



EHEA: Transforming
Education Together



Procedures regarding working structures

Horia Onița, Head of Secretariat
Coordination meeting between co-chairs
Brussels, Belgium – 5th of November 2024



Rules of Procedure – EHEA Structures



- **Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG)**

*The BFUG **oversees and directs the development of the EHEA** between Ministerial Conferences, ensures the **implementation of commitments** adopted by Ministers, develops its **work programme** on this basis and **prepares issues** for discussion and decision by Ministers.*

→ **Co-chairs of working structures are not invited as such at the BFUG meetings**, they need to be part of BFUG delegations. However, *‘The BFUG Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Board, may invite experts to contribute to BFUG meetings under the specific agenda items for which they have the required expertise.’*

Rules of Procedure – EHEA Structures



- **BFUG Board**

*The BFUG Board is an advisory committee of the BFUG to support it in its activities, including the **preparation of its meetings**, to **enhance efficiency in the management** of the EHEA, and ensure its continuity. As such, the responsibilities of the Board consist of **coordinating and monitoring the effective implementation of the work programme**. **One of the Co-Chairs of each of the BFUG working structures** according to the work plan of the respective period is **invited to participate** in Board meetings, without decision-making competence.*

*The Board prepares and follows up the meetings of the BFUG, including proposals for the agenda, **collection of feedback from the working structures, and review of the documents**, to ensure that they are adequate for discussion and decision making at the BFUG.*

→ Usually, the BFUG Board takes place 6 weeks before the BFUG meeting

Rules of Procedure – EHEA Structures



- **EHEA Secretariat**

*The Secretariat provides **neutral, administrative and operational support** to the Ministerial Conference, the BFUG and its Board, chairs and working structures. It operates under the **authority of the BFUG**, is fully accountable to it, and **independent of the country** or organisation within which it is located.*

*The Secretariat contributes to the **overall planning**, and to the **preparation and implementation of meetings** and events. It has a central role as **contact point for all communications** and ensures the **dissemination of information and documentation** to the BFUG and its working structures*

→ More details in the ToRs of the Secretariat (presented later)

Rules of Procedure – Work Programme



The **BFUG develops and implements** the EHEA work programme according to the priorities adopted by Ministers. The work programme shall be completed by the following Ministerial Conference, and the BFUG shall report to Ministers on its implementation. **It may entrust the implementation of parts of the work programme to Working Groups and similar structures** (see Annex 3), the terms of reference of which shall be adopted by the BFUG. **All working structures report and submit their proposals to the BFUG**, in line with the schedule of the work programme.

→ Deadline for reporting: **2 weeks before the BFUG/BFUG Board meeting**

Rules of Procedure – Minutes and documents

*In follow-up of all meetings of the BFUG, the BFUG Board and working structures, the **Secretariat drafts the minutes and submits them within 10 days** to the relevant Co-Chairs, for **comments and endorsement within 10 days**. Afterwards the Secretariat circulates them to the **participants for feedback** within 10 days, and, if necessary, recirculates them for adoption. Once finalised, the Secretariat publishes them on the **EHEA website**. The exchanges usually take place by electronic consultation. If there are diverging views on the meeting reports and the decisions made, the meeting reports shall be adopted at the following meeting.*

- More detailed provisions in the **Guidelines for minuting** and formatting of documents
- Days are calculated as working days
- **Flexible approach** based on the needs of the co-chairs of working structures

All internal documents are sent to the EHEA Secretariat **in editable format** (Word, PowerPoint). The Secretariat is responsible for ensuring the adequate naming of the documents and transforming them into PDF format before uploading them on the website. **Draft documents will be circulated among members of working structure in editable format.**

Rules of Procedure – Working Structures



The BFUG may establish working structures, such as Working Groups, Task Forces, Thematic Peer Learning Groups and similar (see X.4Annex 3 for a typology). **Such structures have no decision-making authority but submit proposals and provide advice** to enable the BFUG to take decisions, **develop recommendations, reports, instruments**, etc. for Ministers to adopt. The **terms of reference** of the working structures are developed on the basis of the Communiqué, the work programme and discussion and decisions of the BFUG.

In principle, all BFUG members and consultative members may participate in any working structure. However, the BFUG may decide to limit participation in a working structure and stipulate in the terms of references how and by what criteria the participants are to be selected. **Interest in participating in a working structure is normally expressed when the group is established.** It may, however, **also be expressed at a later stage**, and the request for participation is then decided by the BFUG at its earliest opportunity.

Commonly, BFUG members and consultative members **participate themselves** in the working structures, but can appoint a representative with a suitable profile. In any case, they have the **duty to ensure regular participation**, as far as possible by the same person, and that their ministry, institution or organisation is **duly informed of the work of the group**.

Rules of Procedure – working group co-chairs



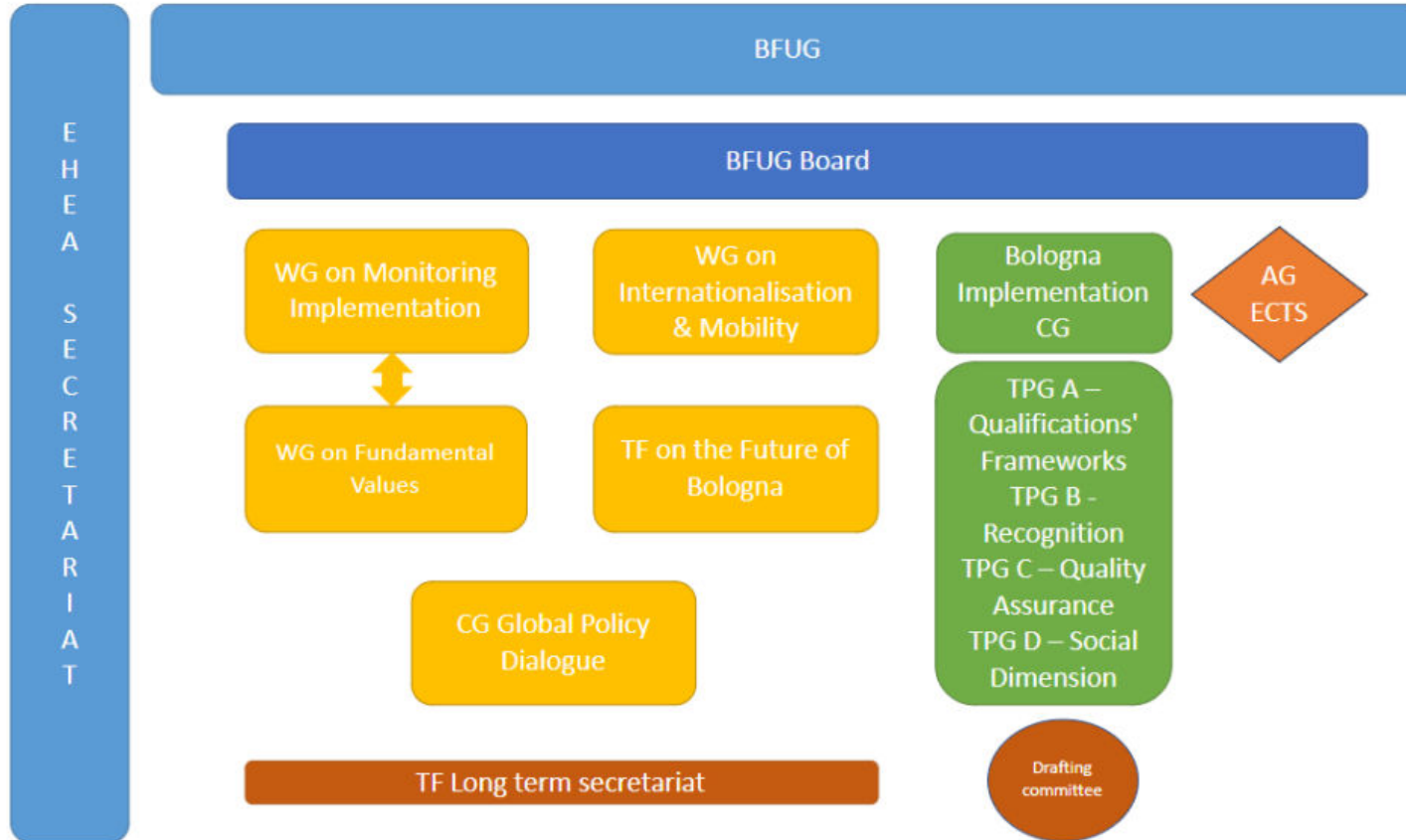
*The chairs, in collaboration with the group's participants and with the support of the Secretariat, are **responsible for the smooth, consistent and efficient work** of the group.*

*They facilitate the working structure's collaboration, through **proper preparation and follow-up of meetings** and by any other means that the structure perceives as fit-for purpose and is deemed useful for its work, such as, **for example, exchanges with other structures, expert hearings, and good practice sharing**. Where these exchanges and collaborations are a **more regular arrangement**, they should be **approved by the BFUG** in advance.*

*Co-chairs ensure that **collaboration on dedicated projects is effective and appropriate**, and **does not lead to a deviation** from the structure's goals, tasks and work plan. In their representation, co-chairs should clearly **distinguish between the structure's preliminary results, and the adopted policies and positions of the Bologna Process***

→ In practice, co-chairs of the working structures support the organisation of the meetings in their own countries.

Work Programme



Work Programme



The BFUG adopted the Work Programme including the working structures, co-chairs, reference to the Tirana Communiqué and main outcomes.

*The working structures are required to operationalise the commitments from the Tirana Communiqué in their Terms of Reference, in order to ensure **an outcome-based approach and make it possible to assess the activity of each working structure.***

*After the 3rd of November (and the meeting of the co-chairs of working structures, if the case), **the BFUG members receive the draft Terms of Reference**, including membership in the working structures. **Ten days of online consultation are given**, followed by the co-chairs of working structures adapting the Terms of Reference, if necessary. Once a consensus is reached, the Terms of Reference are sent for adoption by the BFUG via electronic procedure. If consensus cannot be reached, an online BFUG meeting could be considered to discuss the respective matters.*

→ **Proposal: Finalise the ToRs by 14th of November** (including consultation with members, where it did not happen), so to send them by 15th of November to the BFUG

ToRs working structures

Template for the ToRs included:

- *Name, duration, co-chairs, composition*
 - *Reference to the Communiqué*
 - *Main goals, outcomes, specific tasks*
- The BFUG called for an outcomes-oriented work programme, in order to ensure it is able to track the progress of the working structures and the achievement of the objectives at the end of the work programme
- Outcomes should feed into the Ministerial Conference, the 2027 Communiqué or support the development/implementation of EHEA
- Outcomes should not be dependent of the existence of a supporting project, but supporting projects can contribute to the achievement of the outcomes/deliver adjacent outcomes
- *Meetings*
- Usually one per semester.

ToRs working structures

Template for the ToRs included:

- *Liaison with other working structures*
- *Contribution to enhancing mobility*
- *Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process*

→ In the BFUG, emphasis was put on the relation with ERA

- *Reporting*
- *Dissemination and enhancement knowledge sharing*
- *Contribution to transversal topics*

→ In the BFUG, emphasis was put on digitalisation & AI, student-centred learning

Relation with the Secretariat



The Secretariat implements the following activities:

- provides **administrative and operational support** for the BFUG, its Board and working structures, including **planning meetings, preparing background papers and minute-taking**;
- coordinates or supports the **drafting of the official documents** within the Bologna Process and provides background discussion documents, liaising with relevant authors, as appropriate;
- coordinates the **scheduling of meetings** to ensure there is no avoidable overlap between meetings;

→ via **Doodles**

Relation with the Secretariat

- *provides participants with **information on practical arrangements** for meetings in consultation with the Co-chairs, **supports the practical arrangements during meetings, in cooperation with the hosts, if necessary and requested***

- In principle, we would propose:
 - ❖ 2 months in advance – save the date (+invitation for speakers)
 - ❖ 1 month in advance – invitation + PIN provided by the host, registration form provided by the Secretariat
 - ❖ 2 weeks in advance – agenda, presentations from speakers
 - ❖ 10 days in advance – deadline for registrations, list of participants provided by the Secretariat to co-chairs

- If required, the Secretariat can provide lists of participants in person for signatures, name tags.

- It is advisable that meeting venues have access to Wi-fi, microphones (for recording), video projector and hybrid meeting equipment

Relation with the Secretariat

- ensures the **virtual infrastructure for organising online meetings and sharing documents** with and by the members of the BFUG and its working structures in the backoffice
 - For meetings, we use **Zoom**
 - For sharing documents, we use **Drive** (two folders – one for co-chairs, one for members).
- supports the Co-chairs in monitoring the work of the working structures in relation to the Work Programme and the Terms of Reference, through ongoing liaison with the appropriate parties responsible;
- shares information with European and international stakeholders, as requested by the Co-chairs or Vice-chair of the BFUG and its working structures;
- attends external events related to the mandate of the working structures. Where appropriate, the Secretariat may also represent the BFUG in settings and on occasions to be agreed with the Co-chairs
- develops dissemination tools and organises activities related to enhancing knowledge sharing about the Bologna Process, including supporting BFUG members upon availability, and supports the engagement of experts in the Bologna Process and their liaison with the BFUG;

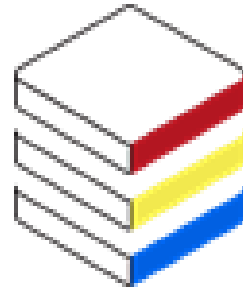
Relation with the Secretariat



- *administers the European Higher Education Area **social media accounts** and its newsletter, in coordination with the Co-chairs and the Vice-chair;*
- The Secretariat prepares **social media posts for the meetings** of the working structures
- Co-chairs are invited to **share materials about their engagements** in the capacities of co-chairs to be shared on EHEA social media, contribute to the newsletter and writing articles for the website promoting their work

Procedures regarding working structures

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EHEA
Secretariat