



**Minutes of the  
2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility  
27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2025  
Hosted by Germany in Bonn**

**Venue: DAAD (Haus Sud), Kennedyallee 91-103, Bonn**

\*List of participants\*

Nr.	NAME	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION
1.	David Akrami Flores	Germany	DAAD
2.	Belgin Amann	Liechtenstein	The Office of Education
3.	Arpine Arakelyan	Republic of Armenia	Higher Education and Science Committee of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia
4.	Muhammet Akif Ataman	Türkiye	Council of Higher Education
5.	Arthur Belle	Netherlands	Ministry of Education Culture and Science
6.	Elena Cirlan	ENQA	The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
7.	Zsolt Dános	Hungary	Ministry of Culture and Innovation
8.	Ligia Deca	Romania	National Commission of Romania to UNESCO
9.	Ciaran Donaghy	United Kingdom	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
10.	Martina Eliasova	Czechia	Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (DZS)

11.	Michael Gaebel	EUA	European University Association (EUA)
12.	Adriana Gonfroid	Belgium	Administration of Education- French Community of Belgium
13.	Božidar Grigić	Slovenia	CMEPIUS
14.	Vusala Gurbanova	Azerbaijan	Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
15.	Rahel Hollenstein	Switzerland	Swissuniversities
16.	Anna Jurkowska-Zeidler	Poland	University of Gdańsk
17.	Nino Kadagishvili	Georgia	National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement
18.	Nikolaos Karaiskos	Ελλάδα	Ministry Of Education
19.	Ruth Lamotte	België	Department of Education, Flanders
20.	Jordi Llombart	Andorra	Ministry of Institutional Relations, Education and Universities
21.	Leila Loupis	France	UNESCO
22.	Horia Onița	EHEA Secretariat	EHEA Secretariat
23.	Lilia Parhomenco	EHEA Secretariat	EHEA Secretariat
24.	Tatiana Pașa	Republic of Moldova	Ministry of Education and Research
25.	Solange Pisarz	France	CTI - Commission des titres d'ingénieur
26.	Nicoleta - Cristina Popa	Romania	ANPCDEFP
27.	Ulla Preeden	EURASHE	EURASHE
28.	Christina Raab	Austria	Universität Innsbruck
29.	Melanie Rosenbaum	Holy See	Dicastery for Culture and Education
30.	Martins Sabovics	Latvia	Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies
31.	Arno Schrooyen	Belgium	European Students' Union
32.	Niclas Lindahl Trosdahl	Norway	Ministry of Education and Research
33.	Mia Wallin Hansen	European Commission	European Commission

Day 1 - 27th of May 2025

The meeting started at 9:35 CEST.

### 1. Welcome and introduction

The meeting started with an address by the Secretary General of DAAD, Mr. Kai Sicks, who welcomed the participants at DAAD and thanked the members of the Working Group for

participating in the PLA organised the day before, at the Bonn University, on relevant issues for the activity of the working structure. The key highlights of Mr. Sicks' speech focused on the history and current international activities and outreach of DAAD, mentioning that in 2025, DAAD had been celebrating its 100th anniversary. He emphasised that over the past century, DAAD had become the world's largest organisation supporting international academic exchange, with more than 3 million students having been funded either to study in Germany or to go abroad.

In relation to the international outlook of German universities, he mentioned that 57 German higher education institutions were members of European University Alliances, a development that had been driving structural change and strengthening collaboration across borders. Despite the central role of programs like Erasmus+, DAAD had further observed a decline in the mobility of European students, which called for renewed strategies to motivate students to pursue academic and professional opportunities abroad. The Secretary General of DAAD pointed out that addressing these challenges was crucial for maintaining momentum in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and ensuring that the next generation would fully benefit from the advantages of international mobility.

## **2. Welcome by the co-chairs and adoption of the agenda**

**Documents:** [\*Draft agenda\*](#)  
[\*Presentation from the WG Co-chairs\*](#)

The Dutch WG Co-chair opened the meeting by thanking the hosts and expressing appreciation for the PLA that had been organised the previous day. He mentioned that while the focus of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting was mostly on mobility, the focus of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting would be on internationalisation. The German WG Co-chair extended the welcome remarks and presented the draft agenda of the meeting.

While not proposing changes to the agenda, EUA stressed the importance of maintaining the focus of the discussions on systemic issues where action at the level of the Bologna Process could bring added value, including guidance for public authorities. He advocated for avoiding focusing too much on the higher education institution level, as it would risk replicating the issues encountered with the WG on Learning and Teaching, where insights were relevant exclusively for HEIs. In this sense, EUA noted that the group must ensure that its conclusions clearly outline what ministries and governments can do, rather than relying too much on recommendations designed for HEIs.

Romania thanked DAAD for organising the Peer Learning Activity (PLA) and echoed EUA's remarks on the importance of focusing on national-level actions. She emphasised the need to discuss what different countries were doing at the national policy level, drawing attention to the work of UNESCO in mapping national contributions toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In her view, the discussions in the WG should also adopt a global perspective, extending beyond institutional or specific examples.

The German WG Co-chair noted that UNESCO had been actively involved in the Subgroup on the Glossary, ensuring that global insights and perspectives were incorporated into the group's ongoing work.

As no other comments were received, the agenda was adopted without changes.

The German Co-chair then gave a brief overview of the state of play regarding the WG Action Plan, outlining that after the 1st meeting in Moldova two calls were opened for joining the Subgroups (on the Glossary and on the Action Plan) and for hosting the upcoming WG meetings. He informed members that the Subgroup on the Glossary already had two meetings, with the first draft of the Glossary proposed for this meeting. He added that the second draft would be discussed at the third WG meeting in autumn and then presented to the BFUG at its meeting in Copenhagen in December 2025. Following this WG meeting, the Sub-group on the Action Plan would also hold its first meeting.

The German WG co-chair stated that the call for participation in the two subgroups was still open, and interested members could apply by filling in the form provided by the Secretariat or contacting them directly.

Regarding the next meeting of the WG, the Dutch WG Co-chair announced that it would be held in The Hague, on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of October, with a PLA organised on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October. In this context, Austria indicated its willingness to host the fourth meeting in Vienna, tentatively scheduled for February or March 2026.

### **3. Presentation from the Secretariat**

**Documents:** [Updates from EHEA Secretariat](#)

The Head of Secretariat provided updates on the activities of the BFUG working structures since the first meeting in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova. He started by outlining that all working structures had been formally established, with their Terms of Reference adopted by the BFUG, and had convened at least once during spring 2025. He noted that the WG on Internationalisation and Mobility was referenced for synergies in the ToRs of several other working structures, showcasing the central role of the group within the current Work Programme.

As the deadline for submitting National Action Plans for implementing the key commitments was soon approaching, he emphasised that more than half of the BFUG members had already submitted their plans, which were available on the EHEA website, and that 14 countries included additional commitments specifically on internationalisation and mobility.

### **4. Round of introductions / Tour de table / Role and vision for participation in the group**

The meeting continued with a round of introductions from the participants, each of them emphasising both their interest in participating in the group and concrete expectations for the

working structure. Several delegates expressed appreciation for the Peer Learning Activity organized and reiterated the need for such events for better communication among the stakeholders and interested parties.

#### **4. Group work**

The German WG co-chair presented the working method for the parallel group discussions, which would each focus on relevant policy areas related to the internationalisation of higher education based on a set of guiding questions. He added that the discussions, taken in conjunction with those of the preceding PLA, would support the WG in drafting the action plan. The participants would be divided into two groups for each parallel session, followed by reporting back in the plenary.

##### **4.1. Session 1: Internationalisation at home: curriculum and teaching approaches**

The following guiding questions were presented by the German co-chair:

- *How can curricula be adapted to integrate global perspectives?*
- *How can faculty be supported in adopting internationalized teaching methods?*
- *What role do intercultural competencies play in student learning outcomes?*
- *What are effective strategies for incorporating multilingualism in the curriculum?*
- *How can assessment methods reflect global and intercultural learning?*
- *How can technology facilitate internationalisation within traditional classrooms?*

After the group discussions, two rapporteurs were selected for presenting the main highlights.

The first group emphasised the importance of developing intercultural competences and the need for teacher preparedness to support internationalisation in higher education. A strong focus was placed on internationalisation at home as a strategic priority, particularly as a means of ensuring inclusiveness for students who are unable to participate in physical mobility programs. Participants reflected on the need to clearly define objectives and competences that should be developed through internationalisation efforts. Key themes included exposure to diverse perspectives, building bridges between cultures, and fostering a sense of global and European identity among students and staff.

Furthermore, while policy tools for internationalisation were considered largely in place, questions remained regarding the effectiveness of incentive mechanisms—especially how to motivate institutions and individuals to engage meaningfully in these processes. Quality assurance was identified as a potential enabler in this area, alongside the adequate implementation of ECTS and other Bologna tools, including on designing learning outcomes that cover intercultural competencies and recognition of those learning outcomes after mobility. The need for continued professional development for academic staff was also underlined, particularly on surpassing ingrained approaches, with Latvia cited as an example of good practice.

Finally, the discussion highlighted the role of regular intercultural exposure and multilingualism as key drivers for advancing internationalisation within higher education institutions, the latter under the backdrop of the decrease in learning languages.

The second group started by exploring the fundamental question of to whom and for what purpose was internationalisation intended. Participants reflected on the roles and missions of various actors involved in internationalisation—ranging from policymakers and institutions to academic staff and students, highlighting the importance of aligning their efforts around common goals and achieving impact. It was acknowledged that there were multiple modes and pathways for achieving internationalisation, including both physical mobility and virtual exchanges, joint programs, and internationalisation at home. Crucially, the needs and approaches of institutions varied significantly depending on their regional and national contexts.

The group considered both curriculum and the use of technology as essential components in embedding international and intercultural dimensions into higher education. Overall, internationalisation emerged as a key strategic issue, requiring a coordinated and context-sensitive approach to maximize its impact across the European Higher Education Area and beyond.

#### **4.2 Session 2: Student engagement and inclusive internationalization**

After the first session, the Dutch co-chair presented the questions to be tackled during the 2nd session:

- *How can institutions create meaningful interactions between domestic and international students?*
- *What barriers exist to inclusive internationalisation, and how can they be addressed?*
- *How can student-led initiatives contribute to a more internationalised campus?*
- *What role do student support services play in fostering a welcoming environment?*

The discussions in the first working group emphasised the importance of ensuring the cohesion among the student body and avoiding establishing or enabling barriers between international and domestic students. The participants underscored the value of peer mentoring, suggesting that having student mentors could significantly support the integration and well-being of international students, whereas domestic students should also be incentivised to engage with international students. The inclusion of international lecturers in university boards and academic governance structures was identified as a way to strengthen the global outlook of institutions. Additionally, the group highlighted the role of the international student as ambassadors — both within the university and in the broader community, as means to foster intercultural understanding.

Participants referenced the work of European University Alliances, as well as the upcoming toolbox on social dimension that was prepared by the European Commission and could support these efforts. A recent upcoming study by the European Commission on balanced mobility was also suggested as a source of inspiration for analysing ways to foster inclusive mobility

approaches. Further key elements discussed included the importance of quality assessment mechanisms in evaluating internationalization practices, and the growing relevance of blended programmes, which combine online and physical learning to expand access and flexibility.

In the second group, participants reflected on the impact of internationalisation on student organisations and associations, noting their crucial role in shaping inclusive environments and facilitating integration. However, internationalisation could also challenge traditional student structures, requiring adaptation and increased intercultural sensitivity. Group members shared examples of practical approaches, including the deliberate amalgamation of international and domestic students in study groups, extracurricular activities and student dorms to encourage interaction and peer learning. These practices were seen as key to building meaningful connections and fostering a sense of belonging.

The discussion also highlighted persistent differences in the experiences of domestic and international students, including variations in academic expectations, support systems, and social integration. The group considered that addressing these disparities was essential for making internationalisation more effective and equitable.

### **Session 3: Digitalisation and the future of Internationalisation at home: The role of online learning, hybrid formats, and AI in fostering internationalisation**

The German co-chairs proposed the following key points for discussion:

- *How can online and hybrid learning formats enhance internationalisation at home?*
- *What role does AI play in facilitating cross-cultural learning and language support?*
- *How can virtual exchange and COIL programmes be effectively implemented?*
- *How can emerging technologies (VR, AR, AI) provide immersive international experiences?*

The first group explored in depth the role of AI and digital tools in supporting internationalisation, highlighting both their potential and limitations. Participants emphasised that in the context of internationalisation AI needs to be understood ambivalently as a tool rather than a goal in itself. While AI and digital platforms could facilitate connections between stakeholders across countries, support administrative processes and the internationalisation of curricula, give personalised guidance or enhance access to information, their capacity to foster deep intercultural experiences remained and was expected to remain limited. In this regard, digitalisation as a structural effort should be clearly defined and aligned with learning & teaching and internationalisation objectives, especially when meant to achieve the goal of building intercultural competencies.

The group also drew attention to the ethical and equity implications of digitalisation, particularly in a post-COVID context, as well as the psychosocial impact of digital tools on students. They argued that a common assumption was that digital tools would inherently increase inclusion, which was not always the case. In this sense, they considered that digital inclusion must be critically assessed, ensuring that students with limited access to infrastructure would not be left behind. Furthermore, they also called for a mindful approach in the use of

personal data, particularly when using AI-powered systems, and urged institutions to consider privacy, transparency, and responsible data practices.

It was noted that universities are expected and tend to expand their use of digital tools, yet this expansion should be purpose-driven, with a carefully tailored balance between digital, blended, and physical learning to meet specific pedagogical and internationalisation goals. Finally, the group reflected on what constituted 'quality' in blended learning environments, stressing that technology should serve and not replace meaningful learning and engagement, particularly in cross-cultural contexts.

The second group shared similar conclusions and pointed out that while digital tools, including AI, could enhance access and flexibility, their use must be quality-driven and ethically sound, particularly in virtual and hybrid learning environments. Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) were mentioned as an example where the mode of delivery (online, hybrid, physical) was less important than the achievement of learning outcomes. The group stressed that the quality of education must be evaluated based on results and impact without an overreliance on the format.

Participants in the second group raised concerns about institutions that may use digital tools unethically or for commercial gain, risking the integrity of the educational experience. In this context, ethical considerations must guide the use of technology in international higher education. On another note, AI was seen as a valuable tool when used responsibly, particularly for supporting multilingualism—e.g., through speech-to-text, text-to-speech, and AI-based mentoring tools. Such technologies could foster inclusion and improve communication, especially for international students, with some referring to these as “polite robots” that support learning and integration.

## **5. Presentation and discussion of the draft glossary**

The Dutch co-chair gave an update on the development of the first draft of the Glossary on Internationalisation and Mobility. He outlined that the process began with extensive consultation of existing sources, including the Erasmus+ Glossary and the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR). The aim was to ensure conceptual clarity and alignment with ongoing European and international efforts, based on the dual role of the Glossary: to accompany the Action Plan and agree a consistent use of the key terms related to internationalisation and mobility within the EHEA policy framework.

The first draft of the glossary explored multiple definitions and highlighted where variations exist. He pointed out that a number of terms were newly introduced, such as those related to inclusive and balanced mobility, for which no previous widely-used definitions existed, making it the responsibility of this working group to formulate and agree on them.

The Dutch Co-chair further noted that the draft document was shared with track changes enabled in order to provide full transparency on the work done, explain choices and suggestions, as well as to facilitate collective review.

In terms of structure, he explained that the draft glossary was organized into three main sections (Internationalisation, Mobility and Barriers to mobility), though further refinements may follow as discussions continue

### **General remarks**

Finland praised the document, which received positive feedback from within their ministry and their Erasmus+ experts, and informed that they would send minor comments in writing.

Romania also welcomed the first draft, while emphasising that the definitions, many of which are technical, should also be linked with the political ambitions stemming from the Action Plan. In this sense, the Romanian representative argued that the definition of mobility should also depend on the political ambitions and, therefore, the glossary should be revisited once the Action Plan would have been drafted. The Dutch Co-chair agreed that some definitions would be more political, such as for the 'inclusive mobility' as well as for counting mobility targets. He also raised the question of how the Glossary would be formally approved at the Ministerial Conference, possibly as an annex to the Ministerial Communiqué since it would be part of the Action Plan.

EUA supported Romania's comments and added that the purpose of the Glossary should be to ensure understanding amongst each other, indirectly also influencing future policy work. The European Commission (EC) praised the progress and noted ongoing parallel work, especially the *Europe on the Move* initiative, which shared similar ambitions. The EC emphasised the importance of aligning methodologies for monitoring progress and counting mobility, avoiding duplication or divergence.

The HoS pointed out that while the targets agreed by ministers in EHEA in 2009 (20% graduates with physical mobility of at least 15 ECTS) and more recently in EU in 2024 (23% of at least 3 ECTS) are different, they do not necessarily diverge as they may follow different policy objectives. The Dutch Co-chair acknowledged however that these differing targets confuse higher education institutions and expressed willingness to align targets for better coherence.

Supported by Andorra, ENQA stressed that the glossary provides a good starting point and suggested including a definition of the "mobile student". They cited two different methodologies used in the BPIR (nationality-based and residence-based), and noted that at least 14 countries define mobile students differently. The Dutch co-chair admitted that these variations were not fully recognized before, and underscored the importance of focusing on the impact from the student perspective, irrespective of whether their experience is counted towards a policy target. To a question from the Dutch Co-chair on whether both definitions should be used, ENQA suggested contacting Eurydice, as for the BPIR both definitions are used whereas UNESCO-OECD takes into account only the residence-based criterion.

EURASHE raised the issue of mobility windows as well as the importance of ensuring that academic staff was supportive for using tools that incentivise mobility. She noted the lack of references to the mobility of researchers, despite the central role of research in internationalisation. In reply, EUA mentioned that while staff mobility was important, the

current targets in EHEA were focusing on student mobility, with the Dutch co-chair adding that while EHEA did not cover research, staff mobility was an important part of internationalisation and could be considered in the Action Plan even in the absence of benchmarks. The HoS referenced the 2012 EHEA Strategy on I&M, which included students, early career researchers as well as staff as target groups.

EURASHE raised the point that staff mobility may be easier to monitor than student mobility, with the co-chairs considering that it would be difficult to determine until which point someone working in a different country may be considered mobile, as well as questioning whether someone who completed a PhD abroad and remained in the system would also be considered mobile. EUA added that diaspora hiring practices were also common in institutions that face challenges in hiring international staff.

Slovenia raised the distinction between types of staff mobility, such as short-term exchanges, sabbaticals, and employment mobility, the latter being rather a labour market mobility, inquiring what would be the purpose for a target on staff mobility. He added that when talking about short term staff mobility, sabbaticals, employment mobility, its different – the student comes back home to finish his degree, while the staff goals are different, not necessarily to come back.

The Dutch co-chair agreed to consider placing the staff mobility under the Internationalisation section of the Action Plan, as well as how staff mobility can be measured.

Belgium (French Community) recalled the upcoming EC study on balanced mobility, suggesting that the glossary should be reviewed in tandem with the study to ensure coherence. The Dutch co-chair asked the Commission whether the study would be descriptive or offer recommendations, noting that early 2026 was a likely release date. The German co-chair further asked about the source of data used in the study, while the Dutch Co-chair also inquired about whether the nationality vs. country of residence issue had been resolved in this context, when monitoring the relevant indicators. Finalising the round of questions on the study, Finland asked the EC if all definitions under *Europe on the Move* had been finalized.

The Commission replied that the study on balanced mobility would include both qualitative and quantitative data, focusing mostly on descriptive elements but also issuing some recommendations. She distinguished between the study and a different policy process on defining indicators for mobility and their monitoring mechanism and proposed to come back with answers on the use of the nationality or residence criterion. The Commission further informed that no data collection had taken place for the study, which would rely on existing data collected directly from participating countries. The EC concluded by stating that the study was seeking input from countries on how they define balanced mobility, acknowledging wide variation in national interpretations, without a final conclusion yet on whether they would prioritise student numbers or the enactment of policies.

After the comments on the overall outlook of the Glossary and in consideration of the comments received, the Dutch Co-chair asked whether the working document should be titled a “Glossary” or rather a “Note on Terminology.” Romania questioned whether the title truly mattered in the

broader context of the work, and ENQA pointed out that the term “glossary” typically would imply alphabetical order, unlike the current format of the document. The Dutch co-chair suggested that a ‘Note on terminology’ might reflect the structure of the document better but proposed returning to the question later if necessary.

### ***Internationalisation***

In relation to the definition proposed for internationalisation, France referenced existing OECD definitions, highlighting that while the added value of internationalisation was related to higher education, its impact was often linked to employability, which should also be integrated in the definition considering the key goal of higher education in this regard. The Dutch co-chair agreed and, in the same vein, suggested also including the values of democratic citizenship and intercultural competences.

ENQA proposed clarifying whether the definition of internationalisation would intend to cover in scope exclusively the EHEA or also go beyond, recommending that the scope of the definition be explicitly stated. Concerning some previous interventions, EUA noted that while it was important for definitions to be clear and commonly understood, some of the more detailed or context-specific explanations might be better placed in the Action Plan rather than changing generic and widely accepted definitions used in the glossary. Supported by EUA, Romania highlighted that the definition for internationalisation followed an extensive debate in academic literature, for example on the intentional dimension of internationalisation, thus suggesting to maintain the core definition and add any signifiers or political considerations in the Action Plan. She further emphasised the risk in promoting a Eurocentric definition of key terms.

The co-chairs agreed with Romania’s position, suggesting that any distinctions or extensions of definitions, including those proposed beforehand by France or ENQA, could be handled in the Action Plan, rather than complicating the terminology itself. In reply, ENQA inquired whether the preferred approach of using established definitions in the glossary and detailing context in the Action Plan should then apply to all terms in the draft, with the HoS reflecting on the broad nature of the definition for internationalisation, whereas other terms were defined ad-hoc or with a narrower/specific scope.

### ***Internationalisation at home***

The Dutch co-chair mentioned that the definition chosen was taken from the BPIR, and opened the floor for comments. No objections or suggestions were received.

### ***Virtual exchange***

The Dutch co-chair explained that the group had chosen a definition for “virtual exchange” that was also included in the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR). He explained that the term “virtual mobility” had been replaced with “virtual exchange”, and that the glossary now also included references to blended mobility and hybrid mobility, aligning with the Erasmus+ glossary.

France suggested that the two alternative definitions referenced in the glossary be combined rather than choosing between the two, since they tackle different elements of virtual exchange - the first focused on general elements and the second detailed its application in higher education. They also proposed maintaining the consideration that virtual exchange intended to complement and not replace physical mobility. Slovenia suggested that the definition should focus on the term itself, not its purpose, and proposed that any explanation of objectives should be placed in the Action Plan rather than the glossary. Supported by EURASHE, France raised concerns about over-simplifying definitions, arguing that moving too much content to the Action Plan could risk affecting clarity and comprehension within the glossary itself, as well as unintentionally limiting the scope of definitions. In reply, the Dutch Co-chair emphasised that while the two could be combined, the second definition included overly detailed policy recommendations that could be moved to the Action Plan. He added that distinction should be made between a policy objective (such as that online learning should promote intercultural competencies) and a given, built-in feature of an activity.

EURASHE added that the glossary should not avoid being value-based and details should be kept for helping shape future understanding. They emphasized the importance of including broader meaning and vision, including the link to research in definitions, and focus on future use and clarity for users instead of overly relying on some definitions that were coined more than ten years ago simply for their wider use.

EUA reminded the group that since one of its mandates was to contribute to terminology development, the starting point should be existing relevant definitions in use, which whenever possible should be kept specific. They also questioned whether there was a clear difference between virtual exchange and virtual mobility, whereas such a distinction had become evident between blended and hybrid learning, which was nevertheless not explained in the glossary. The German co-chair emphasised that in the case of the virtual exchange the bilateral relation would be of essence, which was not necessarily the case for virtual mobility. The Dutch co-chair agreed to incorporate both blended and hybrid mobility in the glossary, since in practice they had been inadvertently used interchangeably, and distinguish between the two.

ENQA echoed the need for terminological alignment, especially if “virtual exchange” replaced “virtual mobility”, and suggested maintaining consistent use of the term across both the glossary and the Action Plan. Slovenia clarified that ‘virtual mobility’ had been intentionally avoided since mobility would imply physical movement. Supported by Slovenia, the Dutch co-chair proposed adding a footnote in the glossary, clarifying that the term “virtual exchange” was used in place of “virtual mobility”. On the issue of hybrid vs blended learning, he noted that the two had often been used interchangeably, but if the group agreed they represent distinct formats, both terms would be included in the glossary.

The European Commission reminded the group that the ECTS Users' Guide was also under revision, and new terminology may emerge from that process. The EC disagreed with EURASHE and considered that the glossary should aim to serve as a common, technical reference point for future use across EHEA, advocating for precise and concise definitions, as well as suggesting cross-referencing between the definitions when possible.

### ***Internationalization of the curricula***

No comments or objections were received for the definition.

### ***International Classroom***

Romania raised concerns about the proposed definition, noting that it seems derived from a project document and was construed more as an enumeration of features rather than a clear, standalone definition. They emphasised that not every classroom encompassing some international elements necessarily had an international vision, cautioning against overgeneralisation and suggesting to take out vision and rationale, while reformulating the remaining text based on policy goals.

In response, the Dutch co-chair acknowledged the feedback and agreed that the definition would benefit from rephrasing. He suggested adopting a more descriptive approach, one that distinguishes between intentional and unintentional internationalisation within classroom settings.

### ***International / Intercultural competences***

ESU raised a concern that while the definitions initially referred to both students and staff, the document later focused almost exclusively on students. They suggested ensuring coherence throughout the glossary in addressing both groups. On the topic of global citizenship, supported by the EC, Romania pointed out that the glossary currently lacked a clear definition of the term and noted that it could be seen as controversial, particularly given the focus on the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). They proposed replacing or rephrasing it using terms like “European” or “internationally sensitive”, to better align with the regional context.

Supported by EUA, the European Commission (EC) also highlighted the importance of including European values explicitly in the glossary. In addition, EUA suggested a rewording of the relevant section, incorporating terms like “developing sociocultural openness and global awareness” that enable meaningful interaction across cultures. The Dutch co-chair welcomed these contributions and invited participants to submit their suggested rewordings in writing. He acknowledged that the current definition of international competences was somewhat descriptive, and suggested that a balanced formulation could be found to reflect and cross-reference the EHEA Statement on fundamental values.

ESU reiterated the need for rephrasing the definition, pointing out to its special sensitivity due to its political dimension, and committed to sending a written proposal. Slovenia proposed a simplification by focusing solely on “intercultural competence”, eliminating the reference to ‘international’ and leaving more ideologically loaded terms. The meeting was adjourned for the day.

**28 May**

### ***Learning mobility***

Supported by the Holy See, the co-chairs agreed to liaise with the Advisory Group on ECTS to ensure consistency and connection between the glossary's mobility definition and the ECTS framework. The co-chairs proposed to adopt the definition of mobility from the ECTS User's Guide while excluding the second part of the draft definition. EUA asked for clarification on the rationale behind not retaining the Erasmus+ glossary definition, noting a significant difference between the two definitions, with the Erasmus+ glossary a more comprehensive definition that resembles more what learning mobility entailed, whereas Slovenia argued that the ECTS User's Guide definition was clearer. The Dutch co-chair replied that the definition from Erasmus+ did not focus on higher education, including youth exchanges or mobility for non-formal learning, while the HoS, supported by Slovenia, added that the subgroup also discussed keeping the ECTS User's Guide definition for its focus on physical mobility and recognition, in which case the 'normally understood' should be dropped nevertheless. Slo

Whereas acknowledging the need to keep the definition broad and focused on HE, Romania highlighted a practical concern on overextending the definition of mobility, questioning whether experiences such as a foreign language school of two weeks with ECTS credits could actually count as mobility.

The Dutch co-chair supported keeping the more detailed definition for conceptual clarity, noting that distinctions like blended and hybrid learning would be defined separately later. The Holy See pointed out that the ECTS User's Guide definition focused on credit mobility and stated that credits from such mobilities 'are formally recognized' by institutions, which could create unintended practical consequences: requiring 'formal' recognition might be disadvantageous, while replacing the verb with 'should' would imply that currently it is not the case.

Finland recommended adding "bilateral agreements" in the definition, should the one from the ECTS User's Guide be kept, since it only referenced 'organised programmes'.

The Dutch co-chair concluded that the group would retain the definition of the ECTS User's Guide but ask the sub-group to incorporate necessary terms from the Erasmus+ Glossary, revise terminology, clarify the focus on physical mobility and adjust the references to recognition.

### ***Inclusive mobility***

The Dutch co-chair noted that multiple existing definitions on the topic—including one developed by the BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension—adopt different approaches. He expressed the view that it would be beneficial to integrate these various definitions into a single, cohesive one. He proposed either assigning this task to the Subgroup or inviting ideas from the WG. The consensus was to task the Subgroup with this integration.

Slovenia recommended that the new integrated definition should begin with the Inclusive Mobility Alliance definition, which puts forward a more coherent skeleton, and then incorporate elements from the Erasmus+ glossary and the Principles and Guidelines on Strengthening Social Dimension in EHEA.

The co-chair added that once the definition would be drafted, it would be reviewed by the Thematic Peer Group (TPG) on Social Dimension to ensure alignment and coherence.

### ***Green mobility***

The Dutch co-chair mentioned that a new definition of green mobility was introduced, noting that the Erasmus+ definition was somewhat limited and did not sufficiently encompass sustainable practices beyond transport considerations.

The Holy See expressed a preference to include the sustainability dimension of digital technology use as well, highlighting that the definition focused exclusively on physical mobility and equated digital with greener, whereas technologies such as blockchain are extensive energy consumers. Supported by Slovenia, they proposed removing the phrase beginning with “while virtual exchange and blended...” from the definition.

Supported by Slovenia, Romania also raised concerns that the proposed definition was overly focused on transportation aspects, stressing that green mobility should also integrate broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and infrastructure use, not simply choosing between modes of travel like train or plane. The co-chair recalled that similar concerns were discussed in Chisinau, and agreed that the definition would be broadened to reflect a wider understanding of green mobility, as well as not equating digital tools with greener mobility.

EUA commented that the suggestions would rather shift the definition from green mobility to greening higher education or green internationalisation, which were broad, different topics. ENQA proposed that while a concise definition be kept in the glossary, details about possibilities to support greener mobility and broader context could be elaborated in the Action Plan, and also suggested including only the first sentence in the glossary, leaving additional explanations for the Action Plan. Slovenia disagreed and considered that the glossary should cover the full scope of the terms, including sustainable institutional practices before, during, and after mobility.

### ***Balanced mobility***

The Dutch co-chair introduced the definition by referencing the key goals outlined in the Tirana Communiqué and presenting two draft definitions of balanced mobility: the first one focusing primarily on students, while the second included a broader societal analysis of mobility. Supported by the Belgium - French Community, the Holy See referred to a combined definition proposed by Latvia in track changes on UDrive, noting it adequately merges aspects of both drafts. The Dutch co-chair replied that Latvia’s input would be taken on board in the next subgroup meeting.

Romania suggested adopting a single definition, taking into account the proposals of the European Commission in the study on balanced mobility. The EC clarified that the study was ongoing and involved gathering perspectives from participating countries. They emphasised that balanced mobility was a new and evolving concept, viewed differently by countries. Romania replied that objective measures to define the concept were needed in order to work towards achieving balanced mobility, otherwise the concept could risk being diluted and anyone

could claim progress, for example through any cultural exchange that might be interpreted as balanced mobility. The co-chair acknowledged the need for quantification, noting that interpretations tended to be subjective.

Supported by the EUA, France disagreed with the first definition arguing the expectation of reciprocity between countries in terms of balanced mobility would be too ambitious, speaking in favour of the second definition. However, France suggested that having a list of benefits and costs could be dangerous but, in any case, the current description focused too much on negative effects while missing emphasising positive ones such as innovation or contribution to society. EUA also recommended that beyond just numerical considerations, institutional strategies to achieve balanced mobility be discussed, potentially in the Action Plan, and that balanced mobility should not be an objective for its own sake but rather look at the prevailing purpose. The Dutch co-chair asked whether EUA meant institutional approaches to balancing incoming and outgoing mobility numbers, to which EUA responded affirmatively while emphasising that not only statistics were relevant.

Finland asked whether the balances related to both credit and degree mobility, if the intention would be to count such imbalances, at what level and through what indicator, what would be the expected outcome should the conclusion be that mobility was imbalanced, whether third-country cooperation would also be included and what exactly were the social costs mentioned as a downside for imbalanced mobility. The Belgium - French Community added that such a complex issue would require dedicated discussion in several upcoming meetings and reiterated the suggestion of the Holy See.

The EC explained that the upcoming study would look at both credit and degree mobility from quantitative and qualitative perspectives, acknowledging the previous focus was placed on credit mobility. The study would also analyse factors impacting the student choice, as well as national and regional internationalisation strategies, influences of the labour market outlook and others. The Dutch co-chair highlighted the timing of the study's expected publication in 2026 as beneficial.

Romania recounted the origins of the discussion, noting concerns from several countries about degree mobility's impact on national systems, and referenced the European Court of Justice rulings that restrictions on mobility were not permitted, thus rendering the discussions moot at least within the EU. Supported by the Commission, Romania referenced the 2023 informal Council meeting and stressed that while discussing means and causes of balanced mobility was beneficial, the measures should not conflict with or hamper achieving the 20% mobility target in EHEA.

The Dutch co-chair agreed with Romania's remark and suggested reflecting these discussions in the recommendations for the Action Plan. He noted differences among countries in terms of accessibility and attractiveness, thus emphasising the added value of open and accessible systems for balancing mobility. Romania underscored the importance of avoiding barriers to mobility, with the EC highlighting that the objective should be to encourage, not limit, student mobility while addressing local challenges in a European-wide context.

### ***Inward / Incoming mobility***

The group discussed the appropriate reference framework for classifying mobility in the context of definitions and data collection — specifically, whether to base it on nationality, country of residence, or the higher education system. Romania asked whether the reference point should be the country itself or the HE system, noting that countries such as Belgium and Germany have multiple HE systems, complicating classification. The Holy See added that some individuals hold multiple nationalities, making citizenship an unreliable reference for mobility data.

Supported by ENQA, the Dutch co-chair clarified that the intention was to count mobility at the country level without delving into intra-country mobility, with the goal to maintain conceptual clarity without creating inconsistencies around nationality. Supported by the Holy See, ENQA added that BPIR followed the same logic, referring to the HE system, rather than nationality or residence.

Slovenia expressed concern about the term “residence,” pointing out practical issues, such as students from Austria temporarily residing in Slovenia before moving elsewhere. They proposed avoiding the term due to its ambiguity. The Head of Secretariat responded by noting that multiple criteria exist in the EU law for defining residence, including temporary status, which would nevertheless still raise the issue of their application in practice.

The Dutch co-chair concluded by confirming that the group had already agreed to consult the BFUG Working Group on Monitoring to understand their approach and ensure consistency across definitions and reporting frameworks.

### ***Degree mobility***

The Dutch co-chair proposed to keep the Erasmus+ definition of degree mobility. ENQA raised the concern that the Erasmus+ definition did not mention joint degrees or joint programmes, unlike the ECTS Users’ Guide, which offered a more detailed formulation. The Dutch co-chair replied that joint programmes did not necessarily imply mobility as the student could remain in their home country.

Greece noted that while joint programmes themselves could not be considered degree mobility, many joint programmes included physical or blended forms of mobility, with varied structures. In this sense, they suggested that joint programmes would be treated separately. EUA emphasised that joint programmes might complicate the definitions, as in practice, especially within European University Alliances, a student may be registered at a university they never physically attended, study for the whole duration at a different university than that of registration or move between various HEIs, raising both legal and statistical questions.

The Holy See asked whether the relevant viewpoint was that of the learner or the institutional/conceptual one and if joint programmes would be considered degree mobility or rather a form of internationalisation. Supported by the Commission and Belgium-French Community, she added that if joint degrees were not explicitly defined, readers may miss their meaning, thus the glossary should either define them separately or clearly reference them within

related entries. The Dutch co-chair suggested that joint programmes and joint degrees were defined separately, while the Commission also proposed to include the European Degree label in the glossary.

In relation to previous comments, ENQA mentioned that there was currently a tendency to move away from the notion of “home institution”, however the Dutch co-chair replied that from a practical or administrative point of view a home institution might still be needed, for example for funding purposes.

Slovenia, supported by the Belgium-French Community, viewed mobility within joint programmes more as credit mobility, if assessed from a cultural and social standpoint, while Belgium-French Community suggested to use the definitions of joint programmes and joint degrees from the Council Recommendation on a European Quality Assurance and Recognition System. The group agreed to include joint programmes and degrees in the glossary, while leaving it open whether other concepts such as double and multiple degrees should also be defined.

EUA proposed keeping all related terms for potential future use, possibly in a descriptive annex, even those highlighted in grey in earlier drafts and thus to be discarded at one point. Supported by Belgium-French Community, ENQA and Slovenia, Romania disagreed and cautioned that if the Action Plan used a term, the glossary must define it consistently, without offering multiple definitions that hamper conceptual clarity, and working as a standalone document. EUA clarified that their suggestion would imply creating an annex of the glossary where all the definitions which were considered would be enlisted for pedagogical use. Belgium-French Community echoed the need for clarity, noting that for readers who did not attend the group discussions, a glossary filled with contradictory or layered definitions would be hard to navigate.

Supported by Slovenia, ENQA suggested instead that the group could prepare a background material for the use of the BFUG with all the definitions considered, without attaching it to the glossary. Supported by the Dutch co-chair, she also proposed adding footnotes within the glossary for enhanced traceability.

The Holy See argued that the meeting minutes would anyhow preserve in detail the discussion, thus serving as a background for the choices made. She added that the Global Recognition Convention Intergovernmental Conference would take place in June, where discussions would also take place on definitions which would be useful based on their global coverage.

Finland asked whether the glossary would be intended as a living document and, if so, how would the reviewing process work. The Head of Secretariat recalled that the last Action Plan was adopted as an annex to the Bucharest Communiqué, suggesting this could be the approach for the glossary as well. He added that the WG would have a final report to be presented at the Ministerial Conference, which could also include all the details regarding the definitions considered by the group.

The Dutch co-chair concluded that the final product should be a clean document, with no internal annexes or explanations, but sources may be referenced through footnotes, and discussion details preserved in the minutes.

### ***Blended mobility***

The Dutch co-chair revisited a point raised by EUA the day before, asking whether it was accurate to distinguish blended mobility from hybrid mobility, and whether the current interpretation of blended mobility was correct. EUA confirmed the current definition was acceptable from their perspective, but proposed that hybrid mobility should also be added to the glossary, and offered to send a proposed definition.

Supported by Slovenia, Romania raised the idea of including "combined mobility" as an additional concept. The co-chairs noted they were not familiar with that term as a standard category, and asked if "combined mobility" referred to the combination of vocational and academic training. Romania clarified that it referred more to combining academic mobility with professional (work-based or traineeship) mobility. Slovenia also noted that if the glossary would distinguish between academic mobility and traineeships, it might be useful to also define combined mobility as a separate category.

### ***Credit transfer***

The group agreed to add the phrase "having credits awarded" to the text concerning mobility definitions. Supported by the co-chairs, Slovenia suggested refining the language around recognition by replacing "may be transferred" with "are transferred", to better reflect the expected practice.

The Head of Secretariat raised a clarification based on the Bucharest Communiqué, which set the benchmark for student mobility at either 15 ECTS credits or at least 3 months of duration. He noted that the Erasmus+ programme included broader mobility types, not limited to higher education, and asked whether such mobilities would count toward the Bologna Process 20% goal. He specifically inquired whether traineeships would count only if they were part of HE programmes and not standalone.

Romania responded that the scope should be narrowed, considering only those traineeships that were embedded in higher education programmes, as those are the relevant mobilities within the EHEA context. EUA questioned whether such a narrowing was truly necessary, suggesting the added value of flexibility in a broader interpretation.

### ***Recognition of credits***

The co-chair described the definition with no comments received.

### ***Mobility / learning agreement***

The Dutch co-chair noted that the group had found two sources for the definition of *learning agreement*, and proposed to keep the Erasmus+ definition in the glossary. Slovenia questioned

the need to include the term in the glossary at all, asking whether it brought added value. The co-chair responded that while the learning agreement could be left out, it remained an important tool for credit recognition. As such, they plan to address it in more detail in the Action Plan, thus justifying its inclusion in the glossary.

### ***Mobility window***

The co-chairs mentioned that the definition was quite straightforward, and they would leave it as it was.

### ***Portability of student support***

The co-chairs mentioned that they had found two different versions of the term, one from the BFUG Group on Portability of Grants and Loans and one in the BIPR.

Finland raised a concern that the definition from the BFUG Working Group Portability of Grants and Loans only includes grants and loans, and suggested that it should be broadened to include “support” more generally. They highlighted that in Finland, student financial aid included more than just grants or loans and was an essential form of support. The Head of Secretariat responded that the Bergen Communiqué explicitly referred to “grants and loans”, therefore, if ministers decided to expand the scope of recognized student support, then other forms of support could be added to the definition. Finland emphasised that even though grants and loans were commonly cited, broader financial assistance mechanisms were relevant especially in national contexts such as Finland’s.

Concluding the debate of the Glossary, the co-chairs set the floor for additional questions and comments, with Hungary proposing to add “brain drain” to “barriers to mobility”.

## **6. Presentation and discussion of the road map for the “EHEA Action Plan on Internationalisation and Mobility**

The German Co-chair gave a summary of the upcoming timeline and responsibilities for the Action Plan, stating the intention to present the structure of the Action Plan with its main components in the upcoming meeting of the WG.

The Holy See reminded participants that final documents must be presented to the BFUG Board before being circulated to the BFUG, and that the WG should plan their schedule accordingly. The HoS confirmed that the deadlines in the RoP had been taken into account, noting that in the case of the Action Plan the Schedule of topics for BFUG meetings expected its presentation at the BFUG meeting in Ireland, with the second draft at the first BFUG meeting in Lithuania. For the Glossary, he added that the first draft should be presented at the BFUG meeting in Denmark, pointing to the risk that the BFUG meeting in Cyprus could be scheduled in early 2026, thus making it difficult to revise the Glossary between the two BFUGs. In reply, the Holy See suggested liaising with the incoming Cypriot co-chairs to schedule their BFUG meeting later due to timeline and logistical complexities.

Romania raised a question regarding the target audience for the recommendations in the Action Plan, since the current ToRs seem to determine the audience as referring exclusively to countries, yet the recommendations should also address HEIs or other stakeholders. The German co-chair acknowledged the question remained open, inquiring the Secretariat about the existing practice in this regard. The HoS informed that several policy documents adopted at the Ministerial Conferences included recommendations for other stakeholders, especially HEIs, including the previous 2012 Strategy for internationalisation and Mobility.

EUA considered that the Action Plan could not avoid tackling elements related to stakeholders, yet cautioned that ministerial-level documents should not be overly prescriptive when addressing institutions.

Pertaining to the content of the Action Plan, Slovenia proposed a structured framework for the Action Plan based on the following elements: goals, objectives, expected impact, barriers, solutions and technical details, while EUA encouraged addressing broader strategic questions such as whether internationalisation in the context of EHEA was limited to Europe or going beyond, what were the political interests of different countries and the extent to which the diversity of national approaches should be reflected.

#### **7. Any other business**

The WG co-chairs proposed launching an open call for hosts for the 2026–2027 meetings and activities, and Greece expressed their interest in considering hosting a meeting.

As a follow-up to the meeting, the Secretariat would recirculate the information on the dates of the next meeting, the forms for joining the subgroups and expressing interest in hosting meetings and the draft Glossary with the deadline to send written comments by the 11th of June.

The participants reiterated their gratitude to DAAD, the German Co-chair and supporting staff for hosting the meeting.

No other business was raised, thus the meeting was closed at 12:15 CEST.