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

Iași – Chișinău, 26 – 27 May 2027

Background

The 2027 Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum is organised by the ministries of education and research of the Republic of Moldova and Romania, with the support of the EHEA Secretariat.

The organisation of the conference and forum is funded by the national authorities of the hosts and benefits of co-funding provided through the following Erasmus+ projects:

- *Support for the 2024-2027 Moldovan-Romanian EHEA Secretariat: Delivering together for a renewed Bologna Process" (EHEA-SEC-4-BP)*
- *Support for the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (GLOBAL 2030)*

At the Ninety-fifth Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting, hosted by Poland, in Warsaw, between 24th-25th of February 2025, the BFUG **approved the date** for the ministerial conference, as well as the roadmap for the organisation of the conference:

- BFUG XCVII meeting (15 – 16 December 2025, Denmark): Discuss the **save-the-dates text** and the proposed **list** of invited countries and organisations from outside EHEA
- BFUG XCIX meeting (9 – 10 March 2026, Cyprus): Discuss the **invitation** and the draft **agenda** (only with timings)
- BFUG CI meeting (4-5 November 2026, Ireland): Discuss the **Practical Information Note** and the **draft agenda**
- BFUG CIII meeting (early Spring 2027, Lithuania): Discuss the **final agenda**

Save the date

At the XCVII BFUG meeting, hosted by Denmark in Copenhagen on 15–16 December 2025, the BFUG approved the save-the-date announcement and the list of non-EHEA countries and organisations to be invited to the Global Policy Forum.

The save-the-date announcement was subsequently circulated by the EHEA Secretariat at the end of March 2026.

Invitation and preliminary agenda

At the BFUG meeting hosted online by Cyprus on 9–10 March 2026, the invitation and preliminary agenda were endorsed.

Co-funded by the European Union

The agreed maximum delegation size is six participants for EHEA members, consultative members and BFUG partners, and four participants for invited non-EHEA countries and organisations.

The invitations for the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum were sent in late September/early October 2026. Based on additional sugestions received, the hosts would also like to send invitations to OBREAL and the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE).

A dedicated call for side events was also launched, inviting BFUG members to propose activities that could complement and enrich the programme of the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum.

The following proposals for side events have been included for now in the tentative agenda:

No.	Title	Organisers
1	ESG and European Approach 2027 – from revision to implementation	ENQA, EUA, EURASHE and ESU, with the support of EQAR; endorsed by Education International and BusinessEurope
2	NewFAV2 Conference – Fundamental Values in the EHEA: Lessons from the First Monitoring Exercise	NewFAV2 project consortium, coordinated by UEFISCDI (Romania), with MFHEA and ESU as partners and EUA as associated partner
3	Student participation in the European Higher Education Area	ESU, together with ANOSR (Romania) and ASM (Moldova)
4	Stakeholder perspectives on the implementation of the Bologna Process in the EHEA	SPICE Consortium: ESU, EUA, ENQA, EURASHE and IHS
5	Articulation between the European Research Area and the EHEA	EURASHE, the Task Force on the Future of Bologna and the National Authority for Research of Romania
6	Bologna 2027: Convergence, divergence and mutual learning between the EHEA and partner higher education systems	SPHERE project (funded by the European Commission and implemented by OBREAL and EUA), in synergy with the EHEA Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue
7	Advancing the Social Dimension in the EHEA	Thematic Peer Group D on Social Dimension (TPG D), in cooperation with the INSPIRE project

A brief description of each proposal can be found in annex. The side events are foreseen to take place on 25 May 2027 at the public higher education institutions of Iași and on the 28 May 2027 at events centers in Chișinău; their list, timing and venues remain to be confirmed.

Presentation of the draft agenda

Given the political importance of the Ministerial Conference and the need to ensure meaningful engagement of BFUG members in shaping its programme, the BFUG Board was invited to provide initial guidance on the themes and issues that should be addressed at ministerial level.

In particular, the hosts approach for developing the agenda was to consider topics that would:

- reflect key developments, achievements and challenges emerging from the implementation of the 2024–2027 Bologna Process work programme;
- benefit from political discussion, visibility or guidance at ministerial level;
- address emerging challenges and opportunities for the European Higher Education Area;
- contribute to shaping the future priorities and development of the EHEA beyond 2027; and
- provide a meaningful basis for dialogue between EHEA and non-EHEA participants within the Global Policy Forum.

The tentative draft agenda of the event is structured as follows:

Wednesday 26 May, Iași

- **08:00–09:00**: BFUG meeting, in the Senate Room of the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University.
- **10:00–12:35**: opening of the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum; keynote on the freedom of higher education, research and innovation, with reactions from ministers; session on the state of the EHEA, including the presentation of the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR) 2027, replies from ministers and interventions from the EHEA consultative members.
- **14:00–16:50**: plenary roundtable on artificial intelligence and higher education, with a keynote; four parallel sessions (mobility and partnerships across regions; European University Alliances; higher education and research; lifelong learning); rapporteurs in plenary.
- **16:50–18:40**: ministers' roundtable on the Communiqué; closed informal dialogue of EHEA ministers, while the other delegates are transferred to the National Theatre.

Thursday 27 May, Chișinău – Chișinău Arena

- **08:00**: departure from Iași by dedicated coaches, with a facilitated border crossing;
- **11:00–12:35**: welcome by the Ministers of Moldova and Romania as chairs; keynote, with reactions from ministers; session on fundamental values, presenting the results of the first monitoring exercise of the Fundamental Values, followed by a debate with ministers and stakeholders, and an intervention from the Ukrainian minister in solidarity with Ukraine.
- **13:45–15:25**: four parallel sessions (social dimension; student-centred learning and teaching; quality assurance; recognition without borders); rapporteurs in plenary.
- **15:25–16:00**: plenary on the Global Policy Forum Statement, with the reactions of GPF delegations.

- **16:20–17:10:** adoption of the Iași–Chișinău Communiqué and its annexes by EHEA members, and of the GPF Statement, including the presentation of the new Bologna tools: the revised ESG and European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, the revised ECTS Users' Guide and the Action Plan on Internationalisation and Mobility.
- **17:10–18:20**: looking ahead (the host of the 2030 Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum; the launch of the permanent EHEA Secretariat in Romania), official closing and press conference.

Bilateral meeting rooms will be open in parallel with the lunches on both days.

The hosts kindly ask the BFUG to discuss the tentative draft agenda of the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum. BFUG members are also invited to reflect on the overall balance and format of the programme, including the relationship between plenary discussions, opportunities for ministerial exchange, the Global Policy Forum and side events.

Presentation of the first draft of the Practical Information Note

The first draft of the Practical Information Note (short version) sets out the essential information that delegations need in order to plan their participation. It will be followed by the full Practical Information Note, addressing all organisational, protocol and security matters.

The main elements included are the following:

- **Dates and venues**
- **Arrangements covered by the organisers**
- **Entry requirements in Romania and the Republic of Moldova**
- **Airports and travel**
- **Accommodation**
- **Transfer between Iași and Chișinău**
- **Registration and key dates**

Delegations will register through an online platform provided by the EHEA Secretariat, on the basis of nominations made by a Designated Accreditation Officer (DAO) of each delegation.

The provisional key dates are:

- mid-January 2027: opening of online registration and nomination of the DAOs;
- 25 February 2027: registration deadline for participants who require a visa
- 15 April 2027: closing of registration for all participants.

BFUG members are invited to comment on the first draft of the Practical Information Note (short version).

Brief description of proposals for side events

- **Title:** ESG and European Approach 2027 – from revision to implementation
  - **Topic:** Presentation of the 2027 versions of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, the changes since the 2015 versions and their implications for the quality assurance and higher education communities.
  - **Organisers:** ENQA, EUA, EURASHE and ESU, with the support of EQAR; endorsed by Education International and BusinessEurope.
- **Title:** NewFAV2 Conference – Fundamental Values in the EHEA: Lessons from the First Monitoring Exercise
  - **Topic:** Results of the first monitoring exercise on the fundamental values of the EHEA, lessons learned and priorities for future monitoring.
  - **Organisers:** NewFAV2 project consortium, coordinated by the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI, Romania), with the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) and ESU as partners, and EUA as associated partner.
- **Title:** Student participation in the European Higher Education Area
  - **Topic:** Student participation as a fundamental value of the EHEA; presentations, workshops and roundtable discussions for students and student representatives.
  - **Organisers:** ESU, together with the National Alliance of Student Organisations in Romania (ANOSR) and the Alliance of Students in Moldova (ASM).
- **Title:** Stakeholder perspectives on the implementation of the Bologna Process in the EHEA
  - **Topic:** Presentation of the data and conclusions of three questionnaires of the SPICE project (Bologna With Students' Eyes, EUA Trends and ENQA/EUA QA Mapping), followed by a question-and-answer session.
  - **Organisers:** ESU, EUA, ENQA, EURASHE and IHS (the SPICE Consortium).
- **Title:** Articulation between the European Research Area and the EHEA
  - **Topic:** Results of the European Research Area (ERA) Structural Policy on improving the articulation between research and innovation and higher education, and proposals for closer alignment of ERA and EHEA governance structures.
  - **Organisers:** EURASHE, the Task Force on the Future of Bologna and the National Authority for Research of Romania (Autoritatea Națională pentru Cercetare).
- **Title:** Bologna 2027: Convergence, divergence and mutual learning between the EHEA and partner higher education systems
  - **Topic:** Influence and adaptation of Bologna Process frameworks and tools in partner countries outside the EHEA; exchange between the Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) network and the EHEA Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue.
  - **Organisers:** SPHERE project (Centralised Support to the Network of Higher Education Reform Experts), funded by the European Commission and implemented by OBREAL and EUA, in synergy with the EHEA Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue.

- **Title:** Advancing the Social Dimension in the EHEA
  - **Topic:** From Principles to Practice: lessons learned from Peer Learning Activities and country reviews. Presentation of the main outcomes of the Peer Learning Activities (PLAs) conducted during the 2024–2027 work cycle of the Thematic Peer Group D on Social Dimension (TPG D), together with the findings of the INSPIRE country reviews (Austria, Lithuania and Portugal) and the synthesis report, followed by a moderated discussion with country representatives on how the EHEA Principles and Guidelines on the Social Dimension have supported national policy development and implementation, highlighting lessons and practices transferable to other EHEA countries.
  - **Organisers:** TPG D, in cooperation with the INSPIRE project