TF Co-chair, the Danish BFUG Co-Chair confirmed the importance of clear guidance from the TF and the probable inevitability of a vote at the BFUG in Copenhagen, thus asking that BFUG members are duly announced so they can prepare in advance. The Italian CG GPD Co-Chair suggested that the Task Force should confirm whether sufficient comparative and objective data had been collected so that the BFUG could determine whether they could take an informed decision on the shortlist. The EUA TF Co-chair confirmed that all necessary documentation would be provided, including a clear description of the proposed process, ensuring that BFUG members would have adequate information to take an informed decision.

The Liechtensteiner BFUG Co-chair noted that the materials from the TF should be circulated to the BFUG with three weeks in advance, together with an information from the Secretariat on the voting procedure. The Head of the EHEA Secretariat also suggested to ask for written comments before the meeting.

6. Discussion on the Draft 2 of the ECTS User's Guide

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 6 ECTS 2 ECTS Users' Guide Review Report 27.10.2025](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 96 6 ECTS 3 Presentation 03.11.2025](#)

The European Commission provided an overview of the timeline and highlighted that the advisory group had been supported by targeted research, including desk research of selected higher education institutions in eight EHEA countries, short surveys, and focus group discussions. She summarized key findings, noting that learning agreements were largely in place but not always properly used; automatic recognition was not consistently implemented, and grade conversion was frequently ineffective, with institutions continuing to rely on outdated grading scales. Regarding micro-credentials, approximately 60% had ECTS allocated, but the assignment of Qualifications Framework levels was inconsistent, and recognition of prior learning options was often unknown and underutilized.

For the new draft, the EC noted that lifelong learning had been mainstreamed throughout the guide rather than being a separate chapter, with the Quality assurance chapter streamlined to focus on key indicators for ECTS implementation. Since the DG EMPL stopped updating the EQAVET system and was encouraging using the ECTS system for VET instead, the Guide had been expanded to other sectors. The EC clarified that the document would still be owned by HE ministers as a key commitment in higher education, while its use in other sectors would remain optional. The guide also proposed clearer definitions for transfer and recognition of credits and outlined different mobility scenarios, including automatic recognition based on learning agreements. Grade conversion methods were under discussion, including the use of a reference table to improve clarity and interoperability instead of the statistical method. Questions were proposed for the BFUG regarding credit awards at different QF-EHEA/EQF levels, grade transparency and conversion methods, preference for a web-based publication and its placement on the EHEA website, and the modalities for future updates and approvals, including ministerial approval for principles and key features, BFUG approval for remaining chapters, and Commission or Secretariat updates for further reading sections.

Upon a remark from EUA that expecting micro-credentials to carry ECTS should remain a recommendation, the EC replied that the Council Recommendation on a European Approach to Micro-credentials stipulated that micro-credentials issued by HEIs should include ECTS while it remained optional for other providers. The Flemish TF on FoB Co-Chair highlighted the challenge of linking micro-credentials to Qualifications Framework levels and noted that micro-credentials should retain some flexibility. She informed about national guidelines stating that if a micro-credential was part of an existing program, it could automatically assume the level of the program to reduce administrative burden.

On the issue of the adoption process, the EUA asked about the complexity of dividing the approval process into two parts, with the EC replying that the advisory group identified the key features that form the backbone of the system and thus should be adopted by ministers. Furthermore, the Vice Chair recalled the strengths of the ESG derived from the ministerial

approval and expressed hesitation that dividing the ECTS Users' Guide approval might risk decreasing its status of and thus affecting implementation.

The HoS suggested that the Guide clarifies how the focus of the micro-credentials' learning outcomes is linked to the generic descriptors for QF levels and what should national authorities do at the level of national policy to implement the Guide. He further emphasised that the expansion of the ECTS to other sectors should avoid creating issues for existing use. He exemplified with the link between ECTS and quality assurance and pointed out that without a clear mandate of using ESG for all learning above level 6 EQF, the HEIs would have to go through various steps checking whether the ECTS were legally awarded in the country of origin, if the provider was subject to ESG or other QA framework, which framework etc.

The Vice-Chair asked what the applicability of the guide across different contexts and sectors would entail and whether it would not endanger their value in HE. She also inquired about changes sought in comparison with the existing guide to better help implementation apart from novelties in regard to expanding the Guide. The EC replied that opening ECTS to other sectors reflected actual practice and the growing need for flexible and open pathways. She reassured that the core concept of ECTS remained unchanged, maintaining credibility, while arguing that it would be better to reflect the other sectors in the Guide and regulate them, for example by expecting the use of QA, than leaving them outside of the Guide.

7. Update on the Draft 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in EHEA

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 7 1 Update on Draft 1 ESG 22.10.2025](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 96 7 2 ESG Presentation 27.10.2025](#)

The ENQA representative provided a brief update on the revision process for the 2027 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG). She explained that the process was ongoing and that the Steering Committee for the ESG revision was due to launch a public consultation on the full draft of the ESG, scheduled for the 17th of November 2025 and until the 9th of January 2026. Input from the BFUG meeting in Copenhagen would be considered alongside the results of the public consultation to prepare the next draft, to be presented at the Cyprus BFUG meeting in March 2026.

The European Commission noted a perceived contradiction stating that standards should be self-explanatory while arguing that some elements such as micro-credentials, fundamental values, and the social dimension should be implicitly understood in standards. On the same vein, the Commission stated that the document should explicitly apply not only to full programs but to all types of higher education provision. The EC also expressed their concern in the lack of references to the changing landscape of HE, the changing student body or the impact of artificial intelligence, including on academic integrity and QA. The Commission also noted the absence of references to the evolving role of teachers or references to the competence frameworks developed by the Commission.

The ENQA representative clarified that micro-credentials, fundamental values, and the social dimension would be addressed in the introductory part of the ESG, which covers scope, principles, purposes, and context. Regarding terminology, she explained that a glossary may be proposed in the introductory section. Furthermore, AI was referenced in the sentence 'accounting latest technological and digital developments', while for QA agencies the strengthening of professional conduct and integrity also indirectly touched AI.

8. Agenda for the XCVII BFUG meeting

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 8 BFUG XCVII Draft agenda](#)

The Danish BFUG Co-Chair noted that no comments were received on the Draft agenda and concluded that the proposed agenda and schedule were acceptable.

9. Information from the incoming BFUG Co-chairs

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 9 Presentation Cyprus 29.10.2025](#)
[BFUG Board DK LI 96 9 Presentation Norway 31.10.2025](#)

Incoming BFUG Co-Chair Presentation - Norway

The Norwegian Incoming BFUG Co-Chair outlined the Norwegian higher education system and their continuous engagement in the Bologna Process. for study abroad. They gave updates on recent policy developments in Norway and presented information on the upcoming BFUG Board meeting in Oslo, scheduled for the 5th of February 2026.

Incoming BFUG Co-Chair Presentation - Cyprus

The Cypriot Incoming BFUG Co-Chair presented the higher education system in Cyprus and outlined the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first half of 2026. They outlined four main pillars for education and training: strengthening basic, democratic, and citizenship skills; empowering teachers through professional development, well-being initiatives, and attractive career pathways; advancing vocational and higher education with a focus on internationalisation and mobility, joint European Degree framework, Union for Skills for Social Inclusion/Accessibility in HE and negotiating the future of Erasmus+ within the multi-annual financial framework. The Cypriot colleagues informed that the BFUG meeting in Nicosia was scheduled for 9-10 March 2026, at the Filoxenia Conference Center.

EURASHE added that a project seminar on lifelong learning and student-centred learning would follow the BFUG meeting, providing additional opportunities for discussion. He added that additional information would be shared at the BFUG meeting in Copenhagen.

10. AOB and closing remarks

Documents: [BFUG Board DK LI 96 10 1 Eurostudent request Steering Board 27.10.2025](#)

10.1 Eurostudent Board nomination

The Liechtensteiner BFUG Co-Chair presented the request from Eurostudent and, bar any other proposals from the Board members or self-nominations, proposed to nominate the EHEA Secretariat to represent the BFUG in the Eurostudent Steering Board. The Co-chairs explained the choice based on the desire to avoid a selection process, the technical role of the body and the role of the Secretariat in facilitating a liaison. Upon request, the Secretariat clarified that in the previous case there was an open call with Greece being the sole applicant.

The Austrian WG on Monitoring Co-Chair, also serving in the Eurostudent Board, noted that the intention of inviting a BFUG representative in the Eurostudent Board was to better connect the BFUG with the Eurostudent project, and thus it would be better to have a country representative rather than the Secretariat, despite the latter's suitability.

The Flemish TF FoB Co-chair and the Italian CG GPD co-chair suggested opening a selection process and delegating the Secretariat should no application be received. The HoS suggested to circulate a Call for expressions of interest prepared by Eurostudent and proposed a clarification of the role, since in the last years no information on the BFUG representative in this body was conveyed to the BFUG, which may also be caused by the fact that the representative had not been a BFUG delegate.

The Liechtensteiner BFUG Co-chair concluded that an open call would be issued to all BFUG members, with the Secretariat coordinating the communication. The call would provide a description of the role and clarify responsibilities and current membership to avoid duplication.

10.2 Student protests in Serbia

ESU drew attention to ongoing student protests in Serbia and recent media attacks on ESU representatives. The situation, including violence against students and restrictions on their voices, was highlighted as a concern regarding the respect of EHEA fundamental values. The BFUG Co-Chair from Liechtenstein thanked the ESU representative for the update and acknowledged the importance of continued monitoring of the situation.

10.3 Closing remarks

The Head of the Secretariat provided reminders regarding follow-up actions and deadlines, congratulated the hosts and thanked everyone for the great cooperation.

The BFUG Co-Chairs delivered the official closing remarks, expressing gratitude to participants for their engagement and commending the effective management of a substantial agenda. Thanks were extended to the Head of the Secretariat and Vice-chair for their support, and to all members for their efficient participation.

The meeting ended at 15:24 CET.