

Proposal of the Republic of Cyprus Hosting the Long-Term EHEA Secretariat

Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
Republic of Cyprus

BFUG Online Information Session
Wednesday 22nd October 2025

Proposal to Host the EHEA Secretariat

- The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of Cyprus is honoured to present its candidacy to host the EHEA Secretariat on a long term basis.
- Cyprus is a committed EHEA member and can enable the establishment of the EHEA Secretariat in Cyprus by facilitating the legal procedures needed and by providing any other support required for the establishment of the BFUG Secretariat in Cyprus

Proposed Legal Framework

Legal basis

- Proposed legal form: Non-profit Association
- Governed by the Law 104(I)/2017 – Societies and Institutions and Other Related Matters Law
- Designed for non-profit, public-benefit purposes
- Requires minimum 20 members (natural or legal persons)

Legal personality

- Registered by the Registrar upon submission of founding documents
- Legal personality is acquired upon publication in the Official Gazette of Cyprus
- Can operate independently, own assets, sign contracts and receive funding

Governance in alignment with BFUG

The Association Model allows for:

BFUG as the General Assembly

- Constitutes the full decision-making authority
- Appoints and supervises the Head of Secretariat
- Approves budget, work plan and statute amendments

Board of Directors

- Executes decisions of the General Assembly (BFUG)
- Oversees daily operations and staff management
- Can include representatives designated by BFUG

Statutory Flexibility

- Statute tailored to EHEA Secretariat structure
- Provisions for: (i) Rotation of chair/co-chairs, (ii) Observer status, (iii) Annual reporting to BFUG

Operational Autonomy

Independent legal entity

- Operates separately from national authorities
- Own legal personality and decision-making powers
- Can enter contracts, receive funds, own property

International staffing

- Staff are employed according to the Cypriot Labour Law
- No restrictions on nationality or EU citizenship
- BFUG appoints the Head of Secretariat; open recruitment for other positions

Financial and administrative autonomy

- Manages own bank accounts and procurement
- Subject to standard audit and reporting rules
- Internal rules can reflect BFUG procedures and approval cycles

Why Association?

Fully aligned with BFUG governance

- BFUG acts as the General Assembly
- Flexible statute reflects EHEA structure
- Full control over appointments, budget and planning

Legally robust and efficient

- Recognized legal entity under Cypriot Law
- Simple registration process (typically within 2–3 months)
- Operates independently from national authorities

Why Association?

Financial and operational flexibility

- Eligible to receive and manage international contributions
- Can hire international staff under private Employment Law
- Transparent financial management with external audit

Proven and sustainable model

- Minimal bureaucratic burden
- Offers Long-term suitability with adaptable internal rules



Why Cyprus?



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SPORT AND YOUTH

Committed EHEA partner

- Active supporter of Bologna Process reforms
- Strong institutional capacity in Higher Education

EU & Council of Europe Member

- Fully aligned with European values and frameworks
- Stable, multilingual and connected internationally

Strategic and accessible

- Gateway between Europe, the Middle East and Africa
- Safe, well-connected and attractive for international staff
- Diverse and welcoming environment with large expat communities

Timeline and Feasibility

Legal registration

- Association registration typically completed within 2–3 months

Work & residence permits

- Non-EU staff permits processed within 4–8 weeks based on official Civil Registry and Migration Department guidance
- Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth will assist with all procedures for international staff

Office space

- Premises to be secured in parallel with legal setup

Target date

- Secretariat expected to be operational in time for a smooth transition by early 2027 - aligned with BFUG planning

In-Kind Support & Sustainability

In-kind support from Cyprus

- Assistance in identifying and securing office space
- Support with furnishing, IT setup and initial infrastructure
- Facilitation of all procedures for legal registration, work/residence permits, and integration of international staff
- Ongoing liaison with Cypriot authorities (tax, legal, operational)

Sustainability of the arrangement

- Low-cost legal form with operational independence
- Eligible to receive funding directly from BFUG members
- Long-term viability

Alternative Legal Forms Considered

Foundation

- Independent legal entity with a specific public-benefit purpose
- Structured governance and long-term continuity
- May offer a more autonomous and mission-focused legal identity

Non-profit company (limited by guarantee)

- Flexible organisational model under Company Law
- Suitable for international cooperation and public benefit activities
- Allows for detailed internal rules and clearer financial oversight mechanisms

Closing Remarks

- Cyprus is fully committed to supporting the goals and values of the EHEA
- The proposed Association model ensures full BFUG control, legal clarity and operational independence
- The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth will provide full institutional and practical support
- Cyprus offers a stable, EU-based and internationally accessible environment
- Readiness to proceed and collaborate closely with the BFUG for a smooth establishment and transition

Bologna Process Fundamental Values

Cyprus and EHEA Values

- Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are legally protected and actively respected
- Universities operate under a public responsibility framework, with autonomy in governance and academic matters
- Non-discrimination, inclusion, and equality are embedded in education policy
- Student and staff participation in Higher Education governance is formally institutionalised
- Cyprus adheres to the rule of law, democratic governance, and freedom of expression as an EU and Council of Europe member
- Recent reforms continue to align Cyprus's Higher Education with EHEA values and objectives

Thank you



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