

Minutes of the 4th Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process meeting

Online (Zoom), 13 February 2026

List of participants

Nr.	Name	Country / Organisation
1	Armela Baka	Albania
2	Helga Posset	Austria (Co-chair)
3	Kyriacos Charalambous	Cyprus
4	Rob Copeland	EI - ETUCE
5	Aleksandar Šušnjar	EQAR
6	Henriette Stöber	EUA
7	David Crosier	Eurydice (Co-chair)
8	Kristina Hauschildt	Eurostudent
9	Daciana Pop	ESU
10	Magdalena Klann	Germany
11	Stefan Sant	Malta (Co-chair)
12	Marius Deaconu	Romania
13	Jernej Širok	Slovenia
14	Horia-Șerban Onița	EHEA Secretariat (HoS)
15	Oana Alexandra Țințar	EHEA Secretariat
16	Susanna Zellini	EACEA (guest)
17	Cezar Hâj	Romanian Co-chair of the WG on Fundamental Values (guest)
18	Christiane Beck	Maltese Co-chair of the WG on Fundamental Values (guest)
19	Katerina Toura	EACEA (guest)
20	Roland Farkas	EACEA (guest)

Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and Türkiye were absent.

1. Welcome by the WG Co-chairs

1.1. Approval of the agenda

1.2. Acknowledgement of the 3rd WG on Monitoring meeting minutes

1.3. Introduction of newcomers - tour de table

Documents: [WG Monitoring 4 CY NO Draft Agenda 26.01.2026](#)

The Austrian Co-chair opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and presenting the draft agenda. As the participants did not raise any issues, the agenda was adopted as proposed. The Austrian Co-chair invited participants to take note of the minutes of the 3rd WG on Monitoring meeting, which had been circulated to members in their final form and uploaded on the EHEA website. She then invited the participants to introduce themselves.

2. Updates from the EHEA Secretariat regarding the activity of the other WS and feedback from the 3rd meeting of the WG on Monitoring

Documents: [WG Monitoring 4 CY NO 2 Feedback 3rd WG meeting](#)

The Head of the EHEA Secretariat provided an update on recent developments within the BFUG working structures in view of the upcoming BFUG meeting in Cyprus. He informed the group that the BFUG would be expected to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Drafting Committee at the meeting in Cyprus, noting that the first meeting of the committee had taken place in late January and that it would be co-chaired by ESU and Romania. He further noted that the BFUG was expected to agree on the revised ECTS Users' Guide and to discuss a further draft of the revised ESG, the latter to be further developed and agreed at a subsequent BFUG meeting in Ireland.

The HoS also referred to ongoing work in the other BFUG working structures and their current status in the implementation of the Work Programme. He further informed about a meeting organised by the Secretariat with the Co-chairs of the various working structures in order to support the alignment of terminology across several Bologna Process documents, including the BPIR, the ECTS Users' Guide, the ESG, the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, and the Action Plan being developed by the Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility.

He also informed the group that the Secretariat was in the beta phase of the new EHEA website, which was expected to be officially launched at the BFUG meeting in Cyprus. The Austrian Co-chair further expressed appreciation for the new EHEA website currently in its beta phase, noting that it appeared clear and user-friendly.

The EHEA Secretariat member briefly presented the feedback report from the 3rd WG on Monitoring meeting, noting the positive feedback received and thanking Austria for hosting the meeting.

Upon a question from the Austrian Co-chair, the HoS explained that the document prepared by the Secretariat on the terminology coordination had been circulated among the Co-chairs of the

BFUG working structures and that comments had subsequently been received from the European Commission. He noted that the intention was for the document to function as a living document maintained by the Secretariat, compiling definitions used across different Bologna Process documents in order to support alignment across working structures. Once these revisions are completed, the document would be made available to the BFUG while at the time of the meeting the document had not yet been published on the EHEA website.

The EUA representative asked for clarification regarding the next steps in this process regarding the terminology coordination paper. She noted that some of the differences between definitions across various Bologna Process documents appeared to be significant and asked whether the intended outcome of the exercise would be simply to raise awareness of these differences or to move towards greater alignment. In response, HoS clarified that the terminology coordination document was not intended to impose a single definition across Bologna Process documents, nor to interfere with the work of the subgroup on terminology within the Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility. Rather, the aim was to bring together the definitions used in different documents and to support greater alignment where possible. He noted that discussions had highlighted an informal order of precedence between sources. By way of example, he referred to the definitions related to joint degrees and joint programmes, where the greatest divergence had been observed. In this case, the definition contained in the European Approach had been used in the ECTS Users' Guide and in the Bologna Process Implementation Report, while the Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility had proposed a different definition. He explained that the document under preparation would compile the existing definitions and identify their original sources, without imposing a single definition. However, the exercise could help clarify where greater alignment may be needed across different working structures.

The Eurydice Co-chair expressed appreciation for the Secretariat's initiative to compile the terminology coordination document. He noted that a first important step was to gather the existing definitions, identify the differences between them and make these transparent. He further referred to the discussion on establishing criteria to indicate which definitions should take precedence, suggesting that this could support gradual alignment and help avoid creating new definitions from scratch in future policy discussions. The EQAR representative emphasised the importance of considering the purpose and target audiences of the different Bologna Process documents when discussing the alignment of terminology. He noted that, while greater alignment could help avoid confusion among stakeholders, in some cases it might be appropriate for specific documents to use particular definitions tailored to their context.

3. Reporting from the WG Co-chairs

3.1. Report from the BFUG meeting in Copenhagen, December 2025

The Eurydice Co-chair reported on the discussions held at the BFUG meeting in Copenhagen in December 2025. He explained that the WG had presented the planning of the draft indicators agreed at the previous WG meeting in Vienna, together with the next steps for the development of the BPIR questionnaire. He noted that several questions had been raised during the BFUG discussion, although none required fundamental changes to the approach agreed by the WG. By way of example, he referred to the indicator on short-cycle higher education, which the WG

had previously agreed to remove. During the BFUG discussion, however, it was suggested that the corresponding data should continue to be collected in order to ensure comparability over time. The WG therefore agreed to reinstate the related question in the questionnaire. The Austrian Co-chair added that clarification had also been requested regarding the use of the terms “strategies” and “measures”. She further reported that the WG had presented its expectations regarding the narrative contributions to the BPIR from the different working structures. While the BFUG discussion had been limited, nominations for authors had already been received from most working structures, with the exception of TPG A and TPG C.

The Eurydice Co-chair added that, following the discussion at the Vienna meeting, a shortlist of potential editors for the narrative sections had been established. He informed the group that Anna-Lena Claes had agreed to take on this role and would begin her work in March. The next steps would include further work on the guidance for the narrative sections and the organisation of a meeting with the authors.

3.2. Report from the BFUG Board in Oslo, February 2026

Documents: [BFUG Board CY NO 98 5.1 WG Monitoring Presentation](#)

The Maltese Co-chair reported on the discussion held at the BFUG Board meeting in Oslo in February 2026. He explained that the WG had provided an update on the state of play regarding the preparation of the BPIR 2027, including the process for identifying authors responsible for drafting the narrative contributions from the different working structures. The HoS added that one of the main points discussed concerned the respective roles of Eurydice and the narrative authors. In particular, clarification had been sought as to whether the authors should limit their contribution to describing the work of the respective working structures or also provide an overview of the chapter based on the available data. The Eurydice WG Co-chair emphasised that the analysis and interpretation of the data would remain the responsibility of Eurydice, while the narrative authors would provide contextual explanations and an overview of developments in their respective thematic areas. Thus, the indicators and their analysis, including the description of developments since the previous reporting cycle, would be prepared by Eurydice.

4. Update from EC and other Working Structures

The Eurydice Co-chair provided a brief update on recent developments at European Commission level. He informed the group that a new round of working groups under the European policy agenda was expected to be launched, following the conclusion of the previous cycle in December. In addition, he referred to developments related to the Union of Skills initiative, including work on a Skills Observatory involving the Joint Research Centre, DG Employment and DG EAC.

The Romanian Co-chair of the Working Group on Fundamental Values provided an update on the monitoring exercise carried out under the NewFAV2 project. He noted that the section of the BPIR questionnaire related to fundamental values was broadly in line with the proposal developed by the WG on FV. He informed the group that the project team had already started training the first wave of national operators and had prepared the infrastructure for the data collection process. He also indicated that the project team remained confident that it would be

able to present a draft monitoring report to the BFUG in autumn. In this context, he asked about the timeline for the distribution of the BPIR questionnaire to national authorities, noting that pre-filled information from national operators could potentially be shared with respondents where available.

The Eurydice Co-chair informed the group that the BPIR questionnaire would be finalised shortly following the meeting and circulated to BFUG members by the end of February. While some pre-filled information would be included, particularly where comparable data existed from previous reporting cycles, the section on fundamental values would largely consist of new questions and therefore only limited pre-filling would be possible. Once the responses would be collected and verified, the relevant data would be shared with the WG on FV and the project team. The analysis of the de jure indicators on fundamental values would also be included in the BPIR chapter prepared by Eurydice.

The Romanian Co-chair welcomed the clarification and asked whether the pre-filled information prepared by Eurydice could also be shared with the project team for reference. He confirmed that the project questionnaire addressed to public authorities, planned for early March, could include the pre-filled information where available.

The EUA representative asked for clarification regarding the role and selection of national operators, as well as the approach used to involve national stakeholders such as higher education institutions. The Slovenian representative requested clarification on the respective responsibilities of national operators and public authorities in completing the questionnaire.

In response, the Romanian Co-chair explained that, due to the timeline of the BPIR process, the national operators would not be able to pre-fill the fundamental values questions in the BPIR questionnaire. However, pre-filled information prepared within the project could still be shared with respondents as a reference. He further clarified that the monitoring exercise aimed to cover all EHEA countries and that national operators had been selected by the research team with the objective of ensuring their independence. Their role would be to prepare an initial pre-filling of the questionnaire based on publicly available information, which would subsequently be validated by national respondents. He also explained that the questionnaire would be distributed to several stakeholder groups, including national student unions affiliated with ESU, trade unions affiliated with EI/ETUCE, and national rectors' conferences associated with EUA.

The EQAR representative provided an update on the activities of TPG C. He informed the group that a new working group on cross-border quality assurance had recently been established and would focus on updating two documents related to how cross-border quality assurance is conducted by quality assurance agencies. He also noted that TPG C was supporting the further development of EQAR's knowledge base, which focuses on the collection and analysis of information related to quality assurance activities. Once further developed, the knowledge base could potentially serve as a source of information for future implementation reports.

The HoS mentioned that the Secretariat planned to organise a conference on enhancing knowledge sharing on the national implementation of the Bologna Process, to be held back-to-back with the Bologna Process Researchers' Conference in September.

The Eurostudent representative informed the group that data collection had been successfully completed in 18 countries, with six additional countries beginning their data collection process. She noted that a Researchers' Forum would take place in March, bringing together national

researchers to discuss initial findings. The next Eurostudent report was expected to be published in 2027.

The EUA representative provided a brief update on the preparation of the next Trends report. She noted that the draft questionnaire was currently being finalised and that the timeline for the exercise was similar to that of the BPIR. She also informed participants that comments on the draft questionnaire would be sought from a selected group of stakeholders from higher education institutions and invited interested members to volunteer to provide feedback. The exercise was being conducted in cooperation with an ESU-led project, SPICE, which also covers the preparation of the Bologna with Student Eyes report.

The ESU representative provided a short update on the preparation of the next Bologna with Student Eyes report. She informed the group that the questionnaire for national unions of students was expected to be launched in April. The draft questionnaire was currently being reviewed with methodological support from IHS.

5. Status Quo BPIR 2027 questionnaire

The Eurydice Co-chair opened the discussion on the BPIR 2027 questionnaire by inviting participants to raise any general comments or questions regarding the draft.

Susanna Zellini asked whether it would be useful to clarify in the questionnaire which categories of actors were covered by the legal protection referred to in some questions, for example in relation to academic freedom, noting that it might be helpful to specify whether this included professors, researchers and students.

In response, the Romanian Co-chair of the WG on FV explained that the questions were aligned with the common understanding of the fundamental values adopted within the EHEA. He noted that, within this framework, the concept of academic freedom covers both staff and students. He also referred to the project website developed within the monitoring exercise, which provides detailed explanations of the fundamental values and their scope.

The Eurydice Co-chair added that the formulations used in the questionnaire were aligned with the statements on fundamental values adopted at EHEA level. While further clarification could potentially be provided within the project context, the current wording reflected the agreed definitions. He emphasised that the meeting represented the final opportunity to raise comments or suggestions on the questionnaire before its finalisation.

The Eurostudent representative raised a minor technical comment regarding the reference to the EUROSTUDENT project in the questionnaire. She suggested that the reference to EUROSTUDENT VII might need to be updated to reflect the current or forthcoming data collection cycle.

6. Preparation for the BFUG meeting in Nicosia, March 2026 - Discussion

The Eurydice Co-chair outlined the main points to be addressed at the BFUG meeting in Nicosia in March 2026. He noted that the BPIR questionnaire would already have been circulated to countries by that time and that the Working Group would primarily listen to any comments or difficulties raised by BFUG members and provide clarification where necessary. He emphasised the importance of respecting the agreed deadlines, noting that countries would be given two months to complete the questionnaire. He also stressed the need for countries to provide references to the relevant legislative or policy documents supporting their answers in order to facilitate the verification of the data.

7. Timeline, next steps, division of tasks

The Maltese Co-chair introduced the discussion on the timeline and next steps, noting that the immediate priority would be the launch of the BPIR questionnaire. He indicated that the cleaning and validation of the collected data was expected to take place between May and July.

The Eurydice Co-chair explained that the data cleaning process during the previous reporting cycle had been particularly challenging due to the complexity of the questionnaire and delays by several countries in submitting their responses. He noted that the aim for the current cycle was to ensure that the two-month deadline for completing the questionnaire would be respected, allowing the data cleaning phase to be completed by July and enabling the drafting of the report to begin during the summer.

The Austrian Co-chair informed participants about the upcoming BFUG meetings. In order to review progress in advance of the BFUG meeting in Dublin, it was proposed to hold the next WG on Monitoring meeting online on 9 October in the morning. As no objections were raised, the proposal was agreed.

In closing the meeting, the Maltese Co-chair thanked participants for their contributions. The Austrian and Maltese Co-chairs, as well as the entire WG, expressed particular appreciation for the significant contribution and dedication of David Crosier to the work of the Working Group and to the development of the Bologna Process Implementation Report over the years.

There was no other business. The meeting ended at 11:08 CET.