



# BFUG SECRETARIAT

## *WORK REPORT*

June 2024



EHEA: Transforming Education together



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**Albanian BFUG Secretariat**  
**2021-2024**

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Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure and profound gratitude that I write this introductory note to the BFUG Secretariat Work Report hosted by Albania for the 2021-2024 work period. The work of the BFUG Secretariat has been instrumental in supporting the efforts of the BFUG in fostering cooperation, dialogue, and progress within the European Higher Education Area, while facing unprecedented challenges and rapid changes in today's landscape. Over the past three and a half years, our dedicated team has strived tirelessly to support the BFUG and all of its structures to uphold the fundamental principles and values of the Bologna Process, while adapting to the evolving needs of the EHEA member countries and major stakeholders.

This report serves as a testament to the collective efforts of our work with BFUG, its Board and Working Structures in advancing the objectives of the EHEA.

I am pleased to highlight the substantial contributions made by the BFUG Secretariat to the BFUG's mission over the course of 42 months of dedicated work and commitment, spanning from January 2021 to June 2024, the longest mandate of any other Secretariat in the history of the BFUG and has efficiently overseen the highest number of working groups (15) and subgroups (21), providing comprehensive technical support, ensuring that all tasks were fulfilled with the highest standards and efficacy. Moreover, throughout its tenure, the BFUG Secretariat has operated with the highest standards of professional ethics and neutrality.

As you delve into the pages of this report, I encourage you to reflect on the progress we have made together as well as the challenges that lie ahead. Whether by fostering inclusive education, addressing digitalization, or promoting sustainability, let us maintain an unwavering commitment to realising the vision of the Bologna Declaration.

Lastly, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the team of the BFUG Secretariat for their steadfast dedication, professionalism, and commitment to support the work of the BFUG and its structures on advancing the goals of the Bologna Process. Their tireless efforts have made a profound impact on the work of the BFUG and its structures and for that I am proud and grateful to each and every member of the team. I believe I speak not only for myself but also on behalf of my team as I extend our heartfelt gratitude to our families. They have been a source of moral support, understanding and resilience, amidst tight deadlines and stressful moments, allowing us to fulfil our duties with purpose and dedication.

In closing, I hope that this report serves as inspiration for all to commend the efforts of the BFUG in its mission to shape a brighter future for education and society at large.

With warm regards,

Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi

Head - BFUG Secretariat



## Executive Summary

25 years since the Bologna Declaration in 1999, which laid the ground for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), with 49<sup>1</sup> countries and the European Commission as members, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, European Universities Association (EUA), European Students Union (ESU), ENQA, EURASHE, EI/ETUCE, as consultative members and several partners. The Bologna Process (BP) is supported by the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG), an executive structure which supports the BP/EHEA in the working periods between Ministerial Conferences.

The BFUG was established in 1999 and the BFUG Secretariat in 2003. The BFUG Secretariat is a technical, neutral structure of the BFUG which supports the BFUG, its Board and the different BFUG Working Groups/Structures during each work period between the EHEA Ministerial Conferences.

This report offers a comprehensive overview of the operations of the BFUG Secretariat hosted by Albania from January 1st, 2021, to June 30th, 2024. It delineates the Secretariat's role in supporting the BFUG and its various Working Structures, encompassing document preparation, active meeting participation, and composition details.

Beyond mandatory tasks, the Secretariat demonstrated proactive efforts in compiling comparative, historical, technical, and analytical reports, alongside provision of information and archival data to the BFUG. This was achieved through record-keeping, expert dissemination of essential information, and close collaboration with members and co-chairs of Working Structures.

The activity of the Secretariat adheres to Rules and Procedures established at the BFUG meeting in Portugal in 2021 (ANNEX I), supplemented by a national bylaw in Albania, government decision No. 1163, date 24.12.2020, "For the establishment and maintaining of the Secretariat of "Bologna Follow Up Group" from the Republic of Albania", amended by the Decision of the Council of Ministers on September 7, 2023 and the legal framework en force in Albania (both documents in ANNEX II).

Information for the 2021-2024 period is derived from meeting minutes, notes, and attendance sheets, with narrative aspects sourced from the EHEA website.

This report has undergone review by relevant BFUG working structure Co-Chairs and received approval from the BFUG.

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<sup>1</sup> Belarus and the Russian Federation were suspended per the decision made on the extraordinary BFUG meeting, held in Strasbourg, in February 2022, thus reducing the number of active countries to 47.

## The Terms of Reference for the BFUG Secretariat

The [Terms of Reference](#) (ToRs) (ANNEX IV) for the BFUG Secretariat hosted by Albania were discussed and approved at the BFUG meeting held in Portugal (online) on 15 – 16 April 2021. As in other work periods, the BFUG Secretariat continued to function as a technical and neutral entity of the BFUG, to support the implementation of the Work Plan adopted by the BFUG. The BFUG Secretariat reviews and updates the European Higher Education Area website [www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info), ensuring that up-to-date information is made available in a timely manner for both the BFUG and the public at large. To achieve this, it has implemented an ad-hoc communication system, utilising modern digital tool.

In conjunction with the BFUG Co-Chairs and Vice-Chair, as per the ToRs, the Secretariat:

- drafts agendas for the BFUG meetings
- drafts background discussion documents (liaising with relevant authors, as appropriate)
- drafts relevant papers for the BFUG and its Board, Working Groups and other structures
- drafts minutes of the BFUG/Board meetings for clearance by the Chairs
- sends these minutes for feedback and subsequent adoption by the BFUG/Board at the next meeting
- provides assistance and support for each working structures.

The BFUG Secretariat carries out the same tasks for all working groups, the BICG, the TPGs, task forces, ad hoc groups, and analogous bodies, in accordance with the respective Co-Chairs of these various working structures.

### *BFUG Secretariat in Figures and Staff Composition*

The BFUG Secretariat's composition, first introduced during the BFUG meeting in Portugal in April of 2021, was designed to support the BFUG structures during the 2021-2024 work period. The roles within the BFUG Secretariat were designed to accommodate full-time and part-time positions, with a strategic consideration for the specific engagement of Albanian Diaspora experts, an approach also aligned with the policy of the Albanian government. The composition of the BFUG Secretariat and its positions were established through Albanian Government Bylaw No. 1163, dated 24.12. 2020<sup>1</sup>. The foreseen BFUG Secretariat was structured as follows:

- Head of the BFUG Secretariat
- Assistant to the BFUG Secretariat
- 2 (two) full-time senior technical experts and 3 (three) part-time experts
- 3 (three) full-time junior experts and 6 (six) part-time junior experts
- 1 (one) full-time Media and Communication expert

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<sup>1</sup> The official document can be found in Annex II.

- 1 (one) part-time IT expert for maintenance of the existing website ([www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info)).

The BFUG Secretariat has undergone several changes in both staff composition and leadership throughout the specified work period. These adjustments were made in order to enhance support for the BFUG Structures, considering also the fact that the work plan of the BFUG and its structures has changed during the same period with additional working structures and their sub-structures being established. The re-evaluation of the BFUG Secretariat's composition facilitated improved allocation of human resources within the BFUG Secretariat, ensuring optimal support for BFUG and its affiliated structures. To better align the Secretariat's role and composition with the requirements of the European Commission (EC) grant, aimed at supporting the daily operations of the BFUG Secretariat, the Albanian government's decision No. 1163, dated 24.12.2020, was amended with the decision No. 126, dated 07.09.2023. The current composition of the BFUG Secretariat comprises the equivalency of 12 full-time positions, distributed as follows:

- Head of the Secretariat
- four Senior Experts; three full-time and one part-time
- three Junior Experts; two full-time and one part-time
- two communication experts; one senior and one junior, both part-time
- two full-time positions for the supporting staff of the Albanian Ministry of Education dealing with all legal, financial and managerial aspects of the EC Grant management.

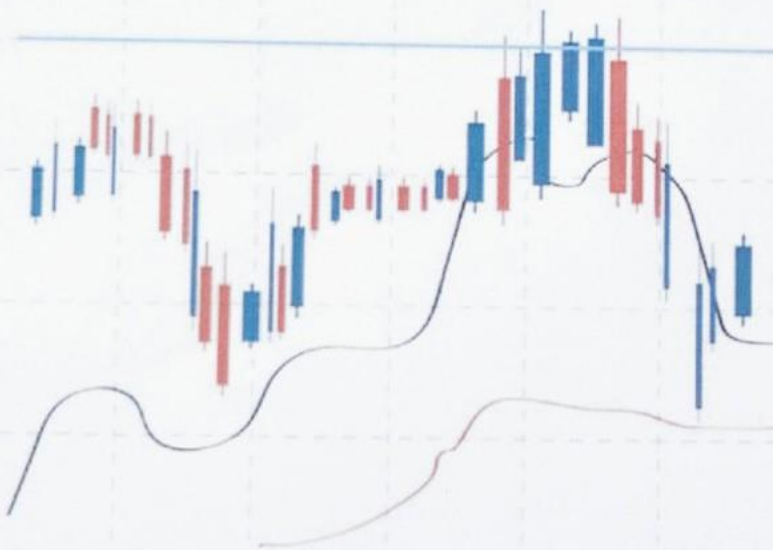
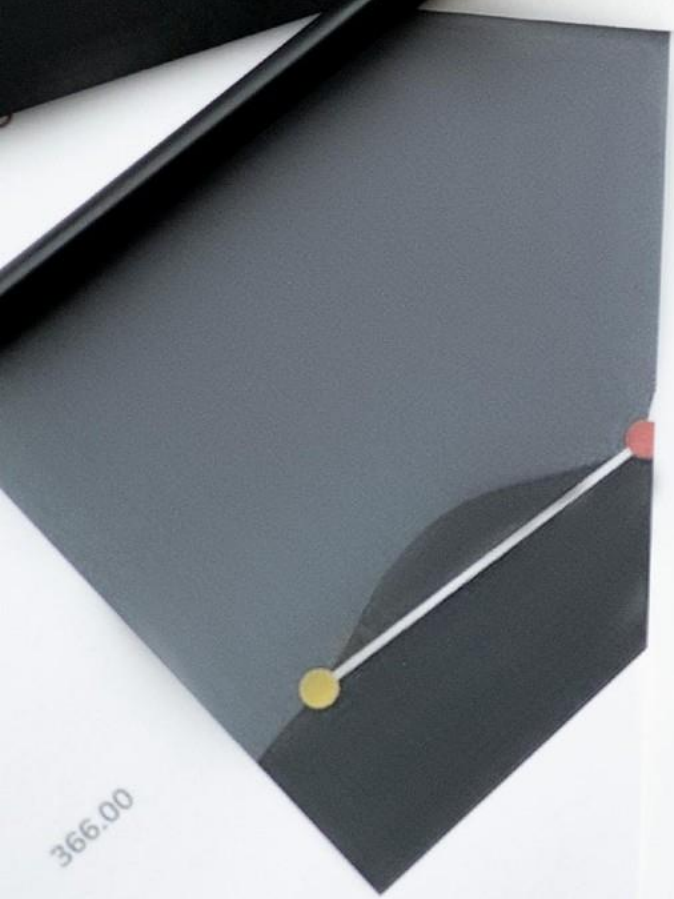
The day to day legal and financial management for the BFUG Secretariat is offered by the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sports (MES).

The BFUG Secretariat contributes skills, competences and expertise to its daily operations, in the areas of:

- Internationalisation of Higher Education
- Recognition of foreign academic qualifications
- Human capital development
- Internal Quality Assurance
- E-Learning and lifelong learning
- Project design and management
- Web, Social Media and Event Management
- Communication, Consulting, Logistics, Strategic Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation
- Programming, operating systems knowledge.

The academic backgrounds of the BFUG Secretariat staff members include a diverse range of majors and qualifications, such as Linguistics, Business Management, International Economics and Consulting, Political Science and International Relations.

The staff of the BFUG Secretariat is fluent in multiple languages, including Albanian, English, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, and Spanish. For detailed bios of each BFUG Secretariat staff member, please refer to Annex III of this report.



## BFUG Secretariat Reports and Updates

The Secretariat supported the BFUG by assisting all working structures, as previously described. On top of that, an assigned expert of the Secretariat continuously reviewed the EHEA website and made numerous changes responding to the requests of the Working Groups (namely, ensuring a smooth transition to a new host provider, adding security certificates, updating categories to better disseminate information, added the BFUG/ Board minutes archive, all while continuously updating required materials on the website). The Secretariat has activated the buttons to the social media accounts and has increased social media engagement.

The staff of the Secretariat drafted a report, at request of the Drafting Committee, analysing stylistic elements and conducting a content review of all previous Communiqués, as a supporting document in drafting the Tirana Communiqué. For a copy of the report, please consult Annex XX.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education and Sports requested the Secretariat to research for the Tirana Ministerial Conference, resulting in a detailed overview of working groups, host countries, representative numbers, and agendas for past Ministerial Conferences and the Global Policy Forum. A series of tables summarise essential aspects of EHEA Ministerial Conferences, including the BFUG Secretariat's working period, working groups, host country, EU membership status, and participant details for past Ministerials and Global Policy Forums, and past Ministerial agenda overviews.

The most notable initiative of the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing, is launching the EHEA newsletter, bringing light to the work of the BFUG and its WG, and other entities related to Higher Education.



## ***Communique Content and Style Analysis***

The Communique Content and Style Analysis was drafted by the BFUG Secretariat, by request of the Drafting Committee (working structure responsible for drafting the communique), in July 2023. It aimed to review and analyse the content and style of previous Communiqués, and its purpose was to assist the work of the Drafting Committee, serving almost as a literature review.

The analysis includes an overview of the methodology, a closer look into the Rome Communiqué (to analyse in depth the most recent Communiqué), visual comparisons of the style and content of all Communiqués, a closer look into prominent, recurring themes (Learning and Teaching, Quality Assurance, Recognition, and Social Dimension), and key take-aways.

## ***The EHEA Website***

In support of the EHEA working structures, to facilitate their work, and to enable the easiest way to reach the information on the EHEA web page, the BFUG Secretariat team recently executed several key initiatives, one of which was the maintenance and enhancement of the EHEA website. Firstly, the categories bar has been revamped, introducing new categories, a restructuring aimed at streamlining information dissemination while preventing cluttered category tabs. Additionally, sub-categories within each category were refined, enhancing their effectiveness in filtering information and managing content efficiently. Lastly, beginning from January 2024, a Senior Expert of the Secretariat (Dr. Aida Myrto) was assigned as liaison for the IT expert, leading the administration and continuous updating of the EHEA website.

Furthermore, the Secretariat seamlessly integrated the EHEA website with social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, as well as a channel at a later stage. This integration involved placing media shortcuts in the top right corner of the index page for effortless access to the organization's social media profiles. These enhancements collectively contribute to a more comprehensive and accessible online presence for the EHEA. Please find the EHEA Website report on Annex V.

## ***Research in Support of the Ministerial Conference***

By request of the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Secretariat conducted research to support the organisation of the Tirana Ministerial Conference. The following results provide a detailed overview of working groups, host country, number of representatives for the Ministerial and the Global Policy Forum, and an overview of the agenda for past Ministerial Conferences.

The first table offers a detailed look at the various EHEA Ministerial Conferences held over the years in different locations. It covers essential aspects like the BFUG Secretariat's working period, the number of working groups and subgroups, the host country, EU membership status, and the number of representatives and delegations. Additionally, it includes agendas and participants' lists.

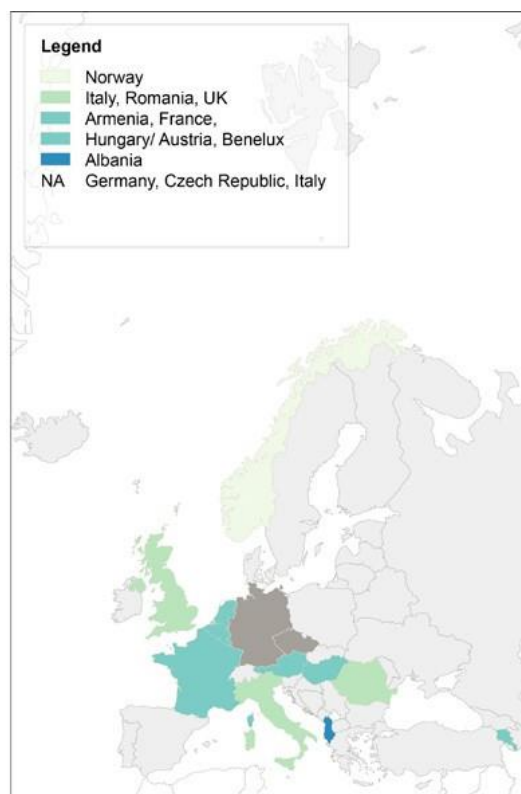


*Ministerial Host Countries*



Ministerial Conference	Working period of the Secretariat (in months)	Number of WG/structures	State	EU Status	No of Representatives	Delegations	Agendas	Participants list
Ministerial conference in Tirana 2024	42	15	Albania	Non EU country				
Ministerial conference in Rome 2020	23	11	Italy	EU country	20		<a href="#">2020 Rome Ministerial Conference Programme</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministerial conference in Paris 2018	35	7	France	EU country	511	115	<a href="#">2018 Paris Ministerial Conference Programme</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministerial conference in Yerevan 2015	35	9	Armenia	Non EU country			<a href="#">2015 Yerevan Ministerial Conference Programme</a>	
Ministerial conference in Bucharest 2012	23	12	Romania	EU country (Non EU country at the time)				
Ministerial conference in Budapest/Vienna 2010	35	13	Hungary/Austria	EU country				
Ministerial conference in Leuven/Louvain-la Neuve 2009	35	13	BENELUX	EU country				
Ministerial conference in London 2007	23	7	United Kingdom	Non EU country (EU country at the time)	372	75	<a href="#">2007 London Ministerial Conference Programme</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministerial conference in Bergen 2005	18	4	Norway	Non EU country			<a href="#">2005 Bergen Ministerial Conference programme</a>	
Ministerial conference in Berlin 2003		6	Germany	EU country	308	53	<a href="#">2003 Berlin Ministerial Conference programme</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Ministerial conference in Prague 2001		3	Czech Republic	EU country (Non EU country at the time)				
Ministerial conference in Bologna 1999			Italy	EU country				

*Review of past Ministerial Conferences, specifically Secretariat working period, working groups, and delegation and representative details.*



*Duration of Work Period*



*Number of Working Groups*

The second table highlights the key activities and benchmarks from these Ministerial Conferences. It captures opening remarks, keynote speeches, plenary sessions, parallel group discussions, the finalization and adoption of the Communiqué, closing statements, and press conferences. Some conferences also feature extra sessions or special announcements. Note that for some conferences, the information might be incomplete.

Ministerial Conference	Opening remarks and keynote speeches	Plenary session	Parallel sessions/ Group discussions	Finalization of discussions and adoption of the Communiqué	Closing statements	Press conference	Other
Paris Ministerial 2018	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Other sessions: Fundamental values and inclusiveness; Italy's project for 2018-2020
Yerevan Ministerial 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	EHEA Accession: Official Announcement on the Membership of Belarus in the EHEA
Bucharest Ministerial 2012	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Budapest/Vienna Ministerial 2010	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	The European Higher Education Area: Achievements, Challenges and Perspectives
Leuven/Louvain-la Neuve Ministerial 2009	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	
London Ministerial 2007	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Bergen Ministerial 2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Decision on the accession of new countries to the Bologna Process
Berlin Ministerial 2003	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Decision on the accession of new countries to the Bologna Process
Prague Ministerial 2001	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Bologna Ministerial 1999	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

*Key activities and benchmarks from Ministerial Conferences, including remarks, speeches, sessions, discussions, Communiqué adoption, and press conferences.*

The final table provides insights into the Bologna Policy Forums, detailing the number of representatives and delegations, agendas, and other pertinent information. However, for a few forums, some information is missing.

Bologna Policy Forum	No of representatives	Delegations	Agendas
Fifth Bologna Policy Forum 2018	87	40	<a href="#">Fifth Bologna Policy Forum Programme</a>
Fourth Bologna Policy Forum 2015	N/A	N/A	<a href="#">Fourth Bologna Policy Forum Programme</a>
Third Bologna Policy Forum 2012	N/A	N/A	<a href="#">Third Bologna Policy Forum Programme</a>
Second Bologna Policy Forum 2010	71	11	<a href="#">Second Bologna Policy Forum Programme</a>
First Bologna Policy Forum 2009	N/A	N/A	<a href="#">First Bologna Policy Forum Programme</a>

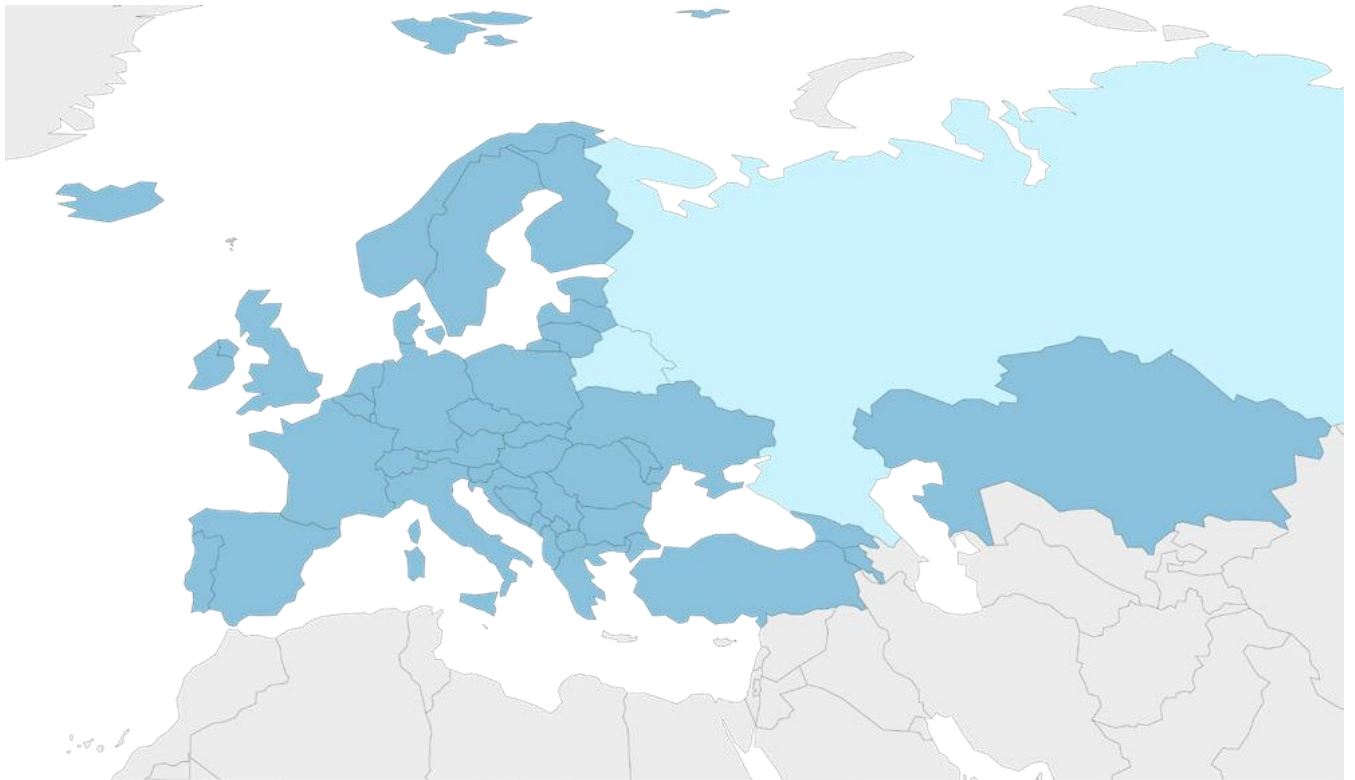
*Bologna Policy Forum analysis.*





## Working Structures for the 2021 - 2024 Working Period

The composition of the BFUG during 2021-2024 is illustrated below, with Russia and Belarus marked in a distinct colour, accompanied by a footnote denoting their suspension following the decision of the Strasbourg extraordinary BFUG meeting.<sup>1</sup>



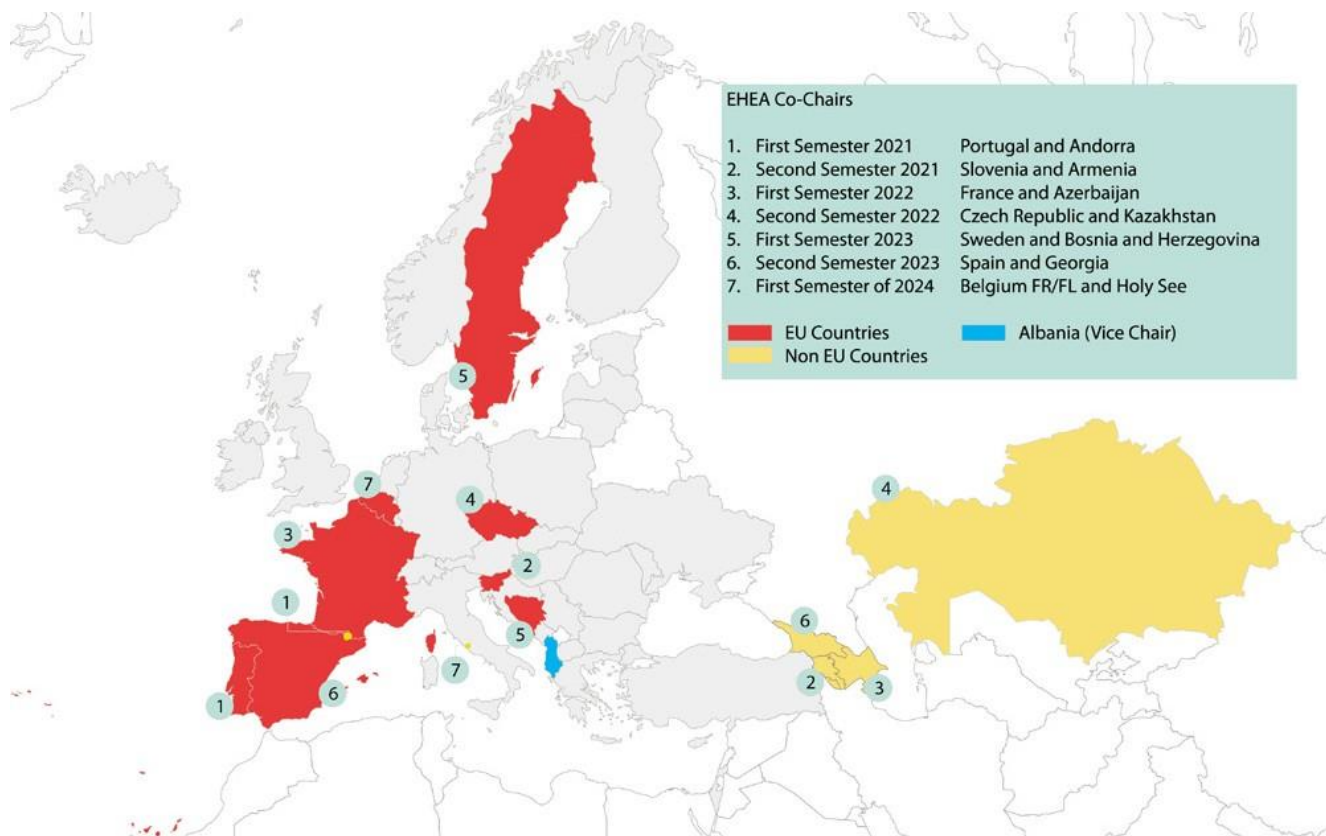
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<sup>1</sup> Belarus and the Russian Federation were suspended per the decision made on the extraordinary BFUG meeting, held in Strasbourg, in February 2022, thus reducing the number of active countries to 47.

## *The BFUG Co-Chairs for 2021 – 2024*

The BFUG is chaired by two Co-Chairs and one Vice Chair for each work period and functions as per Rules and Procedures approved at the 1st BFUG meeting of each Work Period. The [BFUG Rules and Procedures](#) for the Work Period 2021-2024 were approved at the BFUG meeting in Portugal in April 2021, while partially amended and approved at the BFUG meeting in the Czech Republic in November 2022. The BFUG Vice-Chair is appointed from the country hosting the Ministerial conference concluding the work period. The BFUG Co-Chairs rotate every six months and consist of a duo comprising an EU Member State, currently holding the EU Presidency, and a non-EU country, member of the Council of Europe, listed in alphabetical order. During the 2021-2024 work period, spanning seven semesters, the following Co-Chairs from EU and non-EU countries presided. The BFUG Vice-Chair was Linda Pustina.

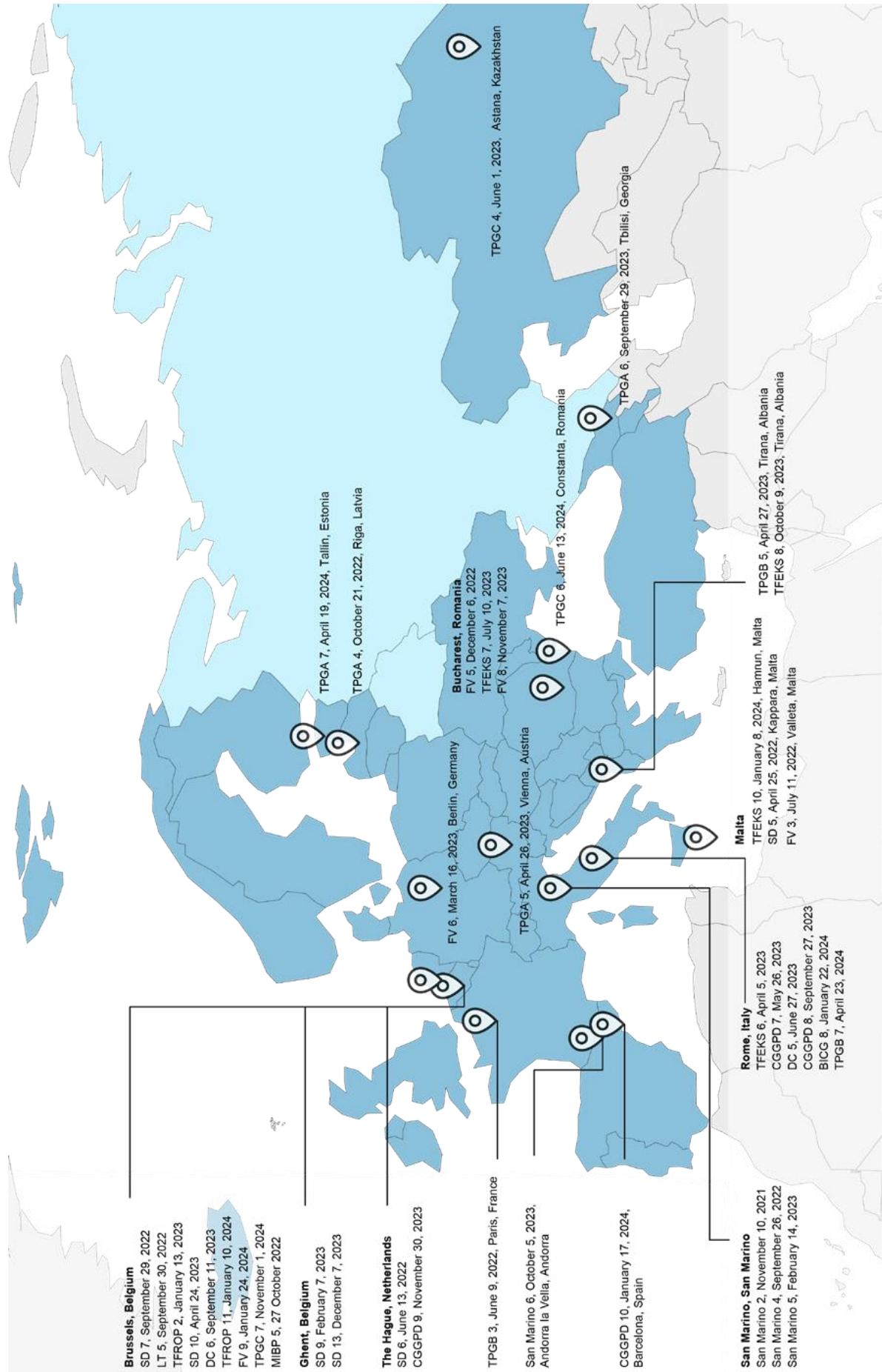
2021		2022		2023		2024
1st semester	2nd semester	1st semester	2nd semester	1st semester	2nd semester	1st semester
EU Portugal Maria de Lurdes Correia Fernandes Ana Mateus	EU Slovenia Duša Marjetič	EU France Patrick Nédellec	EU Czech Republic Karolina Gondkova	EU Sweden Robin Moberg	EU Spain Margarita Lezcano-Mújica Núñez	EU Flemish Belgium Community Liesbeth Hens EU French Belgium Community Caroline Hollela
Non EU Andorra Jordi Llombart	Non EU Armenia Tatevik Gharibyn	Non EU Azerbaijan Nijat Mammadli	Non EU Kazakhstan Kuanysh Yergaliyev	Non EU Bosnia & Herzegovina Aida Duric	Non EU Georgia Maia Shukhohvili	Non EU Holy See Dr. Melanie Rosenbaum



*EHEA Co-chairs for the 2021 – 2024 working period*



## Working Group Meeting Timelines



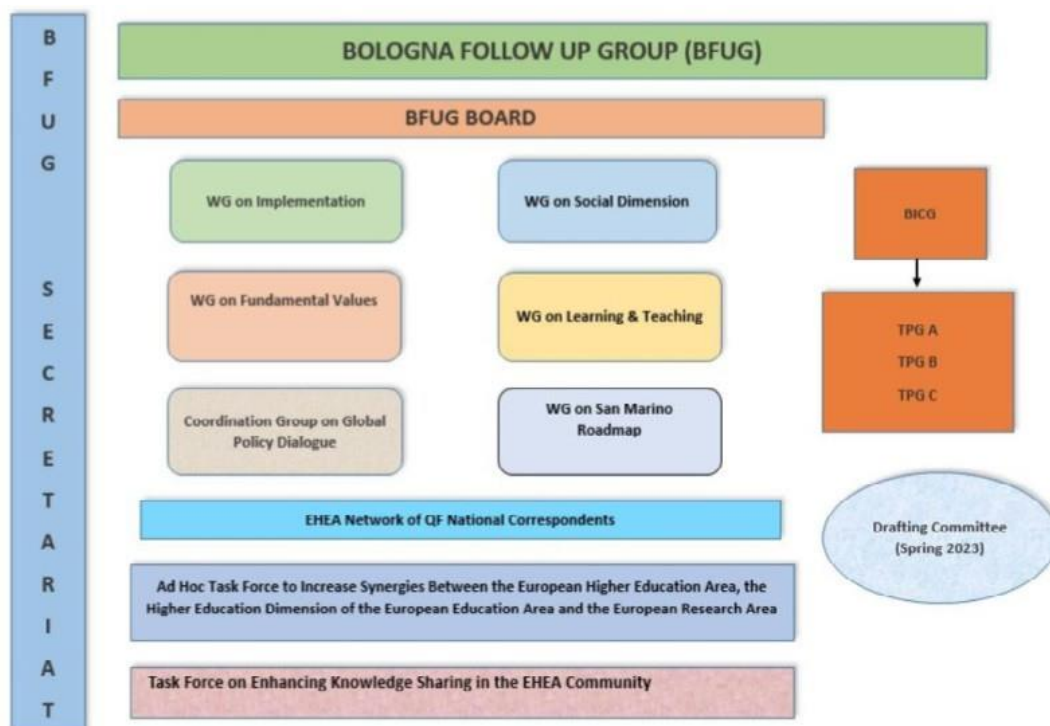
## ***BFUG Work Plan 2021 – 2024***

The BFUG work plan serves as a guiding framework for coordinating and advancing the implementation of the Bologna Process, with the overarching objective to create a more integrated and cohesive European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In the period between the two EHEA Ministerial Conferences, the BFUG operates in accordance with its approved work plan, a strategic blueprint for advancing the objectives of the Bologna Process within the designated work period. Central to this plan are several key tasks such as:

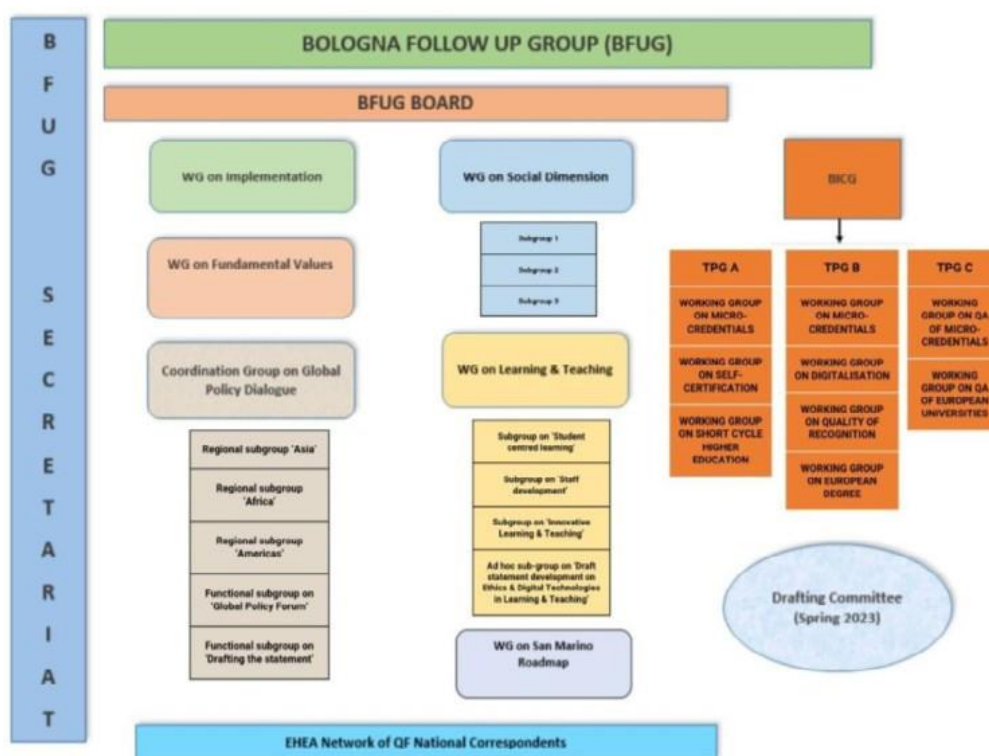
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of commitments made under the Bologna Process
- Policy development aimed at enhancing the compatibility, comparability, and quality of higher education systems across the EHEA
- Coordinating and facilitating cooperation among member countries and stakeholders
- Preparing background documents, reports, and recommendations for consideration by ministers during the Bologna Process ministerial meetings, held at the end of each BFUG work period. These documents serve as the basis for policy discussions and decision-making at the ministerial level.

The 2021-2024 BFUG Work Plan was approved during the term's inaugural BFUG meeting in Portugal, held online in April 2021. Initially, its working structures were as in the figure below, with two more work structures added in 2023; specifically, the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA Community and the Task Force on the Review of the Rules and Regulations for the Governance of the European Higher Education Area.

The 2021-2024 BFUG Work Plan, both the original and the actual ones are provided hereto in Annex VI.



*Foreseen and budgeted workplan activity.*



*Actual workplan activity.*

### ***The BFUG, its Board and its Working Groups***

The BFUG serves as the executive body overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the Bologna Process within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) between Ministerial Conferences, comprising full members from 49 countries (47 currently active), European Commission and consultative members from various organizations. Its key roles include facilitating cooperation, monitoring commitments, providing a discussion platform, coordinating cooperation, and preparing documents for ministerial meetings. BFUG meetings occur at least once every six months and play a crucial role in overseeing ministerial Communiqués and shaping the Bologna Process trajectory. The BFUG Board, acting as an advisory committee, consists of the BFUG Co-Chairs Troika (the outgoing, present and incoming Co-Chairs of the BFUG), the BFUG Vice-Chair, the European Commission, four of the consultative members, and a Co-Chair representative from each BFUG working structure. These structures, established to address specific aspects of the Bologna Process, meet regularly to discuss topics outlined in the EHEA Ministerial Communiqué. Meetings of the BFUG Board usually precede BFUG meetings by at least one month, while the Terms of Reference for the working groups are determined at the beginning of each work period. The ToRs for the 2021-2024 working groups are listed in Annex VII.

Each WG is illustrated below with relevant text from their work, detailing chairing countries, members and their meetings (the last ones with links to the EHEA page). Additionally, participation graphics or each meeting, along with maps of members and meetings are provided. The names of the experts tasked with supporting the WGs are listed alongside their corresponding WGs for

each WG below, tables display the meetings held during the 2021-2024 work period, along with the participation of their members in each meeting. In the tables, grey indicates members' absence from meetings, darker shades represent multiple participants from one country/organisation, while black denotes meetings foreseen in the ToRs of each WG at the outset of the 2021-2024 work period. The information contained in each of the illustrations below has been presented to the BFUG meeting in Belgium in April 2024 and has been drafted according to the request of the BFUG.

### *The Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)*

The Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG) is a coordination group composed of nominated representatives from BFUG members and consultative members, along with Co-Chairs from Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs). A Monitoring WG representative also joins as an observer. The main role of BICG is to ensure the coordinated implementation of the Bologna Process's three key commitments by overseeing the TPGs' work, promoting experience and best practice sharing among them, and reporting progress and any need for revisions in peer support strategies or methods to the BFUG. The BICG co-chairs for the 2021-2024 term are Helga Posset (Austria), Ivana Radonova (Bulgaria) and Ann Katherine Isaacs (Italy).

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
Albania																		
Austria																		
Bulgaria																		
Co-chair of TPG A																		
Co-chair of TPG B																		
Co-chair of TPG C																		
EUA																		
EURASHE																		
European Commission																		
European Commission/ EURYDICE																		
Italy																		
Romania																		



**Thematic Peer Group A on Qualifications Framework (TPG A on QF)**

Thematic Peer Group A on Qualifications Framework (TPG A on QF) was established in 2018 by the BFUG, to address Key Commitment 1, a three-cycle system compatible with EHEA and ECTS frameworks. Thematic indications include self-certification of national qualification frameworks, ECTS User's Guide implementation, short cycle higher education, stakeholder use of qualifications frameworks, study programs outside Bologna three-cycle structure, and the relationship between qualifications frameworks and quality assurance.

The Co-Chairs of the Working Group are: Austria - Karin Riegler; Georgia - Khatia Tsiramua; Latvia - Baiba Ramina. Members include: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium Flemish Community, Bulgaria, Council of Europe, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, EI - ETUCE,

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
Albania																		
Andorra																		
Armenia*																		
Austria																		
Azerbaijan																		
Belgium Flemish Community*																		
Bulgaria																		
Council of Europe*																		
Croatia*																		
Cyprus																		
Czech Republic																		
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Slovak Republic																		
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**Thematic Peer Group B on the Lisbon Recognition Convention (TPG B on LRC)**


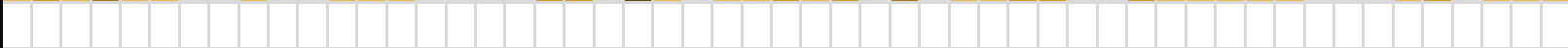













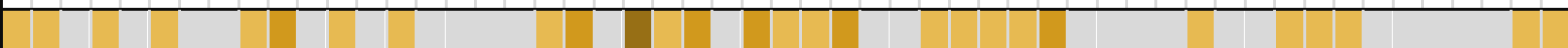





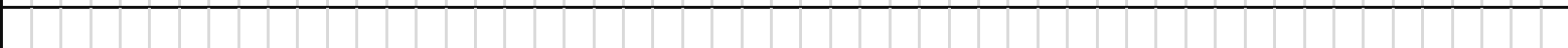


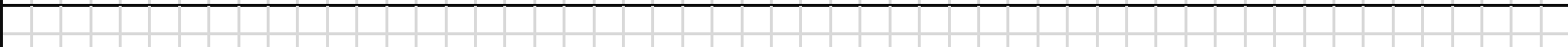
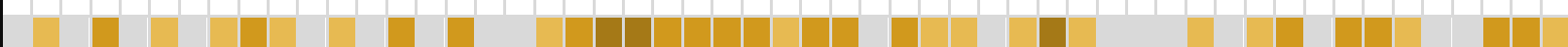
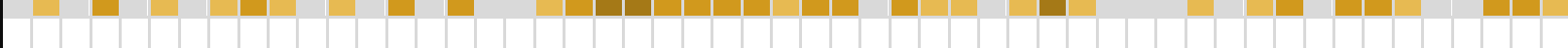
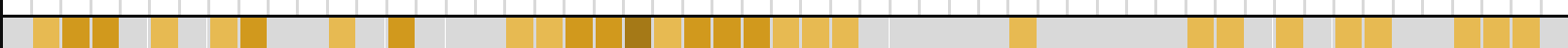
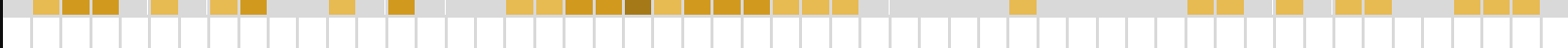

The BFUG established Thematic Peer Group B on the Lisbon Recognition Convention (TPG B on LRC) in September 2018, focusing on Key Commitment 2 (national legislation and procedures compliant with the Convention). Thematic areas include legal framework implementation, automatic recognition, alternative pathways, refugee qualifications, and digital technology optimization.

The Co-Chairs of the Working Group are: Albania - Linda Pustina; France - Martin Beyer; Italy - Chiara Finocchietti.

The expert of the BFUG Secretariat in support of the work of Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process was Blerina Caslli.

For the 2021-2024 work period, the TPG B on LRC held 7 meetings (4 online 3 in presence). In attendance: 3rd meeting of TPG B, Sévres (France) 10 June 2022; 5th meeting of TPG B, Tirana (Albania), 27 April 2023; 7th meeting TPG B, Rome (Italy), 23 April 2024.

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For the 2021-2024 work period, the TPG C on QA held 7 meetings (3 online, 4 in presence). In attendance: 1st meeting of TPG C, Belgium, 17-18 May 2022; 3rd meeting of TPG C, Kazakhstan, 1-2 June 2023; 5th meeting of TPG C, Romania, 13-14 June 2024; 6th meeting of TPG C, Belgium, November 2024.

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### Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process

The Working Group on Monitoring was established in Vienna in September 2018 with the goal to prepare a 2020 report on the EHEA's progress since the start of the Bologna Process. The group's objectives are to guarantee accurate country-to-country comparisons, enhance organized monitoring, evaluate progress towards the European Higher Education Area, supply dependable statistics, and ensure transparency in implementation.

The Rome Communiqué took note of the results described in the Bologna Process Implementation Report (2020) and mandated the Working Group to work on the Bologna Process Implementation Report for 2024, identify sources of reliable and comparable data, make further progress in improving structured and standardised monitoring of the EHEA, and ensuring that accurate comparisons can be made between countries.

The Co-Chairs of the working group are European Commission/Eurydice - David Crosier; Norway - Tone Flood Strøm. Members include: Albania, Austria, Belgium Flemish Community, Belgium French Community, Council of Europe, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, EI - ETUCE, Estonia, ESU - European Students' Union, EUA - European University Association, European Commis-

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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Working Group on Fundamental Values

The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) Working Group on Fundamental Values developed the statements for the remaining fundamental values: public responsibility of higher education, public responsibility for higher education, institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in higher education governance and academic integrity. These statements are the main results of the WG on fundamental values for the period 2021-2024 and aims at providing a common understanding and reference for all fundamental values by the EHEA members in order to develop a fully functional monitoring system to measure the extent to which members are upholding these values.

The co-chairs are Germany - David Akrami Flores; Malta - Rose Anne Cuschieri; Norway -Tone Flood Strøm; Romania - Mihai Cezar Hâj.

Members include: Austria, Council of Europe, Croatia, EI - ETUCE; ENQA, ESU - European Students' Union, EUA - European University Association, European Commission, European Commission/ Eurydice, Finland, France, Germany, Holy See, Iceland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Mal-

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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*Working Group on Social Dimension*

The central focus of the Working Group on Social Dimension is to develop proposed measures and policies in line with the goals set forth in the Paris Communiqué. These efforts aim to strengthen the social aspect of higher education and to lend support to national initiatives geared towards improving access and graduation rates, especially for marginalised and vulnerable demographics.

The produced document “[Indicators and Descriptors for the Principles of the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA](#)” was endorsed by the BFUG at the BFUG Meeting LXXXVIII in Brussels, and the final report was adopted at the BFUG Meeting XC in Brussels.

The co-chairs are Croatia - Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt and European Students’ Union - Horia Onita (\*ESU’s Co-Chair Martina Darmain was replaced by new Co-Chair Horia Onita at the seventh meeting held in Belgium on 29-30 September 2022.)

Members include: Albania, Austria, Belgium Flemish Community, Belgium French Community, Council of Europe, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, EI- ETUCE, Estonia, ESU - European Students’

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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Austria*																		
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Belgium French Community																		
Council of Europe																		
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### Working Group on Learning & Teaching

In its work plan, the Working Group on Learning and Teaching set forth objectives to collaboratively develop concise principles for innovative and inclusive learning and teaching approaches. These efforts aim to provide actions and best-practice examples demonstrating how governments can assist institutions in developing, enhancing, and implementing strategies for teaching and learning in higher education. These initiatives are designed to uphold academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

The final report was presented and approved by the BFUG at the BFUG Meeting XC in Brussels, Belgium in April 2024. The co-chairs include Ireland - Tim Conlon; France - Philippe Lalle; EURASHE - Jon Altuna.

Members include: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium Flemish Community, Croatia, Cyprus, EI – ETUCE, ENQA, ESU - European Students' Union, EUA - European University Association, EURASHE, European Commission, France, Georgia, Germany, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Kingdom (Scotland)

Kristina Metallari is the expert of the BFUG Secretariat in support of the work of Working Group on Learning and Teaching.

For the 2021-2024 work period, the Working Group on Learning and Teaching held 10 meetings (9 online; 1 in presence hybrid). In attendance (hybrid): Fifth Meeting of WG on Learning & Teaching, 30 September 2022, Belgium.

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021
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United Kingdom (Scotland)*												





*Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue*

The Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue aims to foster dialogue with other regions and international organizations on common issues for higher education. CG1 on Global Policy Dialogue planned a Bologna Global Policy Forum for the 2020 Rome Ministerial Conference. Due to the virtual nature of the 2020 Rome Ministerial Conference, a panel on global cooperation in higher education was held, focusing on the global approach in the next decade of EHEA.

The final report was approved by the BFUG at the BFUG Meeting XC in Brussels, Belgium in April 2024.

The co-chairs are Albania - Linda Pustina; Belgium Flemish Community - Magalie Soenen (from 2021 to May 2023); Liesbeth Hens (from 2023 to the end of WP); European Commission - Fiorella Perotto (from 2021 to September 2023); Italy - Ann Katherine Isaacs.

Members include: Albania, Austria, Belgium Flemish Community, Belgium French Community, Cyprus, EI - ETUCE, ENQA, ESU - European Students' Union, EUA - European University As-

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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*The Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA*

The Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's accession to the EHEA was endorsed during the BFUG meeting in Porto in April 2021. Its primary objective was to assist San Marino in executing the Roadmap and to provide guidance to the BFUG and Board regarding implementation and any additional support measures recommended. The Working Group also organised peer-learning in order to support developing specific policy areas. The Work Plan was structured based on the timelines specified in the Roadmap and the implementation plans outlined by the Sammarinese authorities. The Roadmap delineates two categories of actions. The first set involves initiating implementation measures, with a general deadline of 1 June 2021. The second set pertains to completing these actions by 1 November 2023.

The final report of the Working Group was approved by the BFUG at the BFUG Meeting LXXX in Brussels, Belgium in April 2024.

COMPOSITION (2021-2024)

Co-chairs

Andorra - Jordi Llombart

Finland - Maija Innola

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
Andorra																		
Council of Europe*																		
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**Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community**

The Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community aims to promote inclusion, communication, cooperation, and solidarity crucial for the future excellence of the EHEA. It has developed an Action Plan comprising various implemented activities and recommendations to effectively disseminate information on the Bologna Process to multiple stakeholders.

The activities of the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community are partly supported by the IN-GLOBAL project, which is co-financed by the European Union within the Erasmus+ Programme, and also supports the work of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue to strengthen synergies between these BFUG substructures.

For further information visit the project's website at [www.in-global.eu](http://www.in-global.eu).

Co-chairs(Composition 2021 - 2024)

Albania - Linda Pustina (October 2021 - December 2022); Bizena Bijo (February 2023 - 2024)

Italy\*\* - Luca Lantero (October 2021 - December 2022)\*

Romania - Daniela Cristina Ghitulică

\* Albania's Co-Chair Linda Pustina was replaced by new Co-Chair Bizena Bijo on the Fifth Meeting on 16 February 2023 (online)

\*\*Luca Lantero stepped down as Co-Chair of the TF on EKS on the Fourth Meeting on 7 De-

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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**Task Force on the Review of the Rules and Regulations for the Governance of the European Higher Education Area**

The Task Force was established in 2022 and its terms of reference were approved in the BFUG meeting in Brno, Czech Republic in November 2022. The Task Force was established as a structure with its members representing ad personam and not as a representative of any BFUG member. The TF was established to develop a proposed set of rules and regulations for the governance of the European Higher Education Area (“EHEA”) and its bodies, in particular the BFUG, the BFUG Board and the Secretariat, working groups and similar for its final adoption by the BFUG before the Ministerial conference in 2024 including any necessary text to be reflected in the ministers’ communique.

Co-chairs

Michal Karpisek - Czech Republic

Luca Lantero - Italy

Michael Gaebel - EUA

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
Linda Pustina (Albania)																		
Colin Tück (BFUG Expert)																		
Sjur Bergan (BFUG Expert)																		
Michal Karpíšek (Czech Republic)																		
Michael Gaebel (EUA)																		
Kinga Szuly (European Commission)																		
Frank Petrikowski (Germany)																		
Luca Lantero (Italy)																		
Irina Geanta (Romania)																		



*The Drafting Committee*

The Drafting Committee is a task force of the BFUG, entrusted with the task to prepare the draft communique for the upcoming ministerial conference. Drafting Committee is composed by the Co- Chairs of the last three semesters before the Ministerial Conference (Sweden, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Spain, Georgia, Belgium and Holy See) of the actual BFUG Work Plan (2021-2024), the BFUG Vice- Chair (Albania) and one representative of the BFUG consultative members (ESU). The consultative member is suggested by the consultative members and approved by the BFUG. The Drafting Committee agrees on the chairing arrangements during its first meeting. The current Drafting Committee started its work in the first semester of 2023, as the year that precedes the Tirana 2024 Ministerial Conference.

## COMPOSITION (2023 - 2024)

## Co-Chairs

Albania BFUG Vice-Chair - Linda Pustina

Holy See - Melanie Rosenbaum

ESU Consultative Members representative - Horia Onita

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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**BFUG and Board Meeting Participation**

A comprehensive analysis of country participation in the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) Working Structures for the 2021-2024 period has been conducted with the aim of providing an overview of participation metrics for each Working Structure on a country-by-country basis.

The primary objective of this analysis is to ensure transparency in BFUG’s operations and decision-making processes by offering clear and accessible data. This detailed reporting is intended to promote accountability and informed oversight among all stakeholders.

Furthermore, the insights derived from this data are deemed essential for future planning purposes. They can inform the development of subsequent work plans and aid in scheduling future activities of Working Structures. By considering the demonstrated levels of engagement and interests of participating countries, this forward-looking approach aims to optimize the effectiveness of BFUG’s initiatives and foster enhanced collaborative efforts.

Country	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022	May 2022	June 2022
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Bulgaria	September 2021											
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Country	January 2021											
	February 2021											
	March 2021											
	April 2021											
European Comission	May 2021											
	June 2021											
	July 2021											
	August 2021											
EUROSTUDENT	September 2021											
	October 2021											
	November 2021											
	December 2021											
Eurydice	January 2022											
	February 2022											
	March 2022											
	April 2022											
Experts	May 2022											
	June 2022											
	July 2022											
	August 2022											
Finland	September 2022											
	October 2022											
	November 2022											
	December 2022											
France	January 2023											
Georgia												
Germany												
Greece												



												February 1, 2023																	
												March 2023																	
												April 2023																	
												May 2023																	
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												Feburary 2024																	
												March 2024																	
												April 2024																	
												May 2024																	
												June 2024																	
Working Structure												EHEA NNQFC		Total number of meetings	Participation rate														
												Fundamental Values																	
												L&T																	
												Social Dimension																	
												TF EKS																	
												TPG A QF																	
												TPG B LRC																	
												TPG C QA																	
												CGGPD																	
												TF ISB																	
												MIBP		23	83%														
												Social Dimension																	
												Fundamental Values																	
												TPG B LRC																	
												TPG C QA																	
												TF EKS		23	57%														
												Fundamental Values																	
												TPG B LRC																	
												TPG C QA																	
												TF EKS																	
												EHEA NNQFC		12	58%														
												Fundamental Values																	
												TPG B LRC																	
												TPG C QA																	
												TF EKS																	
																								EHEA NNQFC		38	68%		
																								Fundamental Values					
																								San Marino					
																								TF EKS					
																								TF ISB					
																								TPG C QA				71	85%
																								CGGPD					
																								EHEA NNQFC					
																								Fundamental Values					
																								L&T					
																								MIBP		59	71%		
																								Social Dimension					
																								TF ISB					
																								TPG B LRC					
																								TPG C QA					
																								CGGPD				88	78%
																								EHEA NNQFC					
																								Fundamental Values					
																								L&T					
																								MIBP					
																								Social Dimension		23	70%		
																								TF EKS					
																								TPG A QF					
																								TPG B LRC					
																								TPG C QA					
EHEA NNQFC																													
TF ISB																													
TPG A QF																													
TPG B LRC																													

Country												
	January 2021											
	February 2021											
	March 2021											
Holy See	April 2021											
	May 2021											
	June 2021											
	July 2021											
Hungary	August 2021											
	September 2021											
	October 2021											
	November 2021											
Iceland	December 2021											
	January 2022											
	February 2022											
	March 2022											
Ireland	April 2022											
	May 2022											
	June 2022											
	July 2022											
Irina Geanta (Romania)	August 2022											
	September 2022											
	October 2022											
	November 2022											
Italy	December 2022											
	January 2023											
Kazakhstan												
Kinga Szuly (European Comission)												
Latvia												
Liechtenstein												
Linda Pustina (Albania)												

		February 1, 2023
		March 2023
		April 2023
		May 2023
		June 2023
		July 2023
		August 2023
		September 2023
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		November 2023
		December 2023
		January 2024
		February 2024
		March 2024
		April 2024
		May 2024
		June 2024
Working Structure	Total number of meetings	Participation rate
TPG C QA		
CGGPD		
Drafting Committee		
EHEA NNQFC		
Fundamental Values		
L&T	65	72%
San Marino		
TPG B LRC		
TPG C QA		
L&T		
TPG A QF	31	58%
TPG B LRC		
TPG C QA		
EHEA NNQFC		
Fundamental Values	17	71%
TPG C QA		
TPG C QA	6	17%
TF EKS	12	92%
CGGPD		
EHEA NNQFC	35	94%
L&T		
TPG B LRC		
TPG C QA	15	73%
CGGPD		
EHEA NNQFC		
Fundamental Values		
L&T		
MIBP	104	63%
San Marino		
Social Dimension		
TF EKS		
TPG A QF		
TPG B LRC		
TPG C QA		
CGGPD		
Fundamental Values		
L&T	74	23%
MIBP		
Social Dimension		
TPG A QF		
TPG B LRC		
TPG C QA		
TFROP	15	87%
EHEA NNQFC		
TPG A QF	21	95%
TPG B LRC		
TPG C QA		
EHEA NNQFC	14	50%
San Marino		
TPG C QA	15	33%

Country	January 2021			April 2021			July 2021			October 2021			January 2022			April 2022			July 2022			October 2022			January 2023		
	February 2021			May 2021			August 2021			November 2021			February 2022			May 2022			August 2022			November 2022			December 2022		
	March 2021			June 2021			September 2021			December 2021			March 2022			June 2022			September 2022			December 2022			January 2023		
Lithuania																											
Luca Lantero (Italy)																											
Luxembourg																											
Malta																											
Michael Gaebel (EUA)																											
Michal Karpíšek (Czech Republic)																											
Micro-credentials WG Member																											
Moldova																											
Montenegro																											
North Macedonia																											
Norway																											
Nuific (Guest)																											
Poland																											

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Country	January 2021											
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	November 2022											
	December 2022											
	January 2023											
Portugal												
Romania												
Russia												
San Marino												
Sjur Bergen (BFUG Expert)												
Slovak Republic												
Slovenia												
Spain												
Sweden												

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Country	January 2021											
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	December 2022											
	January 2023											
Switzerland												
The Netherlands												
Turkey												
Ukraine												
UNESCO												
United Kingdom												
United Kingdom (Scotland)												
VLUHR-KZ												



## Lessons Learned and Recommendations for the Future BFUG Secretariat

Over the course of its 42-month tenure, the Albanian BFUG Secretariat has taken every opportunity to learn and enhance its work processes, efficiency and effectiveness, made possible through the unwavering dedication of its staff and the valuable feedback received from the BFUG and its structures. In light of these experiences, we believe it would be beneficial to offer some recommendations to the incoming BFUG Secretariat for their consideration in their daily operations.

In addition to the recommendations listed below, we are committed to facilitating a seamless transfer of all the archives, information, and documents from the Albanian BFUG Secretariat and are confident that our colleagues will find these resources valuable and utilise them effectively.

The EHEA web site, the gate to all information related to EHEA, BFUG and its work.

- Implement a new EHEA website, as the existing one is outdated and the servers no longer support it. See Annex VIII for a detailed technical report regarding the inadequacy of the current website.
- The domain of the EHEA website is paid for until July 2024 by the current Secretariat. Subsequently, ensure that the new BFUG secretariat allocates funds to cover the domain expenses for the entire 2024-2027 work period.
- Feasibility of working structures and Human Resources at the Secretariat. At the start of each semester, the Secretariat should circulate a message among BFUG members, requesting updates on BFUG representatives and representatives in each BFUG Structure.

Develop a template for the final report of the BFUG Structures, to be approved by the BFUG, which will ensure uniformity in the information provided in the reports, facilitating processes at the end of the work period.

- Allocate a dedicated expert from the Secretariat to each BFUG Working Structure to oversee its progress from inception, ensuring consistency and institutional knowledge retention. This encompasses tasks such as managing correspondence, generating required documents for the working structure, drafting meeting minutes, and keeping the relevant EHEA webpage up-to-date. The appointed experts of the Working Structures should coordinate with one another to identify any instances of meeting schedule conflicts among different structures and promptly notify their respective Co-Chairs. This is particularly crucial when members of Working Structures are involved in overlapping meetings to prevent any inadvertent absences.
- Draft a comprehensive Work Plan at the onset of the working period. This plan must outline responsibilities and tasks while establishing a timeline of activities. Special attention should be given to periods where workloads may intensify, such as during the semester of the Ministerial Conference, and to unexpected developments like the establishment of new working structures or substructures within existing ones. In such cases, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the relevant working structures, should determine responsibilities in advance. Additionally, the Work Plan should accommodate any increase in meeting frequency beyond what was initially stipulated in the Terms of Reference of the working structures. This principle applies equally when new tasks are delegated to the Secretariat during the work period by working structures, such as assisting in the creation of newsletters and managing social media platforms.
- Given the ongoing necessity for frequent and timely website updates, it is imperative that a full-time IT expert be employed as an internal Secretariat staff member rather than being contracted externally.

## ***Guidelines on Drafting of the Official Documents***

The Secretariat finds it beneficial to provide colleagues with the prescribed format required by the BFUG Co-Chairs for drafting official documents intended for the BFUG, its Board and WGs. Adhering to the outlined format listed below will help ensure consistency and unanimity in document drafting.

- For all meeting documents, particularly draft reports, authors are requested to submit a version in the original format with the pdf conversion handled by the BFUG Secretariat,
- All BFUG/Board documents must have the following, before being converted to pdf: (with the exception of the BPIR, PowerPoint presentations, the draft Communiqué and the GPF statement, and any general information provided by the consultative members, which all maintain their original layout)
  - the BFUG/EHEA, Presidency and Co-Chairing logos added in the header/upper banner;
  - Date, added on the top right (“last modified:\_\_\_\_”);
  - Document name (see below, under 3) added in the footnote on the left;
  - if necessary, page numbers added in the format X/Y pages (x of y pages) in the footnote, on the right.
- Meeting document names are, without exception, to have the customary format of, e.g. Board\_BE\_VA\_87\_2b\_Draft\_annotated\_agenda\_15\_01\_2024.pdf, which includes Meeting specification/name, co-chairing indication, item number, abbreviated document reference and date of the document).
- It is highly recommended to refrain from uploading documents on the website that do not conform to these specifications; if in doubt, consult with the BFUG Co-Chairs.

## Acknowledgments

The BFUG Secretariat extends its heartfelt thanks, first and foremost, to the BFUG for granting Albania this historic opportunity. Our team is deeply grateful for the privilege of hosting the BFUG Secretariat, a momentous occasion for our country. We are honored to have played a role in this significant function and witnessed and reported on the vital discussions shaping higher education policy within the EHEA. Moreover, we are privileged to have been entrusted with hosting the Ministerial in Tirana in May 2024, further enriching our experience and commitment to education policy development.

Thank you to all BFUG and consultative members, as well as the Co-Chairs of Working Groups and other working structures, for their cooperation, and invaluable feedback. We are truly thankful for the trust you placed in us and deeply appreciate your high evaluation of our work.

Likewise, we would like to express our gratitude to the European Commission for their invaluable trust and financial support, as well as their cooperation throughout this significant endeavor. Their steadfast support has been instrumental in our journey toward realising the profound impact of this project.

We wish to convey our great appreciation to the Albanian Ministry of Education and Sports for its consistent administrative, financial, and operational support.

A special thank you goes to the EHEA page hosting company, MCN, and its expert Marti Belegu, for their continuous support and expertise.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the two former Heads of the Secretariat, Ms. Enida Bezhani, for her significant contributions in establishing the BFUG Secretariat and Oltion Rrumbullaku, for his efforts in sustaining the ongoing process before the appointment of the current and permanent Head, Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi, whose leadership has seen the BFUG Secretariat flourish and advance.

Last but not least, we would like to highlight our gratitude to one another. Throughout our collaboration as members of the BFUG Secretariat, we have maintained a harmonious, balanced, and professional atmosphere, navigating challenges with grace and efficiency. Our teamwork has been characterised by seamless coordination and mutual respect, devoid of conflicts or disagreements. We are proud of our collective dedication to upholding the highest standards of professionalism.

Our best wishes for great success to the incoming BFUG Secretariat in Romania and Moldova. It is with confidence that we pass the baton to them, trusting in their ability to fulfil the duties required to advance the objectives of the BFUG and the higher education sector in the EHEA.

## List of Annexes

ANNEX I - BFUG Rules and Procedures 2021-2024, approved at the BFUG meeting in Portugal in 2021

ANNEX II - Bylaws for the Establishment of the BFUG Secretariat 2021-2024 hosted by Albania

ANNEX III – The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the BFUG Secretariat hosted by Albania

ANNEX IV – The Terms of Reference for the 2021-2024 BFUG working structures

ANNEX V - EHEA Website Report prepared by the BFUG Secretariat

ANNEX VI – Communique Content Review Report prepared by the BFUG Secretariat

ANNEX VII - Report from MCN - the EHEA webpage hosting company regarding the problematics of the webpage

ANNEX VIII - Detailed bios of the BFUG Secretariat staff members



## RULES OF PROCEDURE 2021-2024<sup>1</sup>

### BOLOGNA FOLLOW UP GROUP (BFUG)

*Document drafted 24.10.2022*

This document outlines how the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) will operate for the 2021-2024 period, in terms of governance, structure, meeting management and communication. The provisions set out in this document are to be considered as guidelines for the BFUG Rules of Procedure and its sub-structures (the Board, Working Groups, Coordination Group, Task Forces, other *ad hoc* groups and BFUG Secretariat).

With regard to prior periods, Annexes to this document provide a historical overview of the BFUG proceedings, since its establishment, for reference, as well as information purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> BFUG Working period was decided at the LXXI BFUG meeting in [Split](#) on 25 June 2020 (online)





## I. The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG)

### a. Role

The BFUG is the executive structure overseeing the Bologna Process. It has been in place since autumn 1999. The BFUG is entrusted with preparing the Ministerial Conferences, policy forums and with overseeing the Bologna Process between these, including taking forward matters that do not need to be decided by the Ministers or that have been delegated by the Ministers. The BFUG meetings play an important role in overseeing the implementation of the Ministerial Communiqués, as well as in developing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The BFUG has the possibility to set up various types of groups, related to the decisions taken by the EHEA Ministers, normally through the Ministerial Communiqués, in order to deal with specific topics in more detail. It may also decide to establish task forces, ad-hoc groups or other sub-structures to fulfil its tasks and reach the goals set out in the Ministerial Communiqués.

The BFUG members are invited to express their interest in participating in one or more BFUG groups or any other sub-structures, by submitting an Expression of Interest. A Call for Expression of Interest is opened by the BFUG Secretariat. All BFUG groups foresee the participation of the BFUG members and consultative members. The groups can invite international experts on specific topics, if necessary. The groups should be organized in compliance with their Terms of Reference (ToR) adopted by the BFUG and related to the decisions taken by the EHEA Ministers in the Ministerial Conference preceding the mentioned BFUG working period. They should be of a reasonable size and reflect the diversity of EHEA, both in the co-chairing positions and membership.

The 2021-2024 BFUG Work Plan is structured on the basis of the 2020 Rome Communiqué (for more details, see Annex I). The BFUG decides on the ToR of the different BFUG sub-structures, and it decides which of their recommendations are to be proposed to the EHEA Ministers for the 2024 Ministerial Conference. The BFUG provides an opportunity for all members and consultative members to express their views on the recommendations and reports.

According to the mandate by the EHEA Ministers in Paris in 2018, the BFUG has set up the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG) in order to implement, coordinate and monitor the three Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs), possibly organized in sub-groups, focused on the three key commitments of the EHEA (for more details, see Annex I (i)). As mentioned on the 2020 Rome Communiqué the work of the BICG and the TPGs should continue also in the 2021-2024 work period.





EHEA Bologna Process cannot be seen as an isolated process, with no effect as well as cooperation with other parts of the world. In 2018 Paris Communiqué, the EHEA Ministers delegated to the Coordination Group (CG1) the task of working towards the Global Policy Forum, which has until now been organized back-to-back with the Ministerial Conference and which is intended to be a connecting bridge and ensure cooperation of EHEA in a global context. This mandate was strengthened in the 2020 Rome Communiqué, and the work of CG1 should continue also for the 2021-2024 period. As previously, one of the Co-chairs of the CG1 on Global Policy Dialogue (GPD) in principle should be the country hosting the Ministerial Conference, currently Albania, for the 2021-2024 BFUG Work Period.

#### b. BFUG Membership: the current three categories

BFUG membership is based on the membership of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The EHEA currently has three categories:

- **EHEA/BFUG Members** are the 49 countries and the European Commission (listed in Annex III). To become a member of the EHEA, countries have to be party to the European Cultural Convention and to declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education. Annex IV details the updated procedures to become an EHEA member. Only country members and the European Commission have the right to vote within the BFUG and to approve and adopt the final documents.
- **Consultative Members** are relevant stakeholder organizations and other institutions that have a European scope to their work in higher education policy and are instrumental in the development and implementation of the Bologna Process. The current eight EHEA consultative members are: Council of Europe (CoE), UNESCO, European University Association (EUA), European Association of Institutions of Higher Education (EURASHE), European Students' Union (ESU), European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Education International (EI) and BUSINESS EUROPE. The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) was founded in 2008 from an initiative of the Bologna Process. EQAR has a similar status to the consultative members (non-voting member of BFUG).
- **Partners** are organizations that wish to be associated with the Bologna Process/ the BFUG but are not included in the Consultative member category. At present, the following five organizations are partners: the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de



Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC), the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the Council of European professional and managerial staff (Eurocadres), Eurodoc, the European Association for Promotion of Science and Technology (Euroscience). They can, upon approval of prior request in writing to the BFUG Co-chairs, attend BFUG meetings and events and may be invited, upon approval of a written request, by a BFUG group to send an expert in the status of observer, who will participate in some part of the work. During BFUG meetings where they are invited, they can express their comments only relating to identified topics and after other Members and Consultative Members have spoken<sup>2</sup>.

Further technical experts, such as Eurostat, Eurostudent or Eurydice, may be associated to the BFUG and invited to events upon specific request.

For any new application from countries wishing to join the EHEA, an ad hoc BFUG group should be established, to guide the country in the entire admission process, as well as recommend its findings to the BFUG. The group should be composed by the BFUG troika of the specific BFUG work period in which the application is received, the Vice chair, as well as other members including BFUG Secretariat, CoE and two other BFUG members. Since 2015, new countries<sup>3</sup> have been admitted with a roadmap, followed up in the first period after their admission to the EHEA by a Roadmap group for the country in question.

### **c. Chairmanship: BFUG Co-chairs and BFUG Vice-chair**

The current chairing arrangements foresee that the Bologna Process will be co-chaired by the country holding the EU presidency and a non-EU member country (see the document in Annex V) designated by the English alphabetical order<sup>4</sup> and the Vice-chair from the host country of the next Ministerial Conference (referred as Chairs in the document). The following chairing arrangement is due to be applied in the period 2021-2025:

<sup>2</sup> As discussed at the LXVII BFUG meeting in [Helsinki](#) on 12-13 November 2019.

<sup>3</sup> So far, Belarus (2015) and San Marino (2020).

<sup>4</sup> It was, however, agreed by the BFUG at its Berlin meeting in September 2020 that since Albania will be Vice Chair in the 2021 – 24 work program, it would only take its place as Co-Chair in the following work program.



Semester	Co-chair from EU-Presidency	Co-chair from non-EU country	Vice-chair
1 January – 30 June 2021	Portugal	Andorra	Albania
1 July – 31 December 2021	Slovenia	Armenia	
1 January – 30 June 2022	France	Azerbaijan	
1 July – 31 December 2022	Czech Republic	Kazakhstan <sup>5</sup>	
1 January – 30 June 2023	Sweden	Bosnia & Herzegovina	
1 July – 31 December 2023	Spain	Georgia	
1 January – 30 June 2024	Belgium	Holy See	Country hosting the next Ministerial Conference and BFUG Secretariat
1 July – 31 December 2024	Hungary	Iceland	
1 January – 30 June 2025	Poland	Albania	

Each co-chairing country is responsible for appointing one person who will be in charge of fulfilling the tasks of the chairmanship for the mentioned semester. The Co-chairs, in close cooperation with the Vice-chair and supported by the BFUG Secretariat, chair the BFUG and the BFUG Board. In the decision-making process, the Chairs assume the responsibility for leading the way towards compromise in order to move the Bologna Process forward. The Vice-chair, in close cooperation with the BFUG Secretariat, ensures continuity between the rotating chairmanships. Both the Co-chairs and the Vice-chair can speak representing their country, but in that case need to announce explicitly that their intervention reflects their country's position and that they are not speaking as chair at that specific moment. The Co-chairs and the Vice-chair, although they can also represent their country, must exercise their chairing tasks with the necessary neutrality. The Vice-chair is responsible in particular for the host country's preparations for the Ministerial Conference and the Global Policy Forum.

<sup>5</sup> This was resolved by decision of the BFUG at its meeting on December 1 – 2, 2021.



#### d. BFUG Board

##### Role and composition

The BFUG Board is an advisory committee established in order to support the BFUG in its activities and to provide efficiency in the management of the EHEA, at the same time assuring its continuity. As such, the responsibilities of the Board consist of coordinating and monitoring the effective implementation of the work programme. The responsibilities of the Board were defined by the BFUG during its meeting in Rome in 2003 and they remain exactly the same (see Annex VII).

##### The members of the Board are:

- the BFUG Co-chairs double Troika (the outgoing, present and incoming Co-chairs of the BFUG)
- the BFUG Vice-chair;
- the European Commission;
- Council of Europe, EUA, ESU, EURASHE;
- one of the Co-chairs of each of the BFUG -groups of the respective period (Working Groups, Coordination Group, Task Forces, BICG)

##### Functioning of the BFUG Board meetings

The Board usually meets at least one month (preferably six weeks) before each BFUG meeting. The host of the Board is normally one of the EHEA Co-chairs. The minutes of the Board meetings are taken by the BFUG Secretariat.

Before each Board meeting, the Chairs and the Secretariat will hold a preparatory meeting in order to finalize organizational aspects, to check all the documents, to divide competences and tasks, and to check the agenda of the upcoming Board meeting.

#### e. BFUG Secretariat

The Bologna Follow-Up Group Secretariat (BFUG Secretariat) provides neutral, administrative and operational support to the BFUG, the BFUG Board, Chairs, BFUG groups and other established sub-structures (task forces, *ad hoc* groups, etc.). It acts as an external and internal contact point for the EHEA, and also presents the BFUG in a variety of settings in agreement with the Chairs; it supports the preparation of the EHEA Ministerial Conference and the Bologna Global Policy Forum and maintains the EHEA website (<http://www.ehea.info>) with regular updates.





The Terms of Reference related to the Albanian BFUG Secretariat (Annex II) outline more specifically the tasks of the BFUG Secretariat for the 2021-2024 period.

The tasks of the BFUG Secretariat were first defined by the BFUG during its meeting in Rome in November 2003 (see Annex VII).

#### **f. Functioning of the BFUG meetings**

BFUG meetings are in principle hosted by one of the EHEA Co-chairs and are usually convened at least once every six months. The working language of the BFUG is English (see Annex VI for more details).

All BFUG members should attend each BFUG meeting. Each EHEA member or consultative member has the authority to designate its BFUG representatives. Each EHEA member or consultative member usually sends a maximum of 2 representatives to the BFUG meetings. In the cases when members and consultative members have more than one representative designated in the BFUG, they communicate to the BFUG Secretariat which is the Head of Delegation (the countries with a federal system may have maximum 2 Heads of Delegation). On every agenda point, each BFUG delegation is invited to express the position of its country, institution or organization with respect to the matter in question. The BFUG Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Board, have the authority to invite experts/individuals to contribute to BFUG meetings under specific points for which they have the required expertise. BFUG representatives have the duty to notify the BFUG Secretariat about any changes on the respective BFUG representation and update the country's contact details and information as required.

The BFUG Co-chairs, supported by the BFUG Secretariat, lead the discussions on all points of the agenda, as well as declare the meeting open or closed. The decision-making procedure within the BFUG is based on a consensual understanding that the Co-chairs of the BFUG summarize the discussions and decisions at the end of each agenda point. When Co-Chairs speak and act in their capacity as BFUG delegates, they must make clear that their intervention reflects their country's position.

While the BFUG seeks primarily to reach decisions by consensus, in exceptional circumstances, procedural issues, the BFUG chairs may decide to take a decision through vote. Its voting rules foresee two votes per BFUG Member delegation only, to take account of the fact that some countries have a federal system. The BFUG representative responsible to cast the vote/votes is the Head of Delegation or another member of delegation appointed by the Head of Delegation. Voting procedures and arrangements are coordinated by the BFUG Secretariat, according to its neutral role.

A quorum for vote is minimum of half of the members being present. The proposal is adopted two-thirds of





members present vote in its favor. Voting may be in person, online or via an electronic procedure. Normally the voting is an open ballot, but a secret ballot shall be organized if at least one delegation requests it.

As a general rule, the BFUG meeting documents should be circulated by the BFUG Secretariat **15 days** prior to the meeting, after being discussed in the BFUG Board once prepared by the Chairs of the BFUG and by the BFUG Working Groups or other sub-structures. During the discussions in the BFUG, a delegation/organization can propose changes, however, delegations wishing to propose major changes to a document should be encouraged to submit those at least **5 days** prior to the meeting.

The BFUG Secretariat is in charge of drafting the minutes of the meetings of the BFUG/WG/BICG/TPGs/CG/Board. All the BFUG/WG/BICG/TPGs/CG/Board meetings should be recorded for future reference. The draft minutes are agreed with the respective Chairs and are then circulated to the members (BFUG/WG/Board) within **15 days** after the meeting for feedback. The members have the possibility within **15 days** to send amendments to the minutes, which will be taken into consideration by the BFUG Secretariat in the process of finalizing the minutes. Minutes of the meetings of the BFUG and its established sub-structures (BFUG/AG/WG/BICG/TPGs/CG/Task Forces/ad-hoc groups/Board) should generally be adopted by electronic consultation after each meeting: only if there should be too many diverging comments, the adoption will be postponed until the next meeting of the BFUG. The same procedure is applied also for other documents produced that need to be approved by the BFUG in case there are too many diverging comments.

The BFUG can make decisions by electronic consultation, that ought to be presented and recorded in the next BFUG meeting accordingly.

Before each BFUG meeting, the Chairs and the Secretariat will hold a preparatory meeting in order to finalize organizational aspects, to check all the documents, to divide competences and tasks, and to check the agenda of the upcoming BFUG meeting. An additional meeting should be held after the BFUG meeting to summarize the decisions taken and plan future tasks.

## II. Ministerial Conferences

The country hosting the upcoming Ministerial Conference acts as Vice-chair of the Bologna Process/European Higher Education Area. As agreed by the Ministers in the [Berlin Communiqué \(2003\)](#), the country organizing the upcoming Ministerial Conference also hosts the BFUG Secretariat between two consecutive ministerial meetings. This applies to the governing period 2021-2024 in which Albania hosts the BFUG Secretariat. Within the governing period 2021-2024, the Ministerial Conference, hosted by Albania, will take place at the end of the first semester 2024.



In connection with the Ministerial Conference, since 2009, a Bologna Policy Forum (BPF) has been organized<sup>6</sup>, including countries and regional higher education organizations from around the world. Ministers decide at Ministerial Conferences about the central aspects of the EHEA, including its further developments and commitments by its member countries. The Ministerial Conference also decides on new applications for membership to the EHEA as well as any other main changes to the process. A Communiqué is adopted at each Ministerial Conference that outlines decisions taken by the Ministers. The Ministerial Conferences are prepared by the BFUG.

#### **a. Drafting Committee**

Drafting committee is a task force of the BFUG, entrusted with the task to prepare the draft communique for the upcoming ministerial conference. Drafting Committee is composed by the Co-Chairs of the last three semesters before the Ministerial Conference (Sweden, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Spain, Georgia, Belgium and Holy See) of the actual BFUG Work Plan, the Vice Chair and one consultative member. The consultative member is suggested by the consultative members and approved by the BFUG. The drafting committee agrees on the chairing arrangements during its first meeting. The current Drafting Committee is foreseen to start its work on first semester of 2023, as the year that precedes the Ministerial Conference. Drafting Committee meets every time after the Board and BFUG meeting, as well as in other times of necessity, as accordingly decided beforehand. Drafting Committee prepares a roadmap of its work, which is forwarded to the BFUG for its approval.

#### **b. Selection of the next BFUG Secretariat and the Ministerial Conference host country**

During the year 2023, the host for the next BFUG Secretariat and the Ministerial Conference will be selected. The BFUG will advise Ministers on the selection of the next Ministerial conference. The procedure for the Selection of the next BFUG Secretariat and the Ministerial Conference host can be found in Annex VIII. Each member country of the EHEA can apply to host the Ministerial Conference and is expected to provide the necessary logistical and financial support to ensure the successful organization of such an event.

### **III. EHEA Communication: EHEA Website and Backoffice**

As part of the EHEA communication efforts, with the launch of the European Higher Education Area, a EHEA website [www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info) was established. The website will be further developed and updated

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<sup>6</sup> From 2009 to 2018 it was called Bologna Policy Forum. On the Rome Communiqué 2020 it was stated that the COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible to hold the Global Policy Forum and Albania will host the next Global Policy Forum in 2024.



by the BFUG Secretariat with support from the BFUG and its sub-structures.

As a general rule, all relevant documents that are not explicitly excluded will be published on the website. Documents distributed for BFUG meetings will be published on the website at least 10 days in advance of the meetings unless the Co-Chairs have decided otherwise.

The country pages of each BFUG member will be edited by the BFUG Secretariat under the responsibility of the member. The pages concerning BFUG Working Groups and other sub-structures will be edited by the BFUG Secretariat, in close cooperation with the Co-chairs of the sub-structures concerned.

For the internal use of the BFUG members or that of WGs/AGs and other sub-structures, the Secretariat had created a password for a protected website area, generically called “the Backoffice”. This area allowed for document storage and exchange, registration for events, setting up the calendar. In September 2016, a new website was launched which offers public access to the full archive with exception of those documents which it has been decided to keep confidential. The Albanian BFUG Secretariat, will continue its work using the web site used by the Italian BFUG Secretariat and its platforms.

The EHEA website contains an open calendar of events, organized by the BFUG Working structures, and any other sub-structures as well as by the EHEA member countries and organizations. The EHEA website should be passed from one Secretariat to another with all the technical backgrounds in order to guarantee the transition between two Secretariats. For an external event to be published on the official EHEA website, it must be strictly related to the Bologna Process and should be organized and supported by one of the countries or organizations participating in the Bologna Process. Moreover, the event should in principle be open to participants from all Bologna countries and should be in line with the priorities of the BFUG work plan. Relevant invitations, presentations, reports and conclusions from BFUG members and consultative members can be published on the website and forwarded to the BFUG. In principle, this service could also consider similar requests from other parties.

For an event to be published on the EHEA website, the organizers have to fill in a template provided by the BFUG Secretariat (Annex IX). The final decision on whether or not an event is considered a part of the BFUG events is taken by the Co-chairs in consultation with the BFUG Secretariat.

#### **IV. COVID-19**



The global pandemic situation of COVID-19 and its aftermath has affected deeply the normal meeting method of BFUG and its working groups, which, until the pandemics breakout, were all carried out in presence.

The need to maintain normality as much as possible, foresaw a swift move to online meetings, which were carried out with the help of different online meeting platforms. However, it should be emphasized that online meetings should absolutely not replace the meetings in presence. All BFUG and Board meetings should be organized as in presence meetings, and where not possible, due to force majeure (i.e. COVID-19), the organizers should prepare the online or hybrid meeting, using the relevant platform, in concordance with the BFUG Secretariat. BFUG Members attend the meeting with maximum two members for each delegation.



## **BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP (BFUG) RULES OF PROCEDURE 2021-2024 - ANNEXES**

List of Annexes:

### **ANNEX I: BFUG Work Plan 2021-2024**

- (i) BICG – Bologna Implementation Coordination Group
- (ii) Working Groups on:
  - (ii.a) WG 1: On Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process
  - (ii.c) WG 2: On Fundamental Values
  - (ii.d) WG 3: On Social Dimension
  - (ii.e) WG 4: On Learning and Teaching
- (iii) Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (GPD)
- (iv) EHEA Network of National QF correspondents
- (v) Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA ("San Marino Roadmap WG")
- (vi) Task Forces
  - (vi.a) Ad Hoc Task Force to Increase Synergies Between the European Higher Education Area, the Higher Education Dimension of the European Education Area and the European Research Area
  - (vi.b) Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community

### **ANNEX II: Role of the Bologna Secretariat: Terms of Reference 2021-2024**

### **ANNEX III: List of BFUG members, consultative members and partners as of 1 January 2021**

### **ANNEX IV: Requirements and Procedures for Joining the European Higher Education Area**

### **ANNEX V: BFUG Co-chairing and Vice-chairing arrangements**

### **ANNEX VI: Language Regime for EHEA Ministerial Conferences**

### **ANNEX VII: Responsibilities of the Board – Tasks of the Secretariat**

### **ANNEX VIII: Procedure for the Selection of post 2020 Ministerial Conference and BFUG Secretariat Host**

### **ANNEX IX: Template for events to be published on the EHEA**

### **ANNEX X: Historical Overview - Information on the former BFUG Proceedings**





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**ALBANIAN SECRETARIAT OF THE BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP**  
**FREE TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH**

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**DECISION**  
No. 1163, date 24.12.2020

**FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE  
ACTIVITY OF MAINTAINING THE SECRETARIAT OF "BOLOGNA FOLLOW UP GROUP"  
FROM THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

In support of Article 100 of the Constitution and Law no. 90/2012, "On the organization and functioning of the state administration", with the proposal of the Minister of Education, Sports and Youth, the Council of Ministers

**DECIDED:**

1. The establishment of the secretariat within the activity of maintaining the secretariat of the "Bologna Follow Up Group" from the Republic of Albania (hereinafter, the Secretariat), depending on the minister responsible for education.
2. The Secretariat will function for the period from 1.1.2021 to 31.12.2024.
3. The Ministry responsible for education provides the necessary facilities and equipment for the exercise of activity for the functioning of the Secretariat.
4. The primary purpose of the activity of the Secretariat is to provide neutral support for the further consolidation of the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter, EHEA) under the authority of the "Bologna Follow Up Group" (hereinafter, BFUG) and to coordinate the actions undertaken at an international level with the work plan of the BFUG and the activity of the support work group of the BFUG Secretariat during the period of the Secretariat being held by the Republic of Albania.
5. The objectives of the Secretariat are as follows:
  - a) provide administrative and operational support for the BFUG and its board, including planning meetings and keeping relevant minutes;
  - b) provide assistance to the BFUG and its board in the follow-up work for the period 1.1.2021 to 31.12.2024, including the planning of activities and implementation of the decisions of the BFUG;
  - c) provide support to all working groups, advisory groups and other structures and, upon request, prepare project reports;
  - d) perform special tasks related to the implementation of the work program of EHEA;
  - e) review and update the website of EHEA [www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info) and its archives;
  - f) function as an external and internal point of contact for EHEA;
  - g) Distribution of important announcements to BFUG members and stakeholders;
  - h) ensure representation in external meetings at the request of the organizers;



f) provide support to the BFUG board to establish cooperation with the European Research Area (hereafter, ERA);

g) preparation of the Ministerial Conference in Albania 2024 and the Bologna Policy Forum under the supervision of the BFUG;

h) perform any other necessary activity, ascribed by the BFUG.

6. The Secretariat is managed by the chairman, who organizes and directs all the activities of the Secretariat. The chairman is assisted in his work by an assistant.

7. The Secretariat will consist of full-time staff, experts, and part-time staff, experts, who are very well versed in the field of higher education, as follows:

- a) 1 (one) full-time expert and 3 (three) part-time external experts, in the field of project management and implementation, who engage in the development of various activities and meetings of the BFUG, the BFUG board, BFUG working groups and advisory groups, as well as in the organization of the EHEA Ministerial Conference in 2024;
- b) 1 (one) full-time expert in the field of media and communication, who will support the implementation of the strategy and social media instruments, and 1 (one) part-time external expert in the field of maintenance of the existing website [www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info) and its updating by the support working group of the BFUG Secretariat;
- c) 2 (two) full-time high-level technical experts and 3 (three) part-time external experts for making strategic decisions and instructions to implement all activities of the Secretariat;
- d) 2 (two) full-time experts and 3 (three) part-time external experts, who will help in drafting and preparing supporting documents for the BFUG, managing technical and institutional processes, analyzing data and providing recommendations and assistance in working group meetings.

8. External experts, local or foreign, will be contracted according to the relevant field, to give their contribution, whenever it is considered necessitous, in order to coordinate the work.

9. The Secretariat, in cooperation with the co-chairs and vice-chair of the BFUG, performs the following tasks:

- a) drafts the agendas of BFUG meetings;
- b) drafts the content of documents for discussion;
- c) drafts relevant documents for BFUG and its board, working groups and board committee meetings;
- d) draws up the minutes of the meetings of the BFUG and the board, to clarify the speech of the co-chairs;
- e) sends the minutes for comments and approval to the subsequent meetings of the BFUG and the board;
- f) helps working groups and advisory groups to fulfill their tasks;
- g) supports the implementation of the work program approved by the BFUG;
- h) participates in seminars that take place within the Bologna process and other meetings, when necessary;



- i) reviews and updates the EHEA website, ensuring that information is made available at all times to the BFUG and the public;
- j) guarantees an ad hoc communication system, using updated technological tools and proposes a new website page, in order to offer a more efficient service;
- k) performs other specific tasks, as agreed by the mentioned substructures in the BFUG.

10. The rules of procedure on the organization and internal functioning of the Secretariat are approved by the Minister responsible for education, with the proposition of the Head of the Secretariat.

11. The Head and staff of the Secretariat are appointed and discharged by the Minister responsible for education, in accordance with the provisions of the Labor Code, through calls for expressions of interest.

12. The salary scale of the Head and the staff of the Secretariat should be in accordance with the salaries of the staff in public institutions of higher education, determined by decision no. 748, dated 11.6.2009, from the Council of Ministers, "On the salary and salary supplements of academic personnel in public institutions of higher education", amended as follows:

- a) The Head of the Secretariat, the salary equivalent of the academic personnel with the title of "Rector";
- b) Senior-level and/or foreign experts, employed full-time and/or part-time, the salary equivalent of academic personnel of the "Professor" category;
- c) Experts employed full-time, the salary equivalent of academic personnel who hold the scientific title of "Doctor";
- d) Experts employed part-time, the salary equivalent of academic personnel with the title of "Lecturer/researcher".

The salary scale of the Assistant to the Head of the Secretariat is the equivalent of the salary of the Secretary of the Rector, as determined in decision no. 717, dated 23.6.2009, of the Council of Ministers, "On the salaries of aide employees in budgetary institutions", amended.

13. The financial effects resulting from the implementation of this verdict are covered by the grant from the European Commission, the budget of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth and other income from similar funding.

14. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth is in charge of the implementation of this decision.

This decision comes into effect after its publication in the Official Registry.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Erion Braçe

**DECISION**  
**No. 526, dated 7.9.2023**

**FOR SOME ADDITIONS AND CHANGES IN DECISION NO. 1163, DATE 24.12.2020, OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, "FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECRETARIAT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF HOLDING OF SECRETARIAT OF “BOLOGNA FOLLOW UP GROUP” FROM THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA"**

In support of Article 100 of the Constitution and of law no. 90/2012, "On the organization and the functioning of the public administration", with the proposal of the Minister of Education and Sports, Council of Ministers

**DECIDED:**

1. In decision no. 1163, dated 24.12.2020, of the Council of Ministers, the additions and changes are made:

a) Point 4 is amended as follows:

"4. The primary purpose of the “*Bologna Follow Up Group*” Vice-Chair and the “*Bologna Follow Up Group*” Secretariat (hereinafter "BFUG") is the performance of all functions and obligations that arise in application of the Rules and Procedures of the BFUG.

Their duties are exercised according to the duration, as per below follows:

1. The BFUG Vice-Chair, the Head and the deputy Head of the BFUG Secretariat until the fulfillment of the obligations regarding the transfer of the office of the Vice-Chair and the future BFUG Secretariat and representation in subsequent meetings as outgoing BFUG Vice-Chair and Head/deputy Head of the outgoing BFUG secretariat, until 31 December 2024;
2. Employees of the BFUG Secretariat until July 31, 2024, with the fulfillment of obligations for the transfer of duties to the future BFUG secretariat.

The BFUG Vice-Chair is assisted by the work group, established by order of the Prime Minister, for support of his/her activities and for coordination of activities to be organized until the end of the retention period of this position from the Republic of Albania, as well as coordination of work for the organization of Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Dialogue in May 2024. Composition and the tasks of the working group are defined in the order of the Prime Minister, according to the request of the BFUG Vice-Chair and based on the proposal forwarded by the minister responsible for education."

b) Point 5 is repealed.

c) Point 7 is amended as follows:

"7. The secretariat is headed by its Head and consists of personnel employed on a full time and part time basis, as follows:

- a) A high-level expert in the position of to the Head of the BFUG Secretariat, engaged full-time or part-time, who organizes and directs all the activities of the Secretariat;
- b) A high-level expert in the position of the Deputy Head of the BFUG Secretariat, engaged full-time or part-time, who assists the Head of the Secretariat in carrying out his duties;
- c) High-level experts, engaged in full time or part time positions of the BFUG secretariat, for a total monthly commitment of all experts who are employed, up to 968 (nine hundred sixty eight) working hours/month;
- ç) Experts engaged full-time or part-time in the position of the member of the BFUG secretariat for a monthly commitment in total of all experts who are hired, up to 1144 (one thousand one hundred and forty four) working hours/month.

Secretariat staff must have excellent knowledge in the field of higher education and the Bologna Process.

The structure of the Secretariat, full or part time positions, as well as contractual obligations for the staff of the Secretariat are approved by the minister responsible for education on the basis of the proposal of the Head of the BFUG Secretariat. Secretariat staff is appointed and dismissed by the minister responsible for education or by any delegated person by him for this purpose, in accordance with the provisions of the Labor Code, through calls for expression of interest."

ç) Point 12 is amended as follows:

"12. The level of remuneration for the work performed from the BFUG Vice-Chair, the staff of BFUG secretariat, ministry of education personnel or other governmental institutions, which provide over-time support from the normal working hours and for the members of the work group, determined according to this decision, is, as below follows:

a) For the BFUG Vice-Chair and employees of the BFUG secretariat, remuneration is referred to the level of staff salaries in public higher education institutions, determined by decision no. 748, dated 11.6.2009, of the Council of Ministers, "For treatment with salary and salary allowances of academic personnel employees of public higher education institutions ", amended as follows:

1. The BFUG Vice -chair, the Head and the Deputy Head of the Secretariat at the salary of the academic staff "Rector";
2. High-level experts and/or foreigners/from the Albanian diaspora, employed full or part time, referred to the salary of academic personnel of the "Professor" category;
3. Experts employed full-time or part-time, referred to the salary of academic staff holding the "Doctor" scientific degree.

b) The staff of the ministry responsible for education or other state institutions, which offers support, outside normal working hours, in the fulfillment of the obligations of the Albanian BFUG Secretariat as far as financial and legal issues are concerned or the management of the EU grant for BFUG secretariat, practices related to missions for the secretariat, in the framework of the fulfillment of their respective obligations, website maintenance [www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info) or other services that will be carried out in function of the activity of the secretariat, according to the requests that will be forwarded by the Head/Deputy Head, will be considered as part-time expert, within the total of hours defined in the letters "c" and "ç", of point 7 of this decision;

1. members of the working group, defined in point 4 of this decision, are rewarded in the amount of 25,000 (twenty-five thousand) ALL per month."

d) After point 12, point 12/1 is added, with this content:

"12/1. The BFUG Vice -Chair, the secretariat, the working group that assists it and the ministry responsible for education are charged to take all necessary measures to ensure the organization of the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Dialogue in May 2024 and all the activities that will be foreseen until this event, as well as to cooperate for the organization of cultural and promotional programs within these activities with the ministries responsible for tourism and culture."

2. The Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Tourism and Environment and Ministry of Culture are in charge for the implementation of this decision.

This decision enters into force after its publication in the Official Journal.

**Prime Minister**



## **Role of the Bologna Secretariat: Terms of Reference (ToR)**

### **2021-2024**

*Last modified: 20.04.2021*

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

When the BFUG Secretariat was first established following the Berlin meeting of Ministers responsible for higher education, the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) agreed, after discussion, upon its role and functions. These proposals for a BFUG Secretariat were accepted by the [BFUG Meeting in Rome in November 2003](#) (for further information see Annex VII).

#### **2. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS**

For the period 1st of January 2021 until 30th of June 2024 the role and functions of the BFUG Secretariat will continue along the same lines, as agreed previously at the BFUG meetings: The BFUG Secretariat will provide neutral support to further the consolidation of the European Higher Education Area under the authority of the BFUG.

More specifically, the functions include:

- γ providing administrative and operational support for the BFUG and its Board - including planning meetings and taking minutes;
- γ assisting the BFUG and its Board in the follow-up work for the period January 2021 to June 2024 – including planning of activities and following up on the BFUG decisions;
- γ supporting all BFUG Groups (AG, WG, CG, BICG, TPGs) and other structures, and in agreement with the Co-Chairs, taking minutes and preparing the draft reports;
- γ carrying out any special tasks concerning the implementation of the work programme of the European Higher Education Area;
- γ reviewing and updating the European Higher Education Area website and archives;
- γ acting as an external and internal contact point for the European Higher Education Area;
- γ sharing important messages with members and stakeholders;
- γ providing representation at external events upon request of the organisers;
- γ supporting the BFUG Board to establish interaction with the European Research Area (ERA);



γ preparing the Ministerial Conference in Albania (Spring Semester 2024) and the Bologna Policy Forum under the supervision of the BFUG and close cooperation with BFUG Vice-chair.

### 3. METHOD OF OPERATION

In conjunction with the Co-chairs and vice-chair, the Secretariat:

- γ drafts agendas for the BFUG meetings;
- γ drafts background discussion documents (liaising with relevant authors as appropriate);
- γ drafts relevant papers for the BFUG and its Board, Working Groups and other structures;
- γ drafts minutes of the BFUG/Board meetings for clearance by the Chairs;
- γ sends these minutes for comments and subsequent adoption by the BFUG/Board at the next meeting;
- γ provides assistance and support for each Working Group and any other structure

The BFUG Secretariat carries out these tasks also in respect of Working Groups, the BICG, the TPGs, task forces, ad hoc groups, and similar bodies, in agreement with the respective Co-chairs.

The BFUG Secretariat supports the implementation of the Work Plan adopted by the BFUG. To this end, the Secretariat should attend Bologna seminars and other events, where and as appropriate.

The BFUG Secretariat reviews and updates the European Higher Education Area website ensuring that up- to-date information is made available at all times for the BFUG and the public at large. It will develop an ad-hoc communication system, using up-to-date digital tools.

The BFUG Secretariat organises the Ministerial Conference and Bologna Policy Forum in Albania in 2024.



#### 4. Contact details:

##### **Sekretariati i BFUG / BFUG Secretariat**

Head of the BFUG Secretariat:

Enida Bezhani

[secretariat@eha.info](mailto:secretariat@eha.info)

Rruga: Naim Frashëri, Nr. 37,

Tiranë, Shqipëri,

1000





*Last modified: 20.04.2021*

## **ANNEX I: Bologna Follow Up Group Work Plan 2021-2024**

### **BFUG Work Plan 2021-2024**

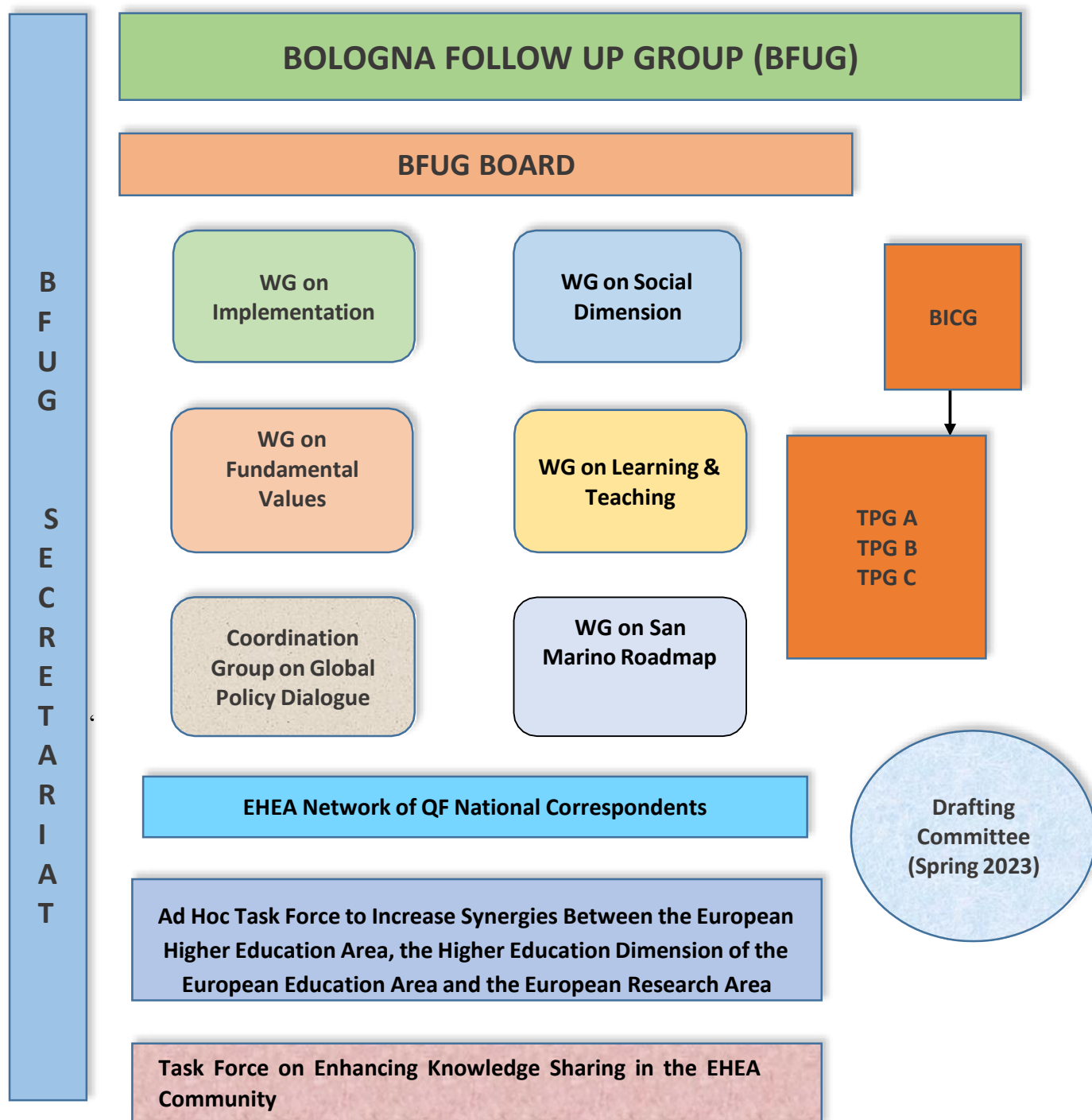
- (i) BICG – Bologna Implementation Coordination Group
- (ii) Working Groups on:
  - (ii.a) WG 1: On Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process
  - (ii.b) WG 2: On Fundamental Values
  - (ii.c) WG 3: On Social Dimension
  - (ii.d) WG 4: On Learning and Teaching
- (iii) Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (GPD)
- (iv) EHEA Network of National QF correspondents
- (v) Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA ("San Marino Roadmap WG")
- (vi) Task Forces
  - (vi.a) Ad Hoc Task Force to Increase Synergies Between the European Higher Education Area, the Higher Education Dimension of the European Education Area and the European Research Area
  - (vi.b) Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community







## Structure





### (i). BICG – Bologna Implementation Coordination Group

#### 3 Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs):

- TPG A - QF-EHEA
- TPG B - LRC
- TPG C – QA

<b>Name of the Working Group</b>
<i>Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)</i>
<b>Contact persons/Co-Chairs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austria</li> <li>• Bulgaria</li> <li>• Italy</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b>
<p>Albania; Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; Bulgaria; European Commission; Georgia; Italy; Romania; EUA - European University Association; EURASHE; one Co-chair of Thematic Peer Group A on Qualifications Framework; one Co-chair of Thematic Peer Group B on the Lisbon Recognition Convention; one Co-chair of Thematic Peer Group C on Quality Assurance; one Co-chair of Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process.</p> <p>In principle, the BICG Co-chairs should not be chairs of a Thematic Peer Group.</p> <p>The BICG should represent the geographical diversity of the EHEA and ensure a balance of expertise across all key commitments. To ensure continuity and diversity, the turnover from one work period to another should not be more than two thirds the BICG members.</p>
<b>Purpose and/or outcome</b>
<p>The purpose of the BICG is to facilitate a coordinated implementation of the three Key Commitments. To achieve that, the BICG coordinates the work of the TPGs, facilitates an exchange of experience and best practice between the TPGs' co- chairs. The BICG follows the peer support activities and reports to the BFUG on the overall progress and necessary review of the approach or methodology of peer support.</p> <p>The activities should build upon the work of the BICG in the period 2018-2020 and the outcomes and recommendations of the work of the TPGs presented in the BICG Report.</p>





### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

*” We take note of the results described in the **Bologna Process Implementation Report** on the progress made over the past two decades. The achievements are impressive. Nevertheless more work is required to ensure that the EHEA is built on strong foundations, capable of supporting interconnected, innovative and inclusive higher education in the coming decade.*

*In the 2018 Paris Ministerial Conference we decided to devote special effort to completing implementation of three “**Key Commitments**” essential for the functioning of the EHEA: the Qualifications Frameworks and ECTS, the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Diploma Supplement, and Quality Assurance according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).*

*We reconfirm our determination to see the Key Commitments fully implemented. We ask the BFUG to continue to employ the **peer support method** to achieve this. We commit to the continued participation in and contribution to this effort.”*

*“We will strengthen the implementation of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention and apply its principles to qualifications and periods of study outside the EHEA, using common assessment criteria and reports, in collaboration with the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee and the ENIC and NARIC Networks.*

*We will ensure automatic recognition of academic qualifications and periods of study within the EHEA so that students, staff and graduates are able to move freely to study, teach and do research. We will make the necessary legislative changes to guarantee automatic recognition at system level for qualifications delivered in EHEA countries where quality assurance operates in compliance with the ESG and where a fully operational national qualifications framework has been established. We also encourage the application of agreed and secure systems of digital certification and communication such as blockchain, as well as the further development of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) to facilitate automatic recognition.*

*We commit to reviewing our own legislation, regulations, and practice to ensure fair recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in refugee-like situations, even when they cannot be fully documented, in accordance with Article VII of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We welcome the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees and will support further broadening its use in our systems.*





### Specific tasks

- Coordinate the work of the TPGs;
- Follow-up peer support activities by keeping an overview of the composition and activities of the different groups;
- Seek to improve the Peer Support Approach for the implementation of the Key Commitments, including possible adjustments;
- Identify synergies in the work of the Thematic Peer Groups;
- Give the BFUG regular updates and an overview on the progress and effectiveness of the Peer Support Approach for the implementation of the Key Commitments, based on the activities of the TPGs;
- Prepare analytical reports to the BFUG on the activities of the different TPGs and the support for the implementation of Key Commitments as a whole, including operation (what works, what does not work), impact and usefulness;
- Prepare recommendations for further action to improve implementation for consideration by the BFUG;
- Provide an assessment of thematic peer groups as a working method, including whether they should be extended to other policy areas within the competence of the BFUG.

### Reporting

Minimum of yearly reporting to the BFUG.

### Meeting schedule

To be decided

### Liaison with other WGs' activities

- WG on Monitoring and any other relevant BFUG structures





### **Additional remarks on the Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs)**

The objective of the TPGs is to provide a forum to support countries in working together to implement the Key Commitments. The TPGs should continue using the Peer Support Approach and build on the work accomplished during the previous work period.

The TPGs should follow up and update their action plans to reflect countries' progress and developments.

The countries and organisations should nominate representatives of authorities and stakeholders with relevant expertise in the topic for the duration of the entire work period.

The co-chairs of the TPGs should be appointed by the BFUG and be responsible for planning, coordinating and reporting on the activities of the TPGs.

There should be no more than three co-chairs per TPG respecting also a principle that one country should co-chair no more than one TPG or BICG.

The TPGs' Co-chairs:

- TPG A: Austria; Georgia; Latvia
- TPG B: Albania; France; Italy
- TPG C: Belgium Flemish Community; Kazakhstan; Romania

## **(ii) Working Groups**

### **(i.a) Working Group 1 on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process**

#### **Name of the Working Group**

*Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process*

#### **Contact persons/Co-Chairs**

- European Commission/Eurydice
- Norway

#### **Composition**

Albania; Austria; Belarus; Cyprus; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; Moldova; The Netherlands; Norway; Romania; Russia; United Kingdom; EI - ETUCE; EQAR; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; European Commission/Eurydice.





### Purpose and/or outcome

- To guide the preparation of the Bologna Process Implementation Report for 2024;
- To identify sources of reliable, comparable data relevant for the EHEA;
- To make further progress in improving structured and standardised monitoring of the EHEA;
- To ensure that accurate comparisons can be made between countries and that implementation and other changes are transparent within as well as between countries.

### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

*We ask the BFUG to develop a framework for the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA that will foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, higher education institutions and organisations, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these are honoured and implemented in our systems.*

### Specific tasks

- To develop a proposal for the scope of the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report;
- To develop and agree the indicators to measure progress, and the data required for the 2024 report with the agreement of the BFUG;
- To develop suitable data collection material;
- To ensure that information is collected from all Bologna countries;
- To guide the drafting of the overall report for approval by the BFUG in advance of the 2024 Ministerial Conference.

### Reporting

Minutes of working group meetings will be made available by the Bologna Secretariat.

BFUG should also receive regular reports and updates.

To allow for good communication with BFUG as a whole and for thenecessary consultations, progress reports should be made at each BFUG meeting. More specifically, the set of key indicators measuring progress on Bologna actions shall be agreed with the BFUG. In between BFUG meetings, updates can be circulated by the Bologna Secretariat via e-mail.

The draft of the Bologna Process Implementation Report for 2024 will be presented and discussed at the BFUG meeting at the end of 2023.

### Meeting schedule

TBD

Past experience suggests that around 2 meetings per year would be required.







### Liaison with other WGs' activities

- A Co chair will take part in BICG meetings;
- Involvement in the Working Group on fundamental values is foreseen;
- Involvement in other Working Groups, is likely to be beneficial and proposals will be made by the Group members.

## (i.b) Working Group 2 on Fundamental Values

### Name of the Working Group

*Working Group on Fundamental Values*

### Contact persons/Co-chairs

- Germany
- Malta
- Norway
- Romania

### Composition

Austria; Croatia; European Commission; Finland; France; Germany; Holy See; Iceland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; The Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russia; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; United Kingdom; United Kingdom (Scotland); Council of Europe; EI – ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; European Commission/ Eurydice.

A representative of the working group on Monitoring should be a member of the working group, preferably one of the co-chairs of WG1, to establish a link between the work done in the two groups.

### Purpose and/or outcome

- To develop a comprehensive framework to further the monitoring and implementation of the fundamental values of the EHEA in the higher education systems of its members. The system should foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these fundamental values are honoured and implemented in the EHEA.

### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

*“We reaffirm our commitment to promoting and protecting **our shared fundamental values in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation** as the necessary basis for quality learning, teaching and research as well as for democratic societies. We commit to*





*upholding institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education.*

*We ask the BFUG to develop a **framework** for the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA that will foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, higher education institutions and organisations, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these are honoured and implemented in our systems. We adopt the **definition of academic freedom** as freedom of academic staff and students to engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in and with society without interference nor fear of reprisal”*

### Specific tasks

- To develop indicators on *de jure* and *de facto* implementation of academic freedom and integrity based on the definition of academic freedom adopted by the ministers in the Rome Communiqué;
- On the basis of consultation with academic experts and relevant stakeholder organisations, to consider how the additional fundamental values defined in the Paris and Rome Communiqués - institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education - can be defined, understood and implemented in the EHEA;
- To continue to develop and trial a comprehensive, effective and evidence-based monitoring framework for future reporting on the implementation of the fundamental values in the EHEA through the Bologna Process Implementation Report, a system that takes into account both the *de jure* and the *de facto* aspects of the fundamental values of the EHEA;
- To liaise with the working group on Monitoring to ensure that the collection of data related to *de jure* monitoring of the fundamental values takes place, and that this data is reported in time for the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report;
- To develop options for the *de facto* monitoring of fundamental values, including different options for types of data to be explored and methods for collecting and combining data;
- To recommend indicators of fundamental values, as well as the evidence required to fill them, and the source for such evidence;
- In cooperation with the BFUG, take the initiative to a policy dialogue and peer learning activities in the areas concerned, with all relevant higher education policy makers, institutions and stakeholders.

### Reporting

Regular progress report will be given to the BFUG. A final report with recommendations will be presented to the BFUG and to the ministerial meeting in 2024.

Minutes of working group meetings will be made available by the Bologna Secretariat.

### Meeting schedule

Dates will be decided upon by the working group at a later stage.







### Liaison with other WGs' activities

- WG on Monitoring

## (i.c) Working Group 3 on Social Dimension

<b>Name of the Working Group</b> <i>Working Group on Social Dimension</i>
<b>Contact persons/Co-Chairs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Croatia</li> <li>• ESU – European Students' Union</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b> Albania; Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; Belgium French Community; Croatia; Cyprus; Denmark; Estonia; European Commission; France; Georgia; Germany; Italy; Kazakhstan; Lithuania; Malta; Moldova; The Netherlands; Poland; Romania; Russia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Turkey; United Kingdom; United Kingdom (Scotland); Council of Europe; EI - ETUCE; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association.
<b>Purpose and/or outcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To support the EHEA members in developing social dimension policies that will create inclusive environment in higher education that fosters equity, diversity, and is responsive to the needs of local communities. The Working Group will follow up and will further develop the main outcomes of the work of the AG1 on Social Dimension 2018-2020: “<i>Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA</i>”, which is annexed to the Rome Communiqué.</li> </ul>
<b>Reference to the Rome Communiqué</b> <i>We adopt the “Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA” (Annex II) based on a broadened understanding of the social dimension, and commit to implementing them in our systems. We will engage in wide-ranging policy dialogue on how to implement the principles and guidelines fully at national level. We will support our higher education institutions in integrating them into their institutional culture and core missions: learning and teaching, research and innovation, knowledge circulation and outreach, institutional governance and management. We ask the BFUG to report back to us in 2024 on the steps taken and the related monitoring measures to assure evidence-based follow-up.</i>



### Specific Tasks

- Developing a system of monitoring the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA. It will enable measuring the impact of the broadened definition of the social dimension in the Principles and Guidelines on the work of different higher education institutions;
- Defining indicators and benchmarks for the principles included in the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA;
- Organising peer support activities for social dimension to support the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines among the EHEA members. The Working Group should consider establishing partnerships for implementing Thematic Country Reviews for Social Dimension to systematically collect country needs for peer support;
- Organising a seminar on the social dimension at the end of the cycle in 2024 to discuss the progress made in developing social dimension policies in the EHEA members.

### Reporting

Minutes of working group meetings and key documents developed by the Working group will be made available on the EHEA website [www.ehea.info](http://www.ehea.info). The Bologna Secretariat will provide administrative support for the work of the Working Group. The BFUG should also receive regular reports and updates from the group. To ensure good communication and consultations with the BFUG as a whole, progress reports should be submitted at least two weeks before each BFUG meeting.

### Draft meeting schedule

The content and timeline of the meetings will be discussed amongst the co-chairs and the members of this Working Group; however, the following can be seen as a draft schedule:

Year 2021 – 1<sup>st</sup> quarter:

- Defining the Workplan for the mandate of the WG with the methods of work

Year 2021 – 2024:

- Organising peer support activities for social dimension

Year 2021 – 2022 (1<sup>st</sup> quarter)

- Defining indicators and benchmarks for the principles included in the *Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA*.

Year 2022 (1<sup>st</sup> quarter) – 2024 (1<sup>st</sup> quarter)

- Defining a system of monitoring the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines





Year 2024 (in the framework of the ministerial conference)

- Organising a seminar on the social dimension

**Liaison with other WGs' activities**

TBC

### *(i.d) Working Group 4 on Learning and Teaching*

<b>Name of the Working Group</b>
<i>Working Group on Learning and Teaching</i>
<b>Contact persons/Co-chairs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ireland</li> <li>• France</li> <li>• EURASHE</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b>
Albania; Armenia; Austria; Belarus; Belgium Flemish Community; Cyprus; European Commission; France; Georgia; Germany; Holy See; Ireland; Italy; Kazakhstan; The Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Romania; Russia; San Marino; Slovenia; Spain; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; United Kingdom (Scotland); EI – ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; EURASHE.
<b>Purpose and/or outcome</b>
<p>➤ To support the members of the EHEA in developing successful ways to improve strategies for the enhancement of learning and teaching. The working group will base its work on the recommendations that were endorsed by Ministers in the 2020 Conference of Ministers [as result of the 2018-2020 BFUG Work Programme], in particular Annex III of the Communiqué, thus, translating these into an operational action framework and – where possible – into measurable, qualitative indicators. The group will include the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making student-centred learning a reality across the entire EHEA;</li> <li>• Supporting staff development;</li> <li>• Fostering innovative learning and teaching. These should ensure inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral and experiential learning as outcomes. Innovations in learning and teaching should</li> </ul>





also contribute to opening up higher education to lifelong and non-traditional learners, for example through micro-credentials;

- Discussing assessment in higher education to encompass a wider set of learning outcomes, in addition to disciplinary knowledge, such as inter-disciplinarity and transversal, green and digital competences;
- Strengthening the capacity of higher education institutions and systems, to support the continuous improvement of learning, teaching and assessment;
- Developing international learning environments for the students, such as the inclusion of a mobility experience or access to internationalisation at home).

In view of its establishment during the COVID-19 pandemic, this group aims also to strengthen the resilience of higher education system, with a focus on future skills, high quality learning, teaching, and assessment methods and strong links with research and innovation.

#### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

*“We adopt the **“Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching in the EHEA” (Annex III)** and commit to follow them, supporting higher education institutions in further implementing student-centred learning and teaching. The recommendations comprise increased support for all learners, and for teaching and non-teaching staff. Academic staff, including junior academics, require stable employment and career opportunities, parity of esteem for teaching and research, attractive working conditions, access to up-to-date staff development, and recognition of their achievements. In all these respects we will foster dialogue and collaboration on learning and teaching in our national systems and at EHEA level.”*

*“**Flexible and open learning paths**, part of the original inspiration for the Bologna Process, are important aspects of **student-centred learning** and are in increasing demand in our societies. In addition to full degree programmes, many higher education institutions offer or plan to offer **smaller units of learning**, which enable learners to develop or update their cultural, professional, and transversal skills and competences at various stages in their lives. We ask the BFUG to explore how and to what extent these **smaller, flexible units, including those leading to micro-credentials**, can be defined, developed, implemented and recognised by our institutions using EHEA tools.*

*“We commit to **supporting our higher education institutions in using digital technologies** for learning, teaching and assessment, as well as for academic communication and research, and to investing in the development of digital skills and competences for all.”*

#### Specific Tasks

- Further develop the recommendations in Annex III of the Rome Communiqué by





**translating them into concrete actions at European/EHEA level and developing measurable qualitative indicators**, which can serve as a basis for monitoring the progress on learning and teaching in EHEA;<sup>1</sup>

- Support member countries in the development of concrete national actions and strategies to implement the above recommendations. This could entail, but does not need to be limited to, organising forums and/or seminars for policy makers and HEI;
- Organise a survey based on the recommendations to map challenges and actions within the EHEA and inform further work in this period. Repeat this survey at the end of the working period;
- 'In preparation of the 2024 ministerial conference, recommend concrete policy actions to the BFUG and ministers on the implementation of micro-credentials in the EHEA, in line with the developments in the European Education Area;
- Make concrete recommendations on strengthening innovative learning, teaching and assessment, including student-centred, trans-disciplinary, challenge-based and STEAM approaches;
- Identify lessons learnt during the COVID-19 crisis for learning, teaching and assessment in higher education in the EHEA. Translate these into recommendations and actions for policymaking at the level of public authorities. Emphasis might be put on the digital transformation of higher education institutions and systems and on future skills development for teachers and learners.

### Reporting

Minutes of the working group meetings and the results of the surveys shall be made available to the BFUG.

BFUG shall receive regular reports and updates and be consulted, if needed. Progress reports will be submitted by the working group at each BFUG meeting.

More specifically, the set of indicators measuring progress shall be agreed with the BFUG. In between the BFUG meetings, updates shall be circulated by the BFUG Secretariat via email.

The draft of the 2024 working group report will be presented and discussed at the BFUG meeting at the end of 2023.

### Meeting schedule

TBC

<sup>1</sup> This objective in particular raises the question of funding; to do this properly funding would be necessary to define and implement a systematic project approach. An EC funded umbrella project is suggested here, such as in the peer support groups of the current working period







### Liaison with other WGs' activities

TBD

### (iii) Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

#### Name of the Coordination Group

*Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue*

#### Contact persons/Co-chairs

- Albania
- Belgium Flemish Community
- European Commission
- Italy

#### Composition

Albania; Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; European Commission; France; Germany; Holy See; Ireland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; The Netherlands; Romania; Spain; United Kingdom; EI - ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; UNESCO.

*Note: Given its contribution to date, IAU will also be invited to contribute to this group.*

#### Purpose and/or outcome

- To foster dialogue and build trust between the EHEA and other countries and macro-regions through exchange of knowledge and cooperation, with the aim of addressing overarching issues more effectively, such as achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The coordination group is also tasked with the organisation of the 2024 Global Policy Forum and Statement, and where possible other appropriate events during the work period.

#### General objectives

- Reinforce ongoing dialogue at global level;
- Achieve greater awareness of the various vital roles of HE in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and find paths for global collaboration to do so effectively;
- Propose how to enhance the EHEA's ability to foster, participate in and benefit from





this dialogue.

### Thematic objectives in the context of global cooperation

- Intensify focus on the societal role of higher education to foster effective inclusion of learners not only at the time of access to HE, but also with respect to retention, success and employability;
- Promote inclusive mobility as one of the most important keys to global understanding and to excellence in higher education;
- Promote further development and use in practice of the transparency and quality tools necessary for advancing mobility and facilitating recognition;
- Create contacts and support reciprocal referencing of the several overarching Qualifications Frameworks and Qualifications Reference frameworks now functioning or being prepared in the EHEA and in other macro-regions;
- Promote student-centred learning and understanding of credit systems or credit reference systems based on Learning Outcomes and student time;
- Develop dialogue about the challenges and opportunities offered by the shift towards digital learning environments, in part triggered by the pandemic;
- Ensure connection with the other BFUG Advisory, Working or Coordination Groups that address the above issues in the EHEA context.

### Specific Tasks

- Suggest plans to the BFUG for the organisation of the Global Policy Forum to be held along with the Ministerial Conference to be hosted by Albania in 2024;
- Organise and implement events, meetings or other initiatives (including virtual events) to build awareness and dialogue with respect to the CG's overarching aims, the general or/and thematic objectives;
- Explore ways of initiating or consolidating contacts with other countries, macro-regions and organisations in order to develop and strengthen dialogue.

### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

*“While the COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible to hold the Global Policy Forum as intended, we are pleased that our Conference includes a global session. We recommit to international dialogue on higher education values, policies, and reforms, drawing on the experiences of the EHEA as well as those of other areas of the world, and ask the BFUG to further develop and strengthen Global Dialogue in the coming work period.”*

### Reporting

Minutes of coordination group meetings and updates on activities will be made available online to the BFUG by the BFUG Secretariat. The BFUG Secretariat, at the request of the CG Chairs, may circulate relevant updates to the CG members.



<p>The BFUG shall also receive regular reports and updates from the group.</p> <p>To ensure good communication with the BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, progress reports shall be submitted two weeks before each BFUG meeting.</p>
<p><b>Meeting schedule</b></p> <p>Meetings can be electronic or in presence, according to what will be possible and appropriate in the post COVID era. Smaller ad hoc groups or task forces may be delegated for specific tasks.</p> <p>The exact programming will be discussed by the Co-chairs and the members of the Coordination Group.</p>
<p><b>Liaison with other WGs' activities</b></p> <p>TBD</p>

#### (iv) EHEA Network of National QF correspondents

<p><b>Name of the Network</b></p> <p><i>EHEA Network of National Qualifications Frameworks Correspondents</i></p>
<p><b>Contact Person/Coordinator</b></p> <p>Council of Europe</p>
<p><b>Composition</b></p> <p>Albania; Andorra; Austria; Belarus; Belgium Flemish Community; Belgium French Community; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; European Commission; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Holy See; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; Moldova; The Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russia; San Marino; Slovakia; Spain; Switzerland; Ukraine; Council of Europe; EI – ETUCE; EUA - European University Association; EURASHE; UNESCO.</p>
<p><b>Purpose and/or outcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To exchange experience and offer advice in the development, implementation, and review of national qualifications frameworks;</li> <li>➤ Further coherence between national QFs and the Overarching Frameworks of Qualifications of the EHEA (QF-EHEA);</li> <li>➤ Further coherence between the QF-EHEA and the European Qualifications</li> </ul>







Framework for lifelong learning (EQF);

- Advice EHEA members and the BFUG on issues related to the QF-EHEA and national qualifications frameworks.

### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

*We commit to completing and further developing the **National Qualifications Frameworks** compatible with the **Overarching Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)** and ask the BFUG to update the criteria for self-certification to include a stronger element of peer review of national reports. We mandate the **Network of QF correspondents** to continue its work, contributing to the further development of the QF-EHEA and the self-certification of national qualifications frameworks against it.*

***Flexible and open learning paths**, part of the original inspiration for the Bologna Process, are important aspects of student-centred learning and are in increasing demand in our societies. In addition to full degree programmes, many higher education institutions are offering or may offer **smaller units of learning**, which enable learners to develop or update their cultural, professional, and transversal competences at various stages in their lives. We ask the BFUG to explore how and to what extent these **smaller, flexible units, including those leading to micro-credentials**, can be defined, developed and implemented by our institutions using EHEA tools.*

### Specific tasks

The Network shall act as a forum for debate and advice on issues related to the QF-EHEA and national frameworks, in particular with a view to:

- ensuring coherence between national frameworks and the QF-EHEA;
- ensuring coherence between the QF-EHEA and the EQF;
- advising on the development and implementation of ECTS-based short cycle qualifications as stand-alone higher education qualifications within the QF-EHEA in countries that wish to develop and implement which short cycle qualifications; advising on how and to what extent smaller, flexible units, including those leading to micro-credentials, can be defined, developed and implemented within the QF-EHEA and national qualification frameworks;
- encouraging periodic reviews of the implementation of national qualifications frameworks for higher education;
- encouraging and providing advice on renewed self-certification of national frameworks for which developments make this necessary or desirable;
- developing proposals for arrangements to strengthen the peer review of national self-certification reports and processes;
- encouraging reflection on how national qualifications frameworks can best help education systems fulfill all major purposes of higher education.





### Working method

Annual meetings of the Network are organised with the participation, as far as possible, of representatives of all EHEA members and consultative members. The meetings will normally be held in September/October. Specific issues may also be addressed by electronic communication or online meetings.

Whenever relevant, joint activities with the EQF Advisory Group, Thematic Peer Groups, or national contact points may be organised.

The Network is coordinated by the Council of Europe, which brings the outcome of its work to the attention of the BFUG as well as the EQF Advisory Group.

### Reporting

Reports will be submitted to the BFUG and Board in writing.

### Meeting schedule

TBC

### Liaison with other WGs' activities

TBD

(v)

## Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA

### Name of the Ad Hoc Group

*Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA ("San Marino Roadmap WG")*

### Contact persons/Co-Chairs

- Andorra
- Finland

### Composition

Andorra; Finland; Holy See; Italy; Liechtenstein; San Marino; Council of Europe; ENQA.





### Purpose and/or outcome

- To support San Marino in its implementation of the Roadmap and advise the BFUG and Board on the implementation and any further support measures recommended.

### Reference to the Rome Communiqué

We are pleased to welcome San Marino as a new Member of the EHEA. San Marino will be supported in the implementation of its commitments with an agreed roadmap. Roadmap (appended)

### Specific tasks

- To follow up the San Marino roadmap together with the Sammarinese authorities;
- To develop a timetable for implementing the higher education reforms, building on the milestones set out in the San Marino Roadmap;
- To assist the Sammarinese authorities in implementing the roadmap and in developing specific policy areas;
- To assist in peer-learning activities and to facilitate cooperation;
- To report to the BFUG on the state of implementation of the roadmap by the beginning of 2024.

### Reporting

Minutes of working group meetings will be made available to the BFUG Board and to the BFUG on the protected part of the website.

The Working Group will present regular updates to the Board and to the BFUG.

Progress reports should be submitted at least three weeks before each Board or BFUG meeting. The reports should be analytical and describe the state of implementation of the Roadmap as well as further measures envisaged by the Sammarinese authorities. In between meetings, updates should be circulated by the Bologna Secretariat via e-mail.

The final progress report will be presented and discussed at the latest during the first BFUG meeting in spring 2024.

### Meeting schedule

[Dates are just tentative, will be decided by the working group at a later stage]

- First meeting: shortly after the BFUG meeting in April 2021 to establish a timetable for the implementation of the San Marino roadmap.





- Further meetings to be held as indicated in the timetable to be established at the first meeting, generally at least one meeting per semester. Meetings may be held online or face to face as required; at least one meeting should be held in San Marino to allow broader contacts with Sammarinese stakeholders.

#### **Liaison with other WGs (or similar)**

Liaison with other Working Groups:

- WG on Monitoring
- WG on fundamental values
- Bologna Implementation Coordination Group and/or relevant peer groups

#### **Additional remarks**

These terms of reference may be reviewed in the light of progress of the work, in agreement with the BFUG.

### **(vi) Task Forces**

#### **(vi.a) Ad Hoc Task Force to Increase Synergies Between the European Higher Education Area, the Higher Education Dimension of the European Education Area and the European Research Area**

<b>Name of the Working Group</b> <i>Ad Hoc Task Force to Increase Synergies Between the European Higher Education Area, the Higher Education Dimension of the European Education Area and the European Research Area (for the period May – December 2021)</i>
<b>Contact persons/Co-Chairs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slovenia</li> <li>• European Commission</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b> <p>Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; Belgium French Community; Denmark; Estonia; European Commission; Finland; France; Greece; Luxembourg; Malta; North Macedonia;</p>





Norway; Portugal; Romania; Slovenia; Spain; Switzerland; United Kingdom; Council of Europe; EI – ETUCE; EUA - European University Association; EURASHE.

### Purpose and/or outcome

A proposal allowing for concrete synergies between the European Higher Education Area (Bologna context), the higher education dimension of the European Education Area (EU context) and the European Research Area (EU context), building on the respective cooperation structures.

### Reference to Rome Communiqué

*We commit to strengthening cooperation with the European Research Area. We call for the BFUG to work closely with the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) to enhance synergies and alignment between education and research and innovation policies. Focus will be inter alia on developing research-based learning, guaranteeing academic and scientific freedom, and contributing to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.*

### Specific tasks

Building on the Rome Communiqué, **develop a proposal allowing for a streamlined and strengthened cooperation between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the higher education dimension of the European Education Area (EEA) and the European Research Area (ERA).** The proposal should describe how the cooperation can be done in a fit-for-purpose and flexible manner, for example in the form of joint meetings or working groups.

**Elaborate a proposal for a way forward on how to concretely work on a strengthened cooperation on the specific topics** identified by the Ministers in the Rome Communiqué, i.e. research-based learning, guaranteeing academic and scientific freedom, and contributing to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

### Reporting

Minutes of Task Force meetings will be made available by the Bologna Secretariat.

The BFUG should receive a proposal for synergies and cooperation by its meeting in December 2021.

### Meeting schedule:

Online meetings, about three meetings, to be decided by the Task Force

### Liaison with other EHEA WGs' activities

Working Group on Social Dimension

Working Group on Learning and Teaching

Working Group on Fundamental Values

### Additional remarks



**(vi.b). Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community (as of June 4, 2021, the ToRs are being finalized)**

<b>Name of the Working Group</b>
<i>Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community</i>
<b>Contact persons/Co-chairs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albania</li> <li>• Italy</li> <li>• Romania</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b>
<p>Albania; Belgium Flemish Community; European Commission; Germany; Italy; Malta; The Netherlands; Romania; United Kingdom; EQAR; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; EURASHE.</p> <p>The Task Force can invite, as appropriate, relevant experts to collaborate in its work.</p>
<b>Purpose and/or outcome</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Devise ways to enhance knowledge sharing within the EHEA, involving academic communities, stakeholder organizations, national authorities and the BFUG itself, in order to enable better understanding and closer collaboration in developing and implementing the EHEA policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Reference to the Rome Communiqué</b>
<p><i>“We commit to <b>building a more closely connected and sustainable higher education community, which fosters inclusion, communication, cooperation, and solidarity, essential for the relevance and excellence of the future EHEA.</b> To accomplish this, we commit to keeping our national higher education sectors informed about and involved in EHEA developments, and to working closely with student and higher education associations and networks on the development and implementation of national reforms. We recognize the importance of the broad consultations carried out to identify priorities for the future of the EHEA and ask the BFUG to organize EHEA</i></p>







*events such as **transnational seminars, workshops and hearings** involving the wider higher education community (students, academic staff and external stakeholders), to discuss present and future goals and explore collaborative ways to address them.”*

### **Specific tasks**

- Map and explore national approaches to communication and implementation of Bologna policy goals: how are they perceived; what the existing practices of exchange and collaboration with the different actors, including stakeholders and the Ministries themselves are;
- Devise and promote ways to make the Bologna Process and its reform goals better understood and more transparent at institutional and national level, for the academic community, as well as for the broader public, also encouraging and taking into account input from them;
- Identify measures to enhance collaboration between individual countries and groups of countries that enable them to learn from and support each other in sharing knowledge more effectively within the EHEA community;
- Organize events aiming at spreading information and creating dialogue about the Bologna process and/or support members in organizing such events at national or transnational level;
- Devise methods for better communication about the Bologna process, employing innovative ways of communication, attractive and accessible for all.

### **Working method**

Working meetings will be held in presence or virtual, as appropriate and possible; online and email consultation will be ongoing within the Task Force (details and roadmap to be agreed within the Task Force).

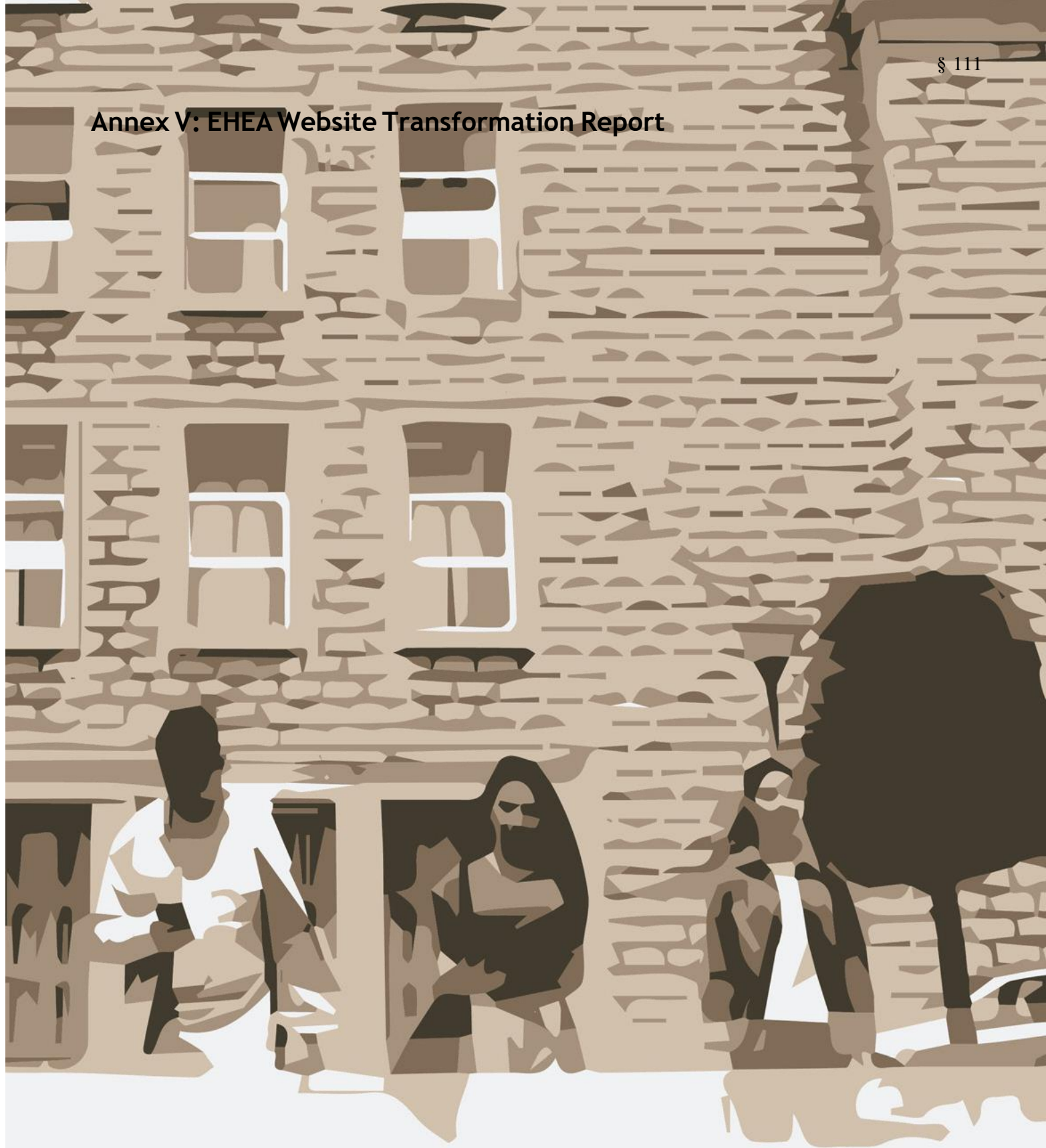
### **Reporting**

Regular progress reports will be presented to the BFUG, and a final report with recommendations will be prepared.

Minutes of Task Force meetings will be made available by the Bologna Secretariat.



## Annex V: EHEA Website Transformation Report



# EHEA WEBSITE TRANSFORMATION REPORT

**BFUG Secretariat**  
**June 2024**



Authors: Aida Myrto, Ana Zhibaj, Oltion Rrumbullaku, Patrik Bardhi

Edited by: Jora Vaso, Manjola Hasa

Approved by: Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi

Bologna Follow-Up Group Secretariat

Rr. Naim Frashëri, Nr. 37

Tirana, Albania

June 23, 2024



**Albanian BFUG Secretariat**  
**2021-2024**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In support of the EHEA working structures, the BFUG Secretariat team recently executed several key initiatives, one of which was the maintenance and enhancement of the EHEA website. Firstly, the categories bar has been revamped, introducing new categories, a restructuring aimed at streamlining information dissemination while preventing cluttered category tabs. Additionally, sub-categories within each category were refined, enhancing their effectiveness in filtering information and managing content efficiently. These tasks were coordinated by Senior Expert, Aida Myrto.

Furthermore, the Secretariat social seamlessly integrated the EHEA website with social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. This integration involved placing media shortcuts in the top right corner

of the index page for effortless access to the organization's social media profiles. These enhancements collectively contribute to a more comprehensive and accessible online presence for the EHEA.

The EHEA website's homepage has been visually revamped, along with a more optimized information structure, aimed at enriching the visitor's experience.

The archive of previous BFUG and Board meeting minutes has been compiled, the result of rigorous research aimed at fulfilling the request of many Co-Chairs who sought access to these archival records.

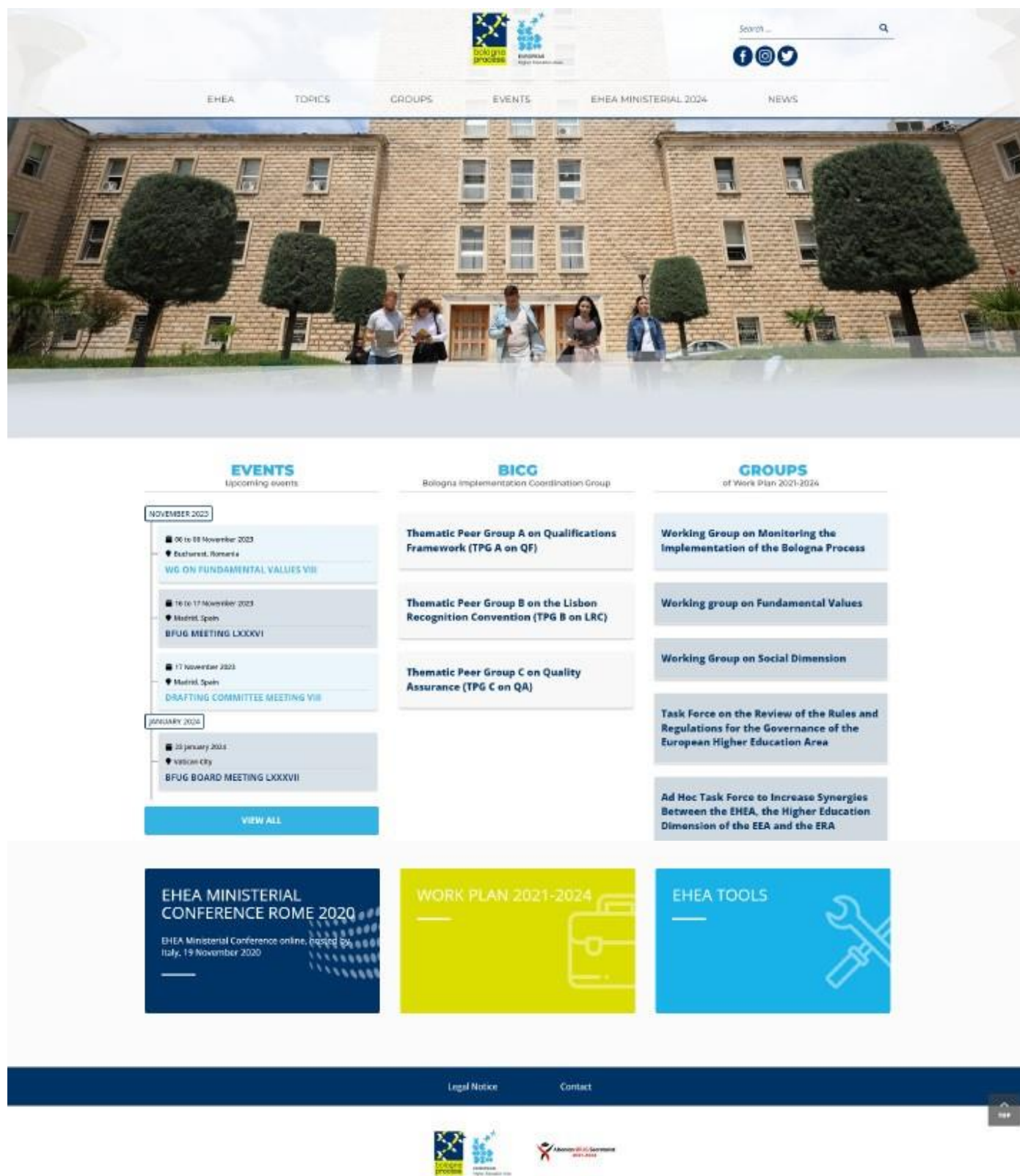
## RATIONALE & BACKGROUND

The BFUG Secretariat activity, is regulated by the Rules and Procedures, approved at the BFUG meeting in Portugal in 2021 as well as by a special national bylaw; government decision No. 1163, date 24.12.2020, "For the establishment and maintaining of the Secretariat of "Bologna Follow Up Group" from the Republic of Albania", amended by the Decision Nr. 526 of the Council of Ministers on September 7, 2023 and the legal framework in force in Albania.

This report encompasses the time frame from January 31st, 2023 to August 31st 2023 and provides an account of the work processes that led to the comprehensive improvements of the website.

The website plays a crucial role in the EHEA and BFUG structures by serving as a platform for disseminating information related to higher education. It offers a means for working groups, member countries, and the broader general public to stay informed on issues regarding higher





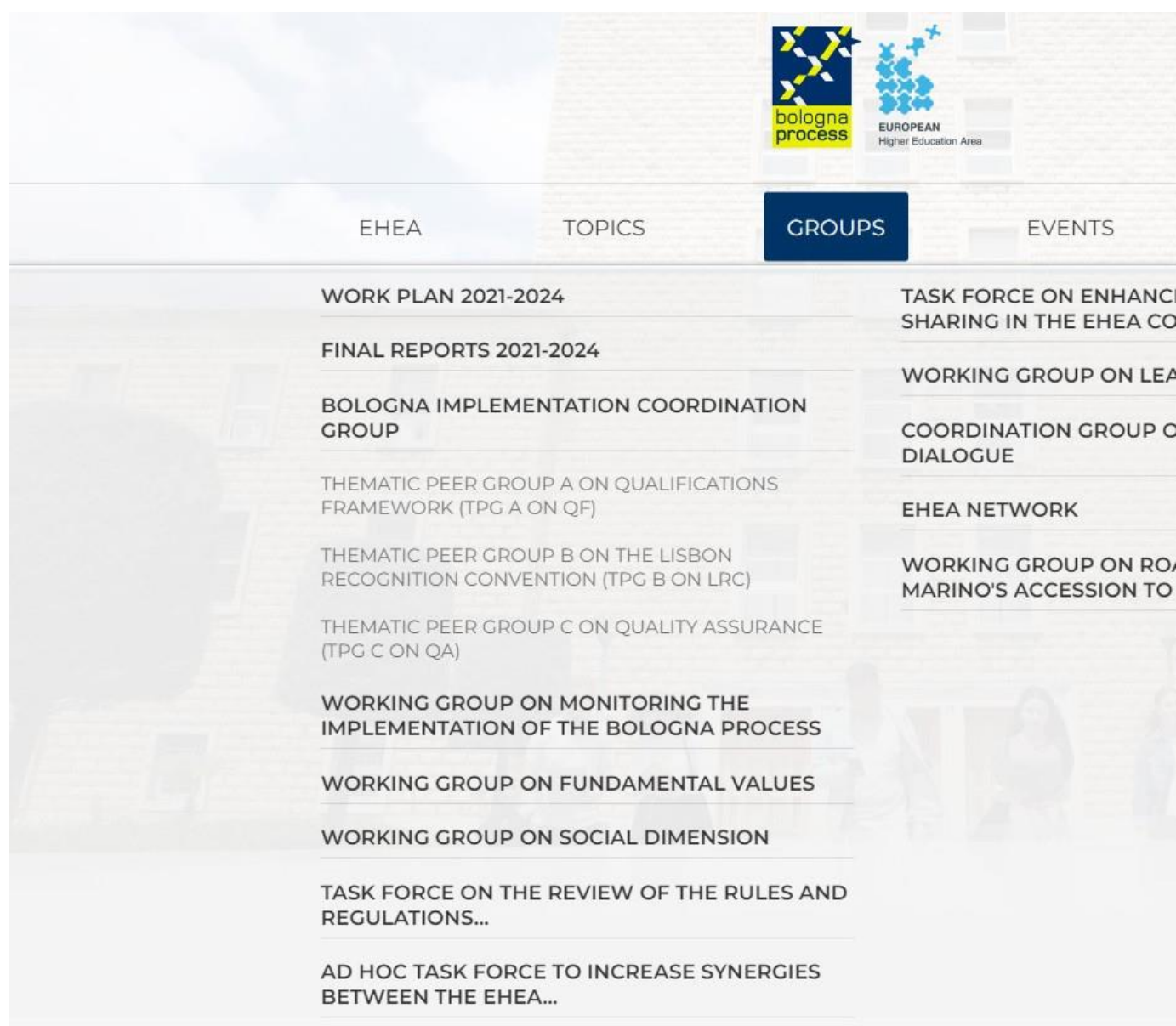
*Figure 1. The index page of the EHEA website.*



## DESCRIPTION OF WORK

The Secretariat staff supported the working structures by enhancing and periodically updating the EHEA website. The duties included, but were not limited to:

- Ensuring accurate and up-to-date information on the Terms of Reference (ToR), membership, meeting minutes and all relevant documents for each meeting held on the web pages of all BFUG working structures, reflecting the ongoing progress of the Working Structures.
- Uploading all required materials, progress reports and presentations pertinent to the BFUG Board and BFUG meetings.
- Undertaking a comprehensive restructuring of the website, which entailed the addition of two main information categories: the BFUG and Board Meeting Minutes Archive.



**Figure 2.** Anatomy of a website transformation: new categories, and added social media buttons.  
BFUG Secretariat Hosted by Albania

## GENERAL RESTRUCTURING OF THE WEBSITE

April 2023 marked the transfer of the hosting and maintenance for the EHEA web page to a new company, which enabled the procurement of a security certificate for the website.

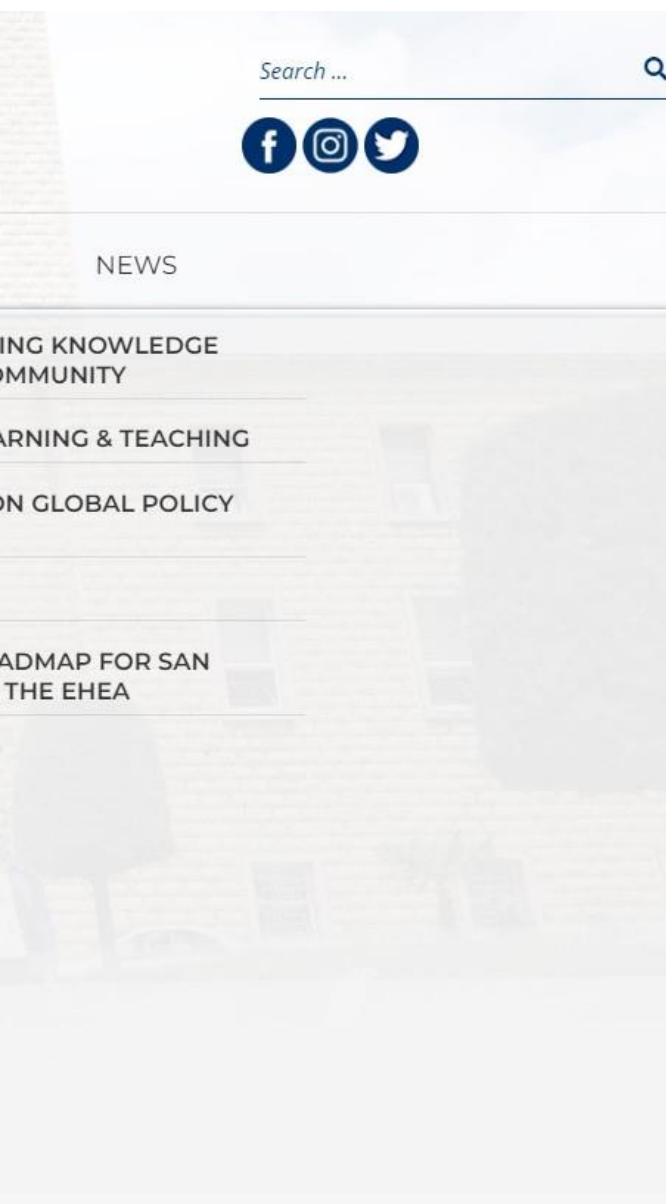
The new contract also foresaw Microsoft licenses, enabling the Secretariat to facilitate meetings of the Working Structures by providing Teams links.

Of particular concern in the main columns of information in the EHEA homepage is the TOPICS category, which seems outdated and in need of attention. To address this, there are two potential courses of action to consider. It may be advisable to archive the existing content in TOPICS, as it appears to have lost its relevance. Alternatively, a recommendation could be made to the upcoming BFUG Secretariat to undertake a thorough update of the topics within this category, aligning them with the current priorities of the BFUG Working Groups.

However, it's worth noting that adding new topics for the current period might pose challenges, given that we are nearing the end of this period, and requesting Working Groups to produce content on specific topics may not be feasible. Hence, one of our potential recommendations to the incoming BFUG Secretariat could be to prioritize this update for the next working period.

Additionally,, the CATEGORIES bar has been restructured and updated with two new categories, GROUPS and EHEA MINISTERIAL 2024, to improve information dissemination and decrease information clutter in the category tabs. The sub-categories area for each category has also been refined, enhancing their effectiveness in filtering information and managing content efficiently.

Finally, links to the social media accounts Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram have been established and integrated within the EHEA website. The social media shortcuts have been added on the top right corner of the index page, for easier access to the EHEA social media profiles.





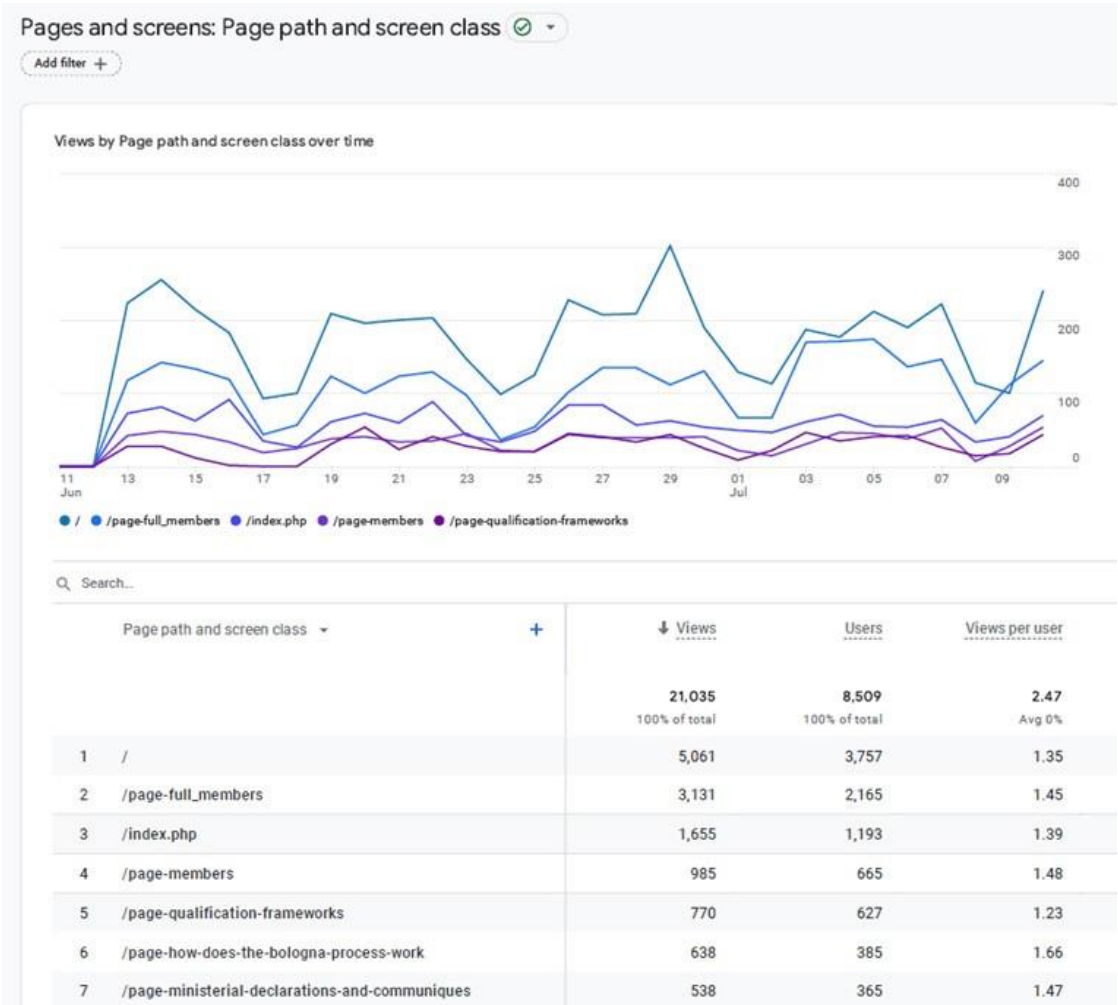
GOOGLE ANALYTICS FINDINGS

Google Analytics is a free tool that helps website administrators understand how their website is doing, who is visiting it, and how many people have visited it for different periods of time. It is useful for indicating how well the website is performing and how strong is its online presence.

We have extracted Google Analytics data for the period of one month, from June 11th to July 10th, 2023 to gain insights about the website’s user activity.

Page Paths & Views

There are a total of 21,000 website views from more than 8,000 users in one month. The most visited page in the EHEA website is the homepage, followed by the Full Members page.



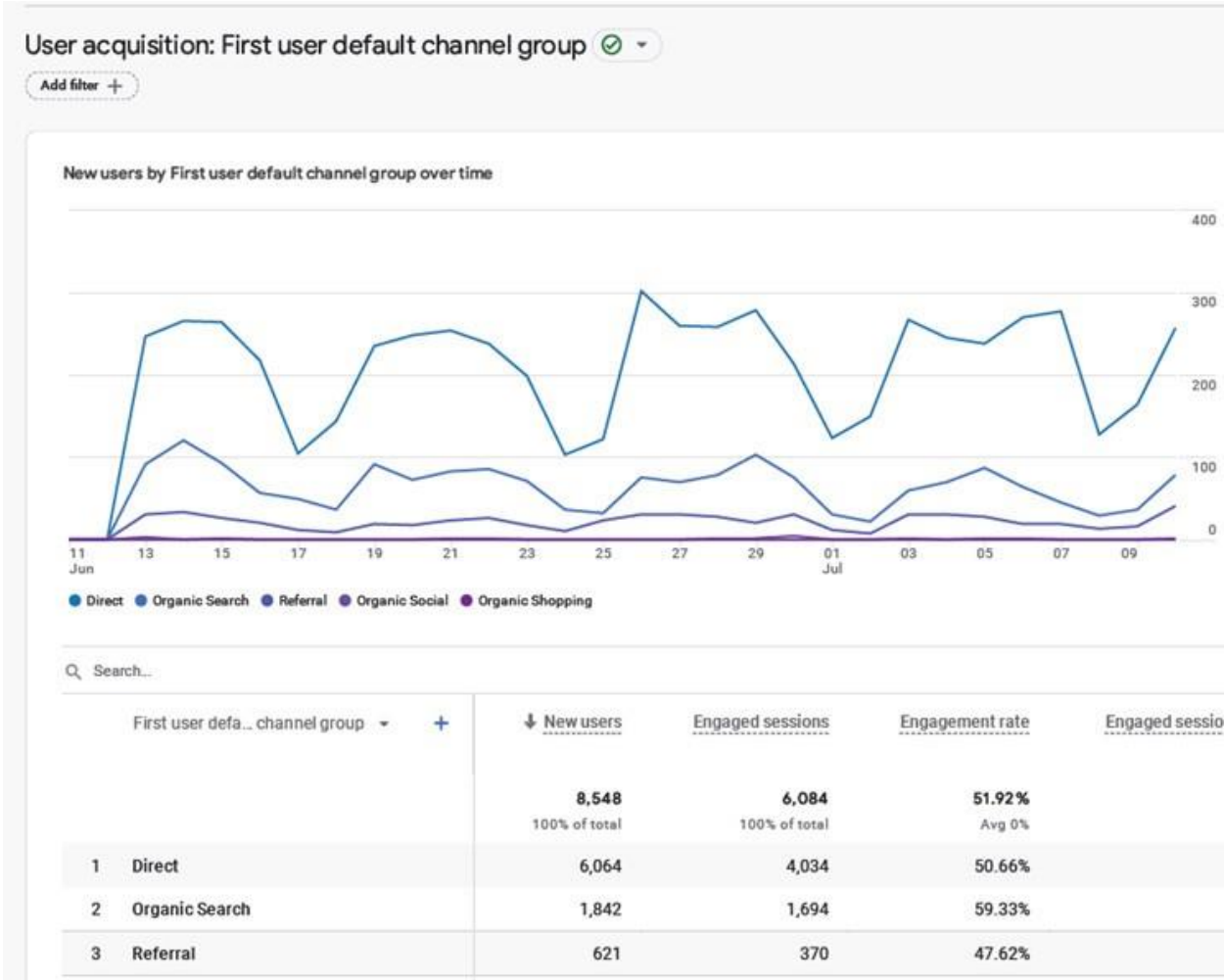
**Figure 3.** *Page paths and views.*

**Figure 4.** *User acquisition in the webpage.*

User Acquisition

In the span of one month, the EHEA website has attracted a total of 8,500 users. The breakdown of user acquisition reveals that the majority (6,000 users) have accessed the page directly, indicating strong name recognition and direct traffic.

Additionally, 1,800 users have discovered the website through organic search, reflecting the effectiveness of our content in search engine results. The remaining users found their way to the EHEA website through referrals, highlighting the role of external sources in driving traffic and engagement.



## Demographic User Data

In one month, the website insights show the diverse geographic reach of our platform. Among the users, approximately 700 hailed from Spain and Italy, indicating a strong presence in Southern Europe. Germany accounted for nearly 600

users, while the USA contributed around 400 users, showcasing international engagement. France and the UK also revealed substantial participation, with both countries contributing over 300 users each.

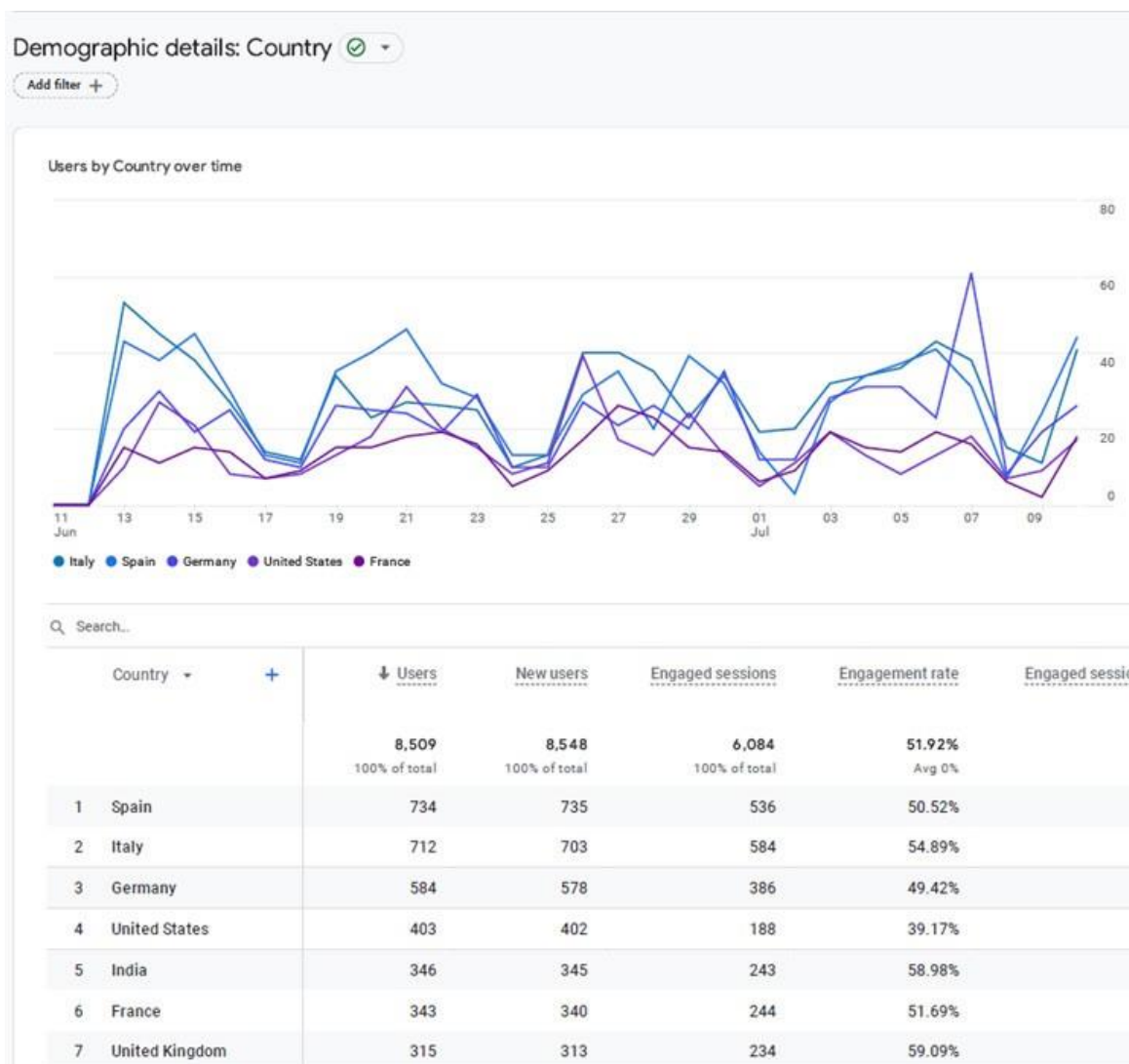


Figure 5. Demographic participation in user data.

Figure 4. User acquisition in the webpage.



## BFUG AND BOARD MINUTES ARCHIVE

The Secretariat worked to add the ‘BFUG/ Board minutes archive since 1999’ to the EHEA tab in the homepage, to render it more accessible to page visitors and shorten the time spent

on the webpage searching for the minutes. Now, all this information has been made accessible in one page.



*Figure 6. The new category, the archive of all BFUG and Board meetings, 1999 – 2024*

## EHEA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

A dedicated section has been added to the EHEA tab in the homepage, providing comprehensive information about the EHEA Ministerial Conference held in Tirana 2024. This includes details about the conference, con-

tact information, a gallery, and the final Tirana Communiqué. At the request of several Working Groups, a section containing specific information on the BFUG Secretariat, has been added within this same EHEA tab.

*Figure 7. The new category, the EHEA Ministerial.*





## EHEA NEWSLETTER AS A TOOL FOR OUTREACH

The BFUG Secretariat, in close cooperation with the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community, has completed and disseminated two issues of the first EHEA newsletter. The newsletter focuses on showcasing the work of BFUG and its Work-

ing Groups, as well as highlighting contributions from other entities related to Higher Education. Now, the subscription option has been included in the website, as a pop-up box on EHEA's landing page.

*Figure 7. The new category, the EHEA Ministerial.*

**Figure 8.** *Mission statement of the EHEA newsletter, and screenshots from the introductory editorial.*



## EHEA Newsletter

Sign up to receive our latest newsletters.

Email

**SUBSCRIBE**

### IDEAS TO IGNITE YOUR JOURNEY

EHEA

#### **WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA NEWSLETTER!**

As we embark on this exciting journey together, our goal is to provide you with valuable insights, fresh ideas, and resources that will enrich your educational experience and career path.

In each edition, we'll explore ideas meant to spark your imagination, share success stories, and highlight educational trends and opportunities that are shaping the future.

We believe that education should be international, so we are sharing with you opportunities that can help you achieve that.

Join us as we embark on this adventure, and together, we'll uncover the possibilities that come with EHEA.

Thank you for being a part of our community!

### LET'S BEGIN THE JOURNEY OF LEARNING TOGETHER!

#### **ONE THING YOU SHOULD KNOW: THE BOLOGNA PROCESS**

Everyone heard about it, some even benefited from it, but what exactly is the Bologna Process? How does it work? And why is it important for you? In this edition's article, we're giving you a brief read about how the Bologna Process was born, where it stands now and why it is still very relevant to you.

Well, simply put, the Bologna Process is the heart of European higher education transformation. This initiative aims to create a unified European Higher Education Area (EHEA), fostering mobility, inclusivity, and competitiveness.

#### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

The Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), composed of 49 countries and the European Commission, drives the Bologna Process. To join the EHEA, nations commit to aligning their higher education systems with Bologna's objectives.

#### **WHAT'S THE BOLOGNA PROCESS?**

Its mission is harmonize higher education across Europe. The EHEA promotes three-cycle education, mutual recognition of qualifications, and quality assurance, fostering collaboration among universities.

#### **WHY IT MATTERS?**

It is a platform for trust in terms of mobility and recognition, and fostering academic cooperation. But even more than that, it offers many opportunities for your career development.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

The BFUG Secretariat has activated the website buttons linked to the EHEA social media accounts and has recently increased social media engagement.

The most viewed post on X (Twitter), with more than 1200 views, was:

*“Meeting with member countries of the European Higher Education Area to discuss the role in society of higher education and implications for internal and external quality assurance”*

Astana, Kazakhstan (June 1, 2023)



The post with the highest engagement on Facebook was:

*“Vienna, Austria exploring learning outcomes in European higher education! We are happy to share the review of the recent peer learning activity held in Vienna, focused on “how are learning outcomes perceived, transmitted, and implemented in daily practice of higher education institutions?”*

Vienna, Austria (August 29, 2023)

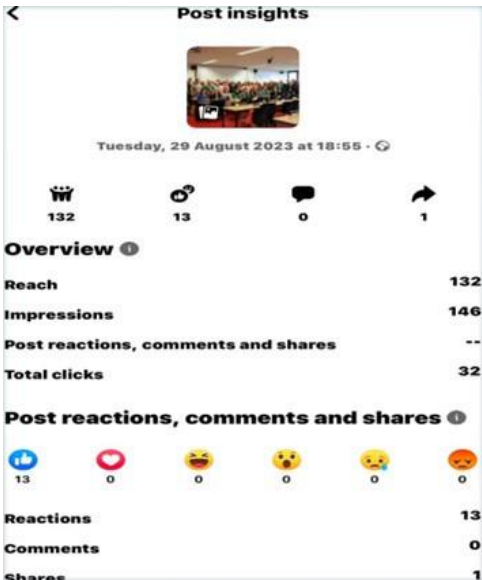


Figure 9. Social media content with the highest outreach.



**Figure 9.** *Social media analysis conducted for the period January – September 2023.*





Albanian **BFUG** Secretariat  
**2021-2024**







# Communique Content & Style Analysis

Draft: July 17, 2023

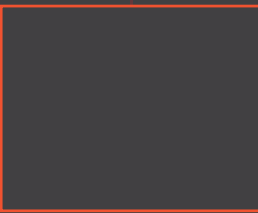
2009 Leuven Louvain-La- Neuve

2012 Bucharest Communique

2015 Yerevan Communique

2018 Paris Communique

2020 Rome Communique



Authors: Aida Myrto, Oltion Rrumbullaku, Ana Zhibaj

Bologna Follow-Up Group Secretariat  
Rr. Naim Frashëri, Nr. 37  
Tirana, Albania

Draft Date: July 17, 2023

Draft prepared by request of the Drafting Committee



**Albanian BFUG Secretariat**  
**2021-2024**

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## INTRODUCTION

This review was drafted by Aida Myrto, Oltion Rrumbullaku and Ana Zhibaj of the BFUG Secretariat, by request of the Drafting Committee. The purpose of this document is to review and analyse the content and style of previous Communiqués.

The following sections include an overview of the methodology, a closer look into the Rome Communiqué (to analyse in depth the most recent Communiqué), visual comparisons of the style and content of all Communiqués, a closer look into prominent, recurring themes (Learning and Teaching, Quality Assurance, Recognition, and Social Dimension), and key take-aways.

## METHODOLOGY/ PROCESS

This review included Communiqués from the Bologna Declaration until the Rome Communiqué, excluding the Budapest Vienna Declaration.

We used “[The European Higher Education Area in 2018: Bologna Process Implementation Report](#)” (found in the following page) as a reference, elaborated the themes, and expanded the review to include a stylistic analysis as well.

The stylistic analysis was focused on tone (aspirational, narrative, narrative and prescriptive), point of view (first person plural, third person plural), other features (bullet points, paragraph numbering, presence of bibliography and indexes) and overall organization, which was generally composed of the following elements:

- Introduction (description of the contexts and stating current priorities)
- Reporting Progress (taking stock of what has happened since the previous declaration)
- Future Priorities
- Future Commitments (pledges for the future and setting up monitoring).

The content analysis was initially guided by the topics identified in the EHEA website. In the process, we expanded to include the most recurring topics as well, and landed on the following list of themes: Learning and Teaching, Social Dimension, Recognition (the Diploma Supplement and the Three-Cycle System were often included in this category), Quality Assurance, Quality Framework (depending on the context, the the Three-Cycle System was included in this category), Mobility, Employability, Policy Dialogue, ECTS, Lifelong Learning, Research/ ERA, Values, Resources/ Funding, Research and Innovation (spotlight on doctoral students — from the Bologna Declaration until the London Communiqué, considerations for doctoral students were included in the Qualification Frameworks). Note that we excluded non-recurring, one-off themes from the scope of our review (e.g.: microcredentials/ short cycle, and public responsibility, which were only mentioned in the Rome Communiqué. Additionally, it could be worthy to explore the relationship between the major topics that are included in each Communiqué and the prior working structures (working groups, advisory groups, and task forces) in later stages of this document.

### The Bologna Process: from Sorbonne to Yerevan, 1998-2015

Mobility of students and teachers	Mobility also for researchers and administrative staff	Social dimension of mobility	Portability of loans and grants	Attention to visa and work permits	Attention also to pension systems and recognition	Benchmark of 20 % by 2020 for student mobility	Explore path to automatic recognition of academic qualifications	Implementation of key commitments
A common two-cycle degree system	Easily readable and comparable degrees	Fair recognition Development of joint degrees	Inclusion of doctoral level as third cycle	QF-EHEA adopted National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) launched	NQFs by 2010	NQFs by 2012	Roadmaps for countries without NQF	Implementation of key commitments
		Social dimension	Equal access	Reinforcement of the social dimension	Commitment to national action plans	National targets for the social dimension to be measured by 2020	Widening access and completion rates	Social inclusion
		Lifelong learning (LLL)	Alignment of national LLL policies Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Flexible learning paths	Partnerships to improve employability	LLL as a public responsibility Focus on employability	Enhance employability, LLL and entrepreneurial skills through cooperation with employers	Employability
Use of credits	A system of credits (ECTS)	ECTS and Diploma Supplement (DS)	ECTS for credit accumulation		Coherent use of tools and recognition practices	Implementation of Bologna tools	Ensure that Bologna tools are based on learning outcomes	Adoption of ECTS Users Guide
	European cooperation in quality assurance (QA)	Cooperation between QA and recognition professionals	QA at institutional, national and European level	European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance (ESG) adopted	Creation of the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)	Quality as an overarching focus for EHEA	Allow EQAR registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA	Adoption of revised ESG and European Approach to QA of joint programmes
Europe of Knowledge	European dimensions in higher education	Attractiveness of the EHEA	Links between higher education and research areas	International cooperation on the basis of values and sustainable development	Strategy to improve the global dimension of the Bologna Process adopted	Enhance global policy dialogue through Bologna Policy Fora	Evaluate implementation of 2007 global dimension strategy	
								Learning and Teaching: Relevance and quality
1998 Sorbonne Declaration	1999 Bologna Declaration	2001 Prague Communiqué	2003 Berlin Communiqué	2005 Bergen Communiqué	2007 London Communiqué	2009 Leuven/ Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué	2012 Bucharest Communiqué	2015 Yerevan Communiqué

## STRUCTURE OF ROME COMMUNIQUÉ

### *Rome 2020*

**Keywords:** online; covid-19; times of crisis; determination to provide inclusive quality education;

**Key commitment/priorities:** fully inclusive EHEA; meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030; prepare learners to become active, critical and responsible citizens; academic and scientific integrity; wide-ranging policy dialogue; develop and support safeguarding student rights through legislation; smaller units of learning; exchange of data; openly licensed materials;

**Other formatting features/stylistic:** the smallest font of all; bold used a lot; ends with conclusion and annexes, but they are not part of the same document;

Narrative-report

Formal language. Long sentences. Complex structure. Hopeful; reassuring; promising; supportive;

### *Rome Communiqué Style Guidance*

The following is a [draft style guidance](#) prepared for the Rome Communiqué (the document was last drafted on May 23, 2018).



#### **Draft structure of the Ministerial Communiqués**

An EHEA Ministerial Communiqué is a short document of 3-5 pages. It is divided into paragraphs of introduction with general information about the context, the elaborated topics during the process and the future objectives. If applicable, the Ministers welcome new members.

1. Introduction – half a page
  - Place and date of the meeting
  - Bologna Process/EHEA general context
  - Values of the EHEA
  - Socio-economic situation affecting the EHEA > improvements needed > EHEA's role to progress
2. Progress in implementing agreed reforms / Goals achieved<sup>1</sup> – two pages
  - Topics elaborated within the work plan of the current BFUG period, such as
  - Social Dimension
  - Learning & Teaching
  - Quality Assurance
  - Qualification Frameworks and SCHE Recognition and Digitalisation Implementation etc.
3. Priorities of the EHEA beyond 2020<sup>2</sup> – one page
  - Internal
  - External - Space for CG13
4. Conclusions – a few lines
  - Governance of the EHEA post 2020
  - Announcement of the place and date of the next Ministerial Conference
5. Appendices

---

1 The Paris Communiqué asked the BFUG to develop a Bologna Process Implementation Report assessing the main developments in the EHEA since the beginning of the Bologna Process.

2 The next decade of the EHEA should focus, inter-alia, on cross-disciplinary and cross-border cooperation; inclusive and innovative approaches to learning and teaching; transnational cooperation in higher education, research and innovation, through synergies between the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA); securing a sustainable future through meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG); promoting mutual learning and joint initiatives, such as social inclusion and the wider role of education; strengthening the social dimension of higher education.

([http://www.ehea.info/Upload/BFUG\\_meeting\\_Bucharest/BFUG\\_RO\\_MK\\_65\\_9\\_7\\_Road-map.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/BFUG_meeting_Bucharest/BFUG_RO_MK_65_9_7_Road-map.pdf)).

3 The Paris Communiqué asked the BFUG to submit proposals for the main priorities for the next decade, in close cooperation with higher education institutions, staff and students, and for the governance of the EHEA. Ministers asked the Bologna Follow Up Group to enter into a global policy dialogue to improve regular cooperation with other regions and international organisations, to supporting this ongoing, successful inter regional dialogue on issues of common concern amongst policy makers, stakeholder organisations, students, staff and higher education institutions.

”

## OVERVIEW OF ALL COMMUNIQUÉS: STYLE

The analysis of style delved into several aspects: tone (aspirational, narrative, narrative combined with prescriptive), point of view (first person plural, third person plural), and additional characteristics such as bullet points, paragraph numbering, inclusion of bibliography and indexes. Furthermore, the overall structure typically comprised the following components:

- Introduction: This section provided an overview of the contexts and priorities.
- Progress Reporting: An assessment made regarding the developments since the previous declaration.
- Future Priorities: The focus towards forthcoming objectives and areas of emphasis.
- Future Commitments: Pledges for the future.

OVERVIEW OF ALL COMMUNIQUE’S: STYLE

	1999 Bologna Declaration	2001 Prague Communique	2003 Berlin Communique	2005 Bergen Communique
TONE	Aspirational	Narrative		
POINT OF VIEW	Third Person			
OTHER FEATURES		Bullet points		Roman Numerals

ORGANIZATION	INTRODUCTION	Joint Declaration	Reaffirming commitments Progress so far	Preamble Previous Meet-ings Current Themat-ic Priorities	New Members Commitment to Establish EHEA Mid-re-view for goals and priorities
	CURRENT PRIORITIES				
	REPORTING PROGRESS		Follow up 6 objectives of Bologna Pro-cess	Progress	Progress Further Chal-lenges and Priorities
	FUTURE PRIORITIES		Future Com-mitments	Additional Actions	Taking Stock on Progress for 2007
	FUTURE COMMITMENTS		Pledge for the Future	Further Follow-Up	Preparing for 2010
	BIBLIOGRAPHY				
	APPENDIXES				



2007 London  
Communique2009 Leuven  
Louvain-La-Neuve2012 Bucharest  
Communique2015 Yerevan  
Communique2018 Paris  
Communique2020 Rome  
communique

Narrative and Prescriptive

Aspirational

Narrative

First Person Plural

Paragraph Numbering

Paragraph Numbering

Bullet points

We the Ministers, New Members	We the Ministers, Current Thematic Priorities Issue and Path Forward	We the Ministers, Current Thematic Priorities Historical Overview and Aspirations	We the Ministers, Thematic Priorities of EHEA Current Challenges	We the Ministers, Progress Thematic Priorities of EHEA	We the Minister, Context (Current Challenges) Vision
Progress towards EHEA	Achievements and Consolidation	Providing Quality Higher Education for All		Progress in Implementing Agreed Reforms	
Priorities for 2009	Learning for the Future	Enhancing Employability to Serve Europe's Needs Improvement of Data Collection and Transparency	A renewed vision: Our priorities Taking Note of the Work of the WG Next Ministerial New Members	Unlocking the full potential of the EHEA: Taking Implementation Forward Innovation in Learning and Teaching	Implementation
Looking forward to 2010 and Beyond	The Organizational Structure and Follow-Up	Setting out Priorities for 2012 - 2015		Beyond 2020: a more ambitious EHEA Preparing the 2020 EHEA Ministerial conference	The EHEA in a Global Setting Conclusions
		Yes		Yes	

## OVERVIEW OF ALL COMMUNIQUÉS: RECURRING THEMES AND TOPICS

	1999 Bologna Declaration	2001 Prague Communiqué	2003 Berlin Communiqué	2005 Bergen Communiqué	2007 London Communiqué
LEARNING AND TEACHING					
SOCIAL DIMENSION		Social dimension to be explored, requested by student organizations	Equal access. Strengthening social cohesion and reducing inequalities	Reinforcement of the social dimension. Need for comparable data	Student body should reflect diversity of population
RECOGNITION		Promoting recognition of qualifications	Importance of ratification of LRC. Appeal for use of Diploma Supplement	Call to develop national action plans to improve Recognition. Looking for progress on joint-degrees and recognition of prior learning	Mentioning of the recognition of non-formal and informal learning
QA	European co-operation in QA;	Encourage cooperation in QA	QA at institutional, national and European level, with a set of specific elements included	ESG adopted, proposal for a register	Creation of the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)
QF	Easily readable and comparable degrees	Comparability of European degrees enhanced by a common framework of qualifications	Inclusion of doctoral level as third cycle. Explore how short cycle are linked to first cycle	QF-EHEA adopted National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) launched	Commitment to implement NQFs by 2010
MOBILITY	Promotion of mobility	Mobility (students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff)			

2009 Leuven Louvain-La- Neuve	2012 Bucharest Communique	2015 Yerevan Communique	2018 Paris Communique	2020 Rome Communique	
Student-centered learning and teaching mission	Commitment to promote student-centered learning	Recognize and support quality teaching and opportunities for enhancing teaching	Encourages the development of new approaches for continuous enhancement of learning and teaching	Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching	LEARNING AND TEACHING
National targets for the social dimension to be measured by 2020	Widening access and completion rates	Social inclusion and widening	Further effort is required, request for next Ministerial enhancing intercultural understanding	Socially inclusive HE. Principles and Guidelines for the Social Dimension	SOCIAL DIMENSION
Mentioning flexible study paths for recognition,	Review the national legislation to fully comply with LRC and promote the use of European Area of Recognition	Removing obstacles on recognition of prior learning. Establish a group of volunteering countries to facilitate professional recognition.	Revised Diploma Supplement	Focus on automatic recognition of academic qualifications. Encouragement of the use of digital certifications.	RECOGNITION
Quality as an overarching focus for EHEA. EQAR to be evaluated externally	Allow EQAR registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA. Request for a revision of ESG	Adoption of revised ESG and European Approach to QA of joint programmes	Ensure compliance with ESG 2015. Promote European Approach for QA of joint programmes	Cross-border cooperation of EQAR agencies. Enhancement-oriented use of ESG	QA
Commitment to implement NQFs by 2012. Requested coordination with European Framework for Lifelong Learning	Roadmaps for countries without NQF. School leaving qualification will be considered EQF level 4. Emphasize the link to learning outcomes	Inclusion of short cycles in QF-EHEA. Review NQFs to ensure learning paths for the recognition of prior learning	ECTS based short cycle as a stand-alone qualification level. Revised Diploma Supplement	Commitment to complete the development of NQFs compatible with QF-EHEA	QF
Mobility is important for personal development and	To strengthen mobility as a means for better learning.		Use of Erasmus+ for increasing cooperation beyond mobility/enabling learners to access and complete higher education at any		employability,

MOBILITY



	1999 Bologna Declaration	2001 Prague Communiqué	2003 Berlin Communiqué	2005 Bergen Communiqué	2007 London Communiqué
EMPLOYABILITY		developing study programmes combining academic quality with relevance to lasting employability	to take advantage of the improved transparency and flexibility of the higher education degree systems, for fostering employability	to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications, including in appropriate posts within the public service.	the importance of improving graduate employability, whilst noting that data gathering on this issue needs to be developed further
POLICY DIALOGUE					2.20 We adopt the strategy "The European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting" and will take forward work in the core policy areas: ...intensifying policy dialogue; and improving recognition.
ECTS	Establishment of a system of credits	Supported by a credit system such as the ECTS or one that is ECTS-compatible, providing both transferability and accumulation functions, is necessary	Encourage further progress with the goal that the ECTS becomes not only a transfer but also an accumulation system, to be applied consistently as it develops within the emerging EHEA		Efforts should concentrate in future on removing barriers to access and progression between cycles and on proper implementation of ECTS based on learning outcomes and student workload.

2009 Leuven Louvain-La- Neuve	2012 Bucharest Communique	2015 Yerevan Communique	2018 Paris Communique	2020 Rome Communique	
Employability empowers the individual to fully seize the opportunities in changing labour markets	to provide quality higher education for all, to enhance graduates' employability	Fostering the employability of graduates throughout their working lives in rapidly changing labour markets - characterized by technological developments, the emergence of new job profiles, and increasing opportunities for employment and self-employment - is a major goal of the EHEA.	developing study programmes combining academic quality with relevance to lasting employability and called for a continued proactive role of HEI		EMPLOYABILITY
Competition on a global scale will be complemented by enhanced policy dialogue and cooperation based on partnership with other regions of the world, in particular through the organisation of Bologna Policy Fora, involving a variety of stakeholders.	The Bologna Policy Forum will continue as an opportunity for dialogue and its format will be further developed with our global partners.	Through policy dialogue and exchange of good practice, we will provide targeted support to member countries experiencing difficulties in implementing the agreed goals and enable those who wish to go further to do so.	As a follow-up to the Bologna Policy Forum, we mandate the BFUG to enter into a global policy dialogue to improve regular cooperation with other regions and international organisations.	We will engage in wide-ranging policy dialogue on how to implement the principles and guidelines fully at national level.	POLICY DIALOGUE
	We welcome the clear reference to ECTS, to the European Qualifications Framework and to learning outcomes in the European Commission's proposal for a revision of the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.	Revised ECTS Users' Guide, as an official EHEA document	ECTS-based short cycle qualifications play an increasingly important role in preparing students for employment and further studies as well in improving social cohesion by facilitating access for many who would otherwise not have considered higher education.	"Key Commitments" essential for the functioning of the EHEA: ECTS, etc.	ECTS

	1999 Bologna Declaration	2001 Prague Communiqué	2003 Berlin Communiqué	2005 Bergen Communiqué	2007 London Communiqué
LIFELONG LEARNING		Recognized the need for a lifelong learning perspective on education	Making lifelong learning a reality	Proposed broader framework for qualifications for lifelong learning	To work towards a common understanding of the role of higher education in lifelong learning
RESEARCH/ ERA			Conscious of the need to promote closer links between the EHEA and the ERA in a Europe of Knowledge, and of the importance of research as an integral part of higher education across Europe, Ministers consider it necessary to go beyond the present focus on two main cycles of higher education to include the doctoral level as the third cycle	Recognise the need to improve the synergy between the higher education sector and other research sectors throughout our respective countries and between the EHEA and the ERA	Closer alignment of the EHEA with the ERA remains an important objective.
VALUES			Ministers declare that transnational exchanges in higher education should be governed on the basis of academic quality and academic values, and agree to work in all appropriate fora to that end.	We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.	We recognise the important influence higher education institutions (HEIs) exert on developing our societies, based on their traditions as centres of learning, research, creativity and knowledge transfer as well as their key role in defining and transmitting the values on which our societies are built.







2009 Leuven Louvain-La- Neuve	2012 Bucharest Communique	2015 Yerevan Communique	2018 Paris Communique	2020 Rome Communique	
The implementation of lifelong learning policies requires strong partnerships between public authorities, higher education institutions, students, employers and employees.	Lifelong learning is one of the important factors in meeting the needs of a changing labour market, and HEI	To widen participation in higher education and support institutions that provide relevant learning activities in appropriate contexts for different types of learners, including lifelong learning	Open education in the context of lifelong learning/Lifelong learning is increasingly important to our societies and economies as well as to our citizens' wellbeing	Must be offered up-skilling and reskilling opportunities in a lifelong learning perspective, and enabled to develop and apply new technologies and approaches.	LIFELONG LEARNING
	Explore how to promote quality, transparency, employability and mobility in the third cycle, as the education and training of doctoral candidates has a particular role in bridging the EHEA and the ERA.	We will also strengthen the links between the EHEA and the ERA	We call on the BFUG to establish interaction with the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) by 2020 in order to develop synergies between the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA)	We call for the BFUG to work closely with the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) to enhance synergies and alignment between education and research and innovation policies.	RESEARCH/ ERA
The necessary ongoing reform of higher education systems and policies will continue to be firmly embedded in the European values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom and social equity and will require full participation of students and staff.	We commit to supporting the engagement of students and staff in governance structures at all levels and reiterate our commitment to autonomous and accountable higher education institutions that embrace academic freedom.	Academic freedom Autonomous higher Education institutions Religious tolerance Gender equality Democratic and civic values	Academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education form the backbone of the EHEA. Having seen these fundamental values challenged in recent years in some of our countries, we strongly commit to promoting and protecting them in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation.	We reaffirm our commitment to promoting and protecting our shared fundamental values in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation as the necessary basis for quality learning, teaching and research as well as for democratic societies.	VALUES

	1999 Bologna Declaration	2001 Prague Communiqué	2003 Berlin Communiqué	2005 Bergen Communiqué	2007 London Communiqué
RESOURCES FUNDING			With a view to promoting student mobility, Ministers will take the necessary steps to enable the portability of national loans and grants.	We reconfirm our commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans where appropriate through joint action, with a view to making mobility within the EHEA a reality. We undertake to ensure that HEI enjoy the necessary autonomy to implement the agreed reforms, and we recognise the need for sustainable funding of institutions.	Ensure that the HEIs have the necessary resources to continue to fulfil their full ranges of purpose We therefore underline the importance of strong institutions, which are diverse, adequately funded, autonomous and accountable.
RESEARCH & INNOVATION			The efforts to introduce structural change and improve the quality of teaching should not detract from the effort to strengthen research and innovation.	The efforts to introduce structural change and improve the quality of teaching should not detract from the effort to strengthen research and innovation.	Stimulating research and innovation
MONITORING & DATA COLLECTION			Ministers stress the need for more comparable data on the social and economic situation of students.	We also charge the Follow-up Group with presenting comparable data on the mobility of staff and students as well as on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries as a basis for future stocktaking and reporting in time for the next Ministerial Conference.	We underline the importance of improving graduate employability, whilst noting that data gathering on this issue needs to be developed further. 3.4 We recognise the need to improve the availability of data on both mobility and the social dimension across all the countries participating in the Bologna Process.

2009 Leuven Louvain-La- Neuve	2012 Bucharest Communique	2015 Yerevan Communique	2018 Paris Communique	2020 Rome Communique	
<p>Within a framework of public responsibility we confirm that public funding remains the main priority to guarantee equitable access and further sustainable development of autonomous higher education institutions. Greater attention should be paid to seeking new and diversified funding sources and methods.</p>	<p>We reiterate our commitment to full portability of national grants and loans across the EHEA and call on the EU to underpin this endeavour through its policies.</p> <p>We commit to securing the highest possible level of public funding for higher education and drawing on other appropriate sources, as an investment in our future.</p>	<p>To promote the portability of grants and loans taking into account the guidelines from the Working group on mobility and internationalization;</p>		<p>We commit to supporting our higher education institutions in bringing their educational, research and innovation capacities to bear on these fundamental global objectives and to deploying resources to ensure that our higher education systems contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.</p>	<p>RESOURCES FUNDING</p>
<p>Higher education should be based at all levels on state of the art research and development thus fostering innovation and creativity in society. We recognise the potential of higher education programmes, including those based on applied science, to foster innovation.</p>	<p>Research</p>		<p>Students should encounter research or activities linked to research and innovation at all levels of higher education to develop the critical and creative mind-sets which will enable them to find novel solutions to emerging challenges.</p>	<p>Core missions: learning and teaching, research and innovation; etc.</p>	<p>RESEARCH &amp; INNOVATION</p>
<p>21. Improved and enhanced data collection will help monitor progress made in the attainment of the objectives set out in the social dimension, employability and mobility agendas, as well as in other policy areas, and will serve as a basis for both stocktaking and benchmarking.</p>	<p>Improvement of data collection and transparency to underpin political goals</p> <p>We welcome the improved quality of data and information on higher education. We ask for more targeted data collection and referencing against common indicators, particularly on employability, the social dimension, lifelong learning, internationalisation, portability of grants/loans, and student and staff mobility.</p>	<p>We need more precise measurement of performance as a basis for reporting from member countries.</p>			<p>MONITORING &amp; DATA COLLECTION</p>

1999 Bologna  
Declaration

2001 Prague  
Communique

2003 Berlin  
Communique

2005 Bergen  
Communique

2007 London  
Communique

DIGITALISATION

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT

2009 Leuven Louvain-La- Neuve	2012 Bucharest Communique	2015 Yerevan Communique	2018 Paris Communique	2020 Rome Communique	
			<p>To further promote student and graduate mobility, we welcome and support initiatives such as the digitalisation of the Diploma Supplement, and commit to support higher education institutions to pursue further student data exchange in a secure, machine-readable and interoperable format, in line with data protection legislation.</p>	<p>Digitalisation has allowed most of our systems to continue to function during the COVID-19 pandemic, although the intensified use of digital means has brought to light certain limits. With its consolidated experience of transnational and international cooperation and research, higher education must take a leading role in exploring and advising on how to address and overcome these limitations.</p>	DIGITALISATION
			<p>We commit to developing the role of higher education in securing a sustainable future for our planet and our societies and to finding ways in which we, as EHEA Ministers, can contribute to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at global, European and national levels.</p>	<p>Higher education will be a key actor in meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.</p>	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT RECURRING THEMES

### *Learning and Teaching*

#### **Leuven Communiqué 2009**

The Leuven Communiqué (2009) acknowledges the challenges and opportunities of globalisation and technological advancements in European higher education. It sets the foundation for student-centered learning and the teaching mission of higher education.

“ *European higher education also faces the major challenge and the ensuing opportunities of globalisation and accelerated technological developments with new providers, new learners and new types of learning. Student-centred learning and mobility will help students develop the competences they need in a changing labour market and will empower them to become active and responsible citizens. Student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education*

*We reassert the importance of the teaching mission of higher education institutions and the necessity for ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes. Student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum focused more clearly on the learner in all three cycles. Curricular reform will thus be an ongoing process leading to high quality, flexible and more individually tailored education paths. We ask the higher education institutions to pay particular attention to improving the teaching quality of their study programmes at all levels. This should be a priority in the further implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines for*

*quality assurance.*

”

#### **Budapest Vienna Declaration 2010**

Building on the previous Communiqué, the Budapest Vienna Declaration (2010) calls for fostering student-centered learning and cooperation among teachers and researchers. It emphasizes the cooperation of teachers and researchers in international networks to facilitate inspiring working and learning environments.

“ *We call upon all actors involved to facilitate an inspiring working and learning environment and to foster student-centred learning as a way of empowering the learner in all forms of education, providing the best solution for sustainable and flexible learning paths. This also requires the coop-*

*eration of teachers and researchers in international networks.*

”

#### **Bucharest Communiqué 2012**

The Bucharest Communiqué (2012) reiterates the commitment to student-centered learning, innovative teaching methods, and creating a supportive environment.

“ *We reiterate our commitment to promote student-centred learning in higher education, characterised by innovative methods of teaching that involve students as active participants in their own learning.*



*Together with institutions, students and staff, we will facilitate a supportive and inspiring working and learning environment.*

*At the national level, together with the relevant stakeholders, and especially with higher education institutions, we will:*

*Establish conditions that foster student-centred learning, innovative teaching methods and a supportive and inspiring working and learning environment, while continuing to involve students and*

*staff in governance structures at all levels.*

”

### **Yerevan Communiqué 2015**

The Yerevan Communiqué (2015) focuses on enhancing the quality and relevance of learning and teaching in higher education. It emphasizes pedagogical innovation, the integration of digital technologies, and the promotion of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. It highlights the importance of transparent learning outcomes, flexible learning paths, and involving students and stakeholders in curriculum design and quality assurance processes.

“

*Enhancing the quality and relevance of learning and teaching is the main mission of the EHEA. We will encourage and support higher education institutions and staff in promoting pedagogical innovation in student-centred learning environments and in fully exploiting the potential benefits of digital technologies for learning and teaching. We will promote a stronger link between teaching, learning and research at all study levels, and provide incentives for institutions, teachers and students to intensify activities that develop creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Study programmes should enable students to develop the competences that can best satisfy personal aspirations and societal needs, through effective learning activities. These should be supported by transparent descriptions of learning outcomes and workload, flexible learning paths and appropriate teaching and assessment methods. It is essential to recognize and support quality teaching, and to provide opportunities for enhancing academics' teaching competences. Moreover, we will actively involve students, as full members of the academic community, as well as other stakeholders, in*

*curriculum design and in quality assurance.*

”

### **Paris Communiqué 2018**

The Paris Communiqué (2018) highlights the core mission of the Bologna Process, which is to ensure and enhance the quality and relevance of learning and teaching. It emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning and calls for cooperation in innovative learning and teaching practices. It encourages the development of new approaches for continuous enhancement of learning and teaching, fostering social mobility, and combining academic and work-based learning. It also stresses the need to link teaching, learning, and research.



### *Innovation in Learning and Teaching*

*For the past 20 years, the core mission of the Bologna Process and the main objective of structural reforms have been to ensure and enhance the quality and relevance of learning and teaching. Lifelong learning is increasingly important to our societies and economies as well as to our citizens' wellbeing. Now it is time to add cooperation in innovative learning and teaching practices as another hallmark of the EHEA. We therefore commit to developing new and inclusive approaches for continuous enhancement of learning and teaching across the EHEA, and can succeed only if we do so in close collaboration with the European higher education community, in full respect of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.*

*The success of the European Learning and Teaching Forum launched by the European University Association last year demonstrates the value and potential of collaboration in learning and teaching, with tangible benefits for higher education institutions, staff and students.*

*Therefore, in addition to measures at national level, we will develop joint European initiatives to support and stimulate a wide range of innovative learning and teaching practices, building on existing good practice in our countries and beyond.*

*This will encompass the further development and full implementation of student-centred learning and open education in the context of lifelong learning. Study programmes that provide diverse learning methods and flexible learning can foster social mobility and continuous professional development whilst enabling learners to access and complete higher education at any stage of their lives. We will support higher education institutions to develop and enhance their strategies for learning and teaching. We also encourage them to provide inter-disciplinary programmes as well as to combine academic and work-based learning. Students should encounter research or activities linked to research and innovation at all levels of higher education to develop the critical and creative mindsets which will enable them to find novel solutions to emerging challenges. In this regard, we commit*

*to improving synergies between education, research and innovation.*



## **Rome Communiqué 2020**

The Rome Communiqué (2020) adopts recommendations for the enhancement of higher education learning and teaching. It emphasizes the implementation of student-centered learning and teaching, the support of digital technologies for learning and assessment, and the development of digital skills for all stakeholders. It highlights the importance of stable employment and career opportunities for academic staff, as well as the promotion of open science and education.



*We adopt the “Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching in the EHEA” (Annex III) and commit to follow them, supporting higher education institutions in further implementing student-centred learning and teaching. The recommendations comprise increased support for all learners, and for teaching and non-teaching staff. Academic staff, including junior academics, require stable employment and career opportunities, parity of esteem for teaching and research, attractive working conditions, access to up-to-date staff development, and recognition of their achievements. In all these respects we will foster dialogue and collaboration on learning and teaching in our national systems and at EHEA level.*

*We commit to supporting our higher education institutions in using digital technologies for learning, teaching and assessment, as well as for academic communication and research, and to investing in the development of digital skills and competences for all. We commit to the development of open science and education to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and openly licensed materials that can be easily shared among higher education stakeholders, who can adapt and repurpose them for*

*their needs.”*

”

## **Quality Assurance**

### **Prague Communiqué 2001**

Ministers recognized the importance of quality assurance systems in ensuring high standards and comparability of qualifications. They encouraged cooperation between recognition and quality assurance networks and the dissemination of best practices. The focus was on mutual acceptance of evaluation and accreditation mechanisms.

“

*Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance*

*Ministers recognized the vital role that quality assurance systems play in ensuring high quality standards and in facilitating the comparability of qualifications throughout Europe. They also encouraged closer cooperation between recognition and quality assurance networks. They emphasized the necessity of close European cooperation and mutual trust in and acceptance of national quality assurance systems. Further they encouraged universities and other higher education institutions to disseminate examples of best practice and to design scenarios for mutual acceptance of evaluation and accreditation/certification mechanisms. Ministers called upon the universities and other higher education institutions, national agencies and the European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), in cooperation with corresponding bodies from countries which are not members of ENQA, to collaborate in establishing a common framework of reference and to*

*disseminate best practice.*

”

### **Berlin Communiqué 2003**

Ministers committed to supporting the further development of quality assurance at institutional, national, and European levels. They stressed the need for shared criteria and methodologies and emphasize institutional responsibility for quality assurance. The introduction of a set of elements for the national quality assurance systems was highlighted, along with definition of the responsibilities of the bodies involved, a system of accreditation or comparable procedures, etc.

“

*The quality of higher education has proven to be at the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area. Ministers commit themselves to supporting further development of quality assurance at institutional, national and European level. They stress the need to develop mutually shared criteria and methodologies on quality assurance.*

*They also stress that consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability of the academic system within the national quality framework.*

*Therefore, they agree that by 2005 national quality assurance systems should include:*

- *A definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.*
- *Evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results.*
- *A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.*
- *International participation, co-operation and networking.*

*At the European level, Ministers call upon ENQA through its members, in co-operation with the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB, to develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance, to explore ways of ensuring an adequate peer review system for quality assurance and/or accreditation agencies or bodies, and to report back through the Follow-up Group to Ministers in 2005. Due account will be taken of the expertise of other quality assurance associations and networks.*

”

## **Bergen Communiqué 2005**

Progress was made in quality assurance systems, while there was a need of further progress on student involvement and international cooperation. Higher education institutions were urged to enhance the quality of their activities through internal mechanisms linked to external quality assurance. The adoption of European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA is introduced, along with the proposal for a peer review system and a European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies.

“

*Almost all countries have made provision for a quality assurance system based on the criteria set out in the Berlin Communiqué and with a high degree of cooperation and networking.*

*However, there is still progress to be made, in particular as regards student involvement and international cooperation. Furthermore, we urge higher education institutions to continue their efforts to enhance the quality of their activities through the systematic introduction of internal mechanisms and their direct correlation to external quality assurance.*

*We adopt the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area as proposed by ENQA. We commit ourselves to introducing the proposed model for peer review of quality assurance agencies on a national basis, while respecting the commonly accepted guidelines and criteria. We welcome the principle of a European register of quality assurance agencies based on national review. We ask that the practicalities of implementation be further developed by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB with a report back to us through the Follow-up Group. We underline the importance of cooperation between nationally recognised agencies with a view to enhancing the mutual recognition of accreditation or quality assurance decisions.*

*Quality Assurance and a European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies*

*The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA adopted in Bergen (ESG) have been a powerful driver of change in relation to quality assurance. All countries have started to implement them and some have made substantial progress. External quality assurance in particular is much better developed than before. The extent of student involvement at all levels has increased since 2005, although improvement is still necessary. Since the main responsibility for quality lies with HEIs, they should continue to develop their systems of quality assurance. We acknowledge the progress made with regard to mutual recognition of accreditation and quality assurance decisions, and encourage continued international cooperation amongst quality assurance agencies.*

*The first European Quality Assurance Forum, jointly organised by EUA, ENQA, EURASHE and ESIB (the E4 Group) in 2006 provided an opportunity to discuss European developments in quality assurance. We encourage the four organisations to continue to organise European Quality Assurance Fora on an annual basis, to facilitate the sharing of good practice and ensure that quality in the EHEA continues to improve.*

*We thank the E4 Group for responding to our request to further develop the practicalities of setting up a Register of European Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies. The purpose of the register is to allow all stakeholders and the general public open access to objective information about trustworthy quality assurance agencies that are working in line with the ESG. It will therefore enhance confidence in higher education in the EHEA and beyond, and facilitate the mutual recognition of quality assurance and accreditation decisions. We welcome the establishment of a register by the E4 group, working in partnership, based on their proposed operational model. The register will be voluntary, self-financing, independent and transparent. Applications for inclusion on the register should be evaluated on the basis of substantial compliance with the ESG, evidenced through an independent review process endorsed by national authorities, where this endorsement is required by those authorities. We ask the E4 group to report progress to us regularly through BFUG, and to ensure that after two years of operation, the register is evaluated externally, taking*

*account of the views of all stakeholders.*

”

### **Leuven Communiqué 2009**

The adoption of the three-cycle structure and the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance was mentioned. The focus was on the European Quality Assurance Register and the need for external evaluation.

“

*The Bologna Process is leading to greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education and is making it easier for learners to be mobile and for institutions to attract students and scholars from other continents. Higher education is being modernized with the adoption of a three-cycle structure including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications linked to the first cycle and with the adoption of the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance. We have also seen the creation of a European register for quality assurance agencies and the establishment of national qualifications frameworks linked to the overarching European Higher Education Area framework, based on learning outcomes and workload.*

*We ask the E4 group (ENQA-EUA-EURASHE-ESU) to continue its cooperation in further developing the European dimension of quality assurance and in particular to ensure that the European Quality Assurance Register is evaluated externally, taking into account the views of the stakeholders.* ”

### **Bucharest Communiqué 2012**

The importance of quality assurance for building trust and reinforcing attractiveness is emphasized. The need for the revision of the European Standards and Guidelines is introduced, along with the external evaluation of the European Quality Assurance Register. The priority is given to allowing EQAR registered quality assurance agencies to perform activities across the EHEA.

“ *Quality assurance is essential for building trust and to reinforce the attractiveness of the EHEA's offerings, including in the provision of cross-border education. We commit to both maintaining the public responsibility for quality assurance and to actively involve a wide range of stakeholders in this development. We acknowledge the ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE (the E4 group) report on the implementation and application of the “European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance” (ESG). We will revise the ESG to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness, including their scope. The revision will be based upon an initial proposal to be prepared by the E4 in cooperation with Education International, BUSINESSEUROPE and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), which will be submitted to the Bologna Follow-Up Group.*

*We welcome the external evaluation of EQAR and we encourage quality assurance agencies to apply for registration. We will allow EQAR-registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA, while complying with national requirements. In particular, we will aim to recognise quality assurance decisions of EQAR-registered agencies on joint and double degree programmes. Setting out priorities for 2012-2015*

*Having outlined the main EHEA goals in the coming years, we set out the following priorities for action by 2015.*

*At the national level, together with the relevant stakeholders, and especially with higher education institutions, we will:*

*Allow EQAR-registered quality assurance agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA, while complying with national requirements;* ”

### **Yerevan Communiqué 2015**

The revised Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance and the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes are mentioned as policy measures adopted.

“ *Policy measures adopted  
The revised Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education*

## Paris Communiqué 2018

The progress in implementing the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance is recognized, and the promotion of joint programs and the respective use of the European Approach for Quality Assurance are highlighted. The development of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) is mentioned. It introduces the concept of key commitments to reinforce and support of the quality assurance through a thematic peer group.

“ Quality assurance is key in developing mutual trust as well as increasing mobility and fair recognition of qualifications and study periods throughout the EHEA. We therefore recognize the progress made in implementing the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) into national and institutional practice in most countries, and we commit to removing the remaining obstacles to their implementation in national legislations and regulations. In order to encourage the development of more joint programmes and joint degrees, we will also enable and promote the use of the “European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes” in our higher education systems. We welcome and will promote the development of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR). In 2018-2020, thematic peer groups will focus on three key commitments crucial to reinforcing and supporting quality and cooperation inside the EHEA: and quality assurance in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in

the European Higher Education Area.

”

## Rome Communiqué 2020

The affirmation of the determination to seeing the key commitments carried out in full, including Quality Assurance according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, is emphasised. Automatic recognition at the system level for qualifications meeting quality assurance criteria is introduced, along with the encouragement of digital certification systems and the enhancement-oriented use of the European Standards and Guidelines.

“ In the 2018 Paris Ministerial Conference we decided to devote special effort to completing implementation of three “Key Commitments” essential for the functioning of the EHEA: the Qualifications Frameworks and ECTS, the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Diploma Supplement, and Quality Assurance according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). We reconfirm our determination to see the Key Commitments fully implemented. We ask the BFUG to continue to employ the peer support method to achieve this. We commit to the continued participation in and contribution to this effort. We will make the necessary legislative changes to guarantee automatic recognition at system level for qualifications delivered in EHEA countries where quality assurance operates in compliance with the ESG and where a fully operational national qualifications framework has been established. We also encourage the application of agreed and secure systems of digital certification and com-

*munication such as blockchain, as well as the further development of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) to facilitate automatic recognition.*

*We acknowledge the progress made in the development of quality assurance systems aligned with the ESG, and we commit to removing the remaining obstacles, including those related to the cross-border operation of EQAR registered agencies and the application of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. We commit to ensuring that our external quality assurance arrangements cover transnational higher education in the EHEA with equal standards as for domestic provision. In view of the need for increased flexibility and openness of learning paths, smaller units of learning and greater synergies among higher education institutions, we encourage an enhancement-oriented use of the ESG to support innovation in higher education*

*and its quality assurance.*

”

## **Recognition**

### **Prague Communiqué 2001**

The Prague Communiqué highlighted the importance of promoting academic and professional recognition of qualifications within the European Higher Education Area. It emphasised the need for universities and institutions to utilize existing national legislation and European tools to facilitate recognition. The aim was to ensure that citizens can effectively use their qualifications and skills throughout Europe. The Communiqué called for closer cooperation among organizations and networks like NARIC and ENIC to promote simple, efficient, and fair recognition that reflects the diversity of qualifications.

“

*Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees*

*Ministers strongly encouraged universities and other higher education institutions to take full advantage of existing national legislation and European tools aimed at facilitating academic and professional recognition of course units, degrees and other awards, so that citizens can effectively use their qualifications, competencies and skills throughout the European Higher Education Area. Ministers called upon existing organisations and networks such as NARIC and ENIC to promote, at institutional, national and European level, simple, efficient and fair recognition reflecting*

*the underlying diversity of qualifications.*

”

### **Berlin Communiqué 2003**

The implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, the use of Diploma Supplements, and the importance of widely spoken European languages for better transparency and flexibility were highlighted.



“ First cycle degrees should give access, in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, to second

*cycle programmes. Second cycle degrees should give access to doctoral studies.*

*Recognition of degrees: Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees*

*Ministers underline the importance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which should be ratified by all countries participating in the Bologna Process, and call on the ENIC and NARIC networks along with the competent National Authorities to further the implementation of the Convention.*

*They set the objective that every student graduating as from 2005 should receive the Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge. It should be issued in a widely spoken European language.*

*They appeal to institutions and employers to make full use of the Diploma Supplement, so as to take advantage of the improved transparency and flexibility of the higher education degree systems,*

*for fostering employability and facilitating academic recognition for further studies.*

”

## **Bergen Communiqué 2005**

The Bergen Communiqué acknowledged the progress made in ratifying the Lisbon Recognition Convention. It emphasised the need for full implementation of the convention's principles and the incorporation of these principles into national legislation. The Communiqué called on participating countries to address recognition problems identified by the ENIC/NARIC networks and develop national action plans to improve recognition processes. It also emphasised the importance of joint degrees and the recognition of prior learning for lifelong learning in higher education.

“

*Recognition of degrees and study periods*

*We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge those that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We commit ourselves to ensuring the full implementation of its principles, and to incorporating them in national legislation as appropriate. We call on all participating countries to address recognition problems identified by the ENIC/NARIC networks. We will draw up national action plans to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications. These plans will form part of each country's national report for the next Ministerial Conference. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition*

*Convention and call upon all national authorities and other stakeholders to recognise joint degrees awarded in two or more countries in the EHEA.*

*We see the development of national and European frameworks for qualifications as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning in higher education. We will work with higher education institutions and others to improve recognition of prior learning including, where possible, non-formal and informal learning for access to, and as elements in, higher education programmes.*

*We charge the Follow-up Group with continuing and widening the stocktaking process and reporting in time for the next Ministerial Conference. We expect stocktaking to be based on the appropriate methodology and to continue in the fields of the degree system, quality assurance and recognition of degrees and study periods, and by 2007 we will have largely completed the implementation of these three intermediate priorities.*



*In particular, we shall look for progress in:*

- *the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level;*
- *creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the*

*recognition of prior learning.*

”

### **London Communiqué 2007**

It underscored the importance of fair recognition of higher education qualifications, study periods, and prior learning within the EHEA, including non-formal and informal learning. The Communiqué encouraged the remaining members to ratify the Lisbon Recognition Convention and called for more coherent recognition practices. It also highlighted the role of the ENIC/NARIC networks in analyzing national action plans and spreading good practices.

“

#### *Recognition*

*2.5 Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components of the EHEA, both internally and in a global context. Easily readable and comparable degrees and accessible information on educational systems and qualifications frameworks are prerequisites for citizens' mobility and ensuring the continuing attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA. While we are pleased that 38 members of the Bologna Process, including Montenegro, have now ratified the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European region (Lisbon Recognition Convention), we urge the remaining members to do so as a matter of priority.*

*2.6 There has been progress in the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC), ECTS and diploma supplements, but the range of national and institutional approaches to recognition needs to be more coherent. To improve recognition practices, we therefore ask the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) to arrange for the ENIC/NARIC networks to analyse our national*

*action plans and spread good practice.*

”

### **Leuven Communiqué 2009**

It emphasised the need for flexible study paths, recognition of prior learning, and support services to ensure equitable access for all.

“

*Missing specific policies for the recognition.*

*Successful policies for lifelong learning will include basic principles and procedures for recognition of prior learning on the basis of learning outcomes regardless of whether the knowledge, skills and competences were acquired through formal, non-formal, or informal learning paths. Lifelong learning will be supported by adequate organizational structures and funding. Lifelong learning*

*encouraged by national policies should inform the practice of higher education institutions. Flexible study paths and active information policies, full recognition of study achievements, study*

*support and the full portability of grants and loans are necessary requirements.*

”

## **Bucharest Communiqué 2012**

It emphasised the importance of fair academic and professional recognition within the EHEA. It aimed to remove obstacles hindering effective recognition and work towards the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees as a long-term goal. The Communiqué called for the review of national legislation to comply with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and encouraged the use of the European Area of Recognition (EAR) Manual. It emphasised the role of higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies in assessing recognition procedures and advancing recognition practices.

“ *We welcome the clear reference to ECTS, to the European Qualifications Framework and to learning outcomes in the European Commission’s proposal for a revision of the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. We underline the importance of taking appropriate account of these elements in recognition decisions.*

*Fair academic and professional recognition, including recognition of non-formal and informal learning, is at the core of the EHEA. It is a direct benefit for students’ academic mobility, it improves graduates’ chances of professional mobility and it represents an accurate measure of the degree of convergence and trust attained. We are determined to remove outstanding obstacles hindering effective and proper recognition and are willing to work together towards the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees, building on the tools of the Bologna framework, as a long-term goal of the EHEA. We therefore commit to reviewing our national legislation to comply with the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We welcome the European Area of Recognition (EAR) Manual and recommend its use as a set of guidelines for recognition of foreign qualifications and a compendium of good practices, as well as encourage higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies to assess institutional recognition procedures in internal and external quality assurance.*

*At the national level, together with the relevant stakeholders, and especially with higher education institutions, we will:*

*Review national legislation to fully comply with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and promote*

*the use of the EAR-manual to advance recognition practices;*

”

## **Yerevan Communiqué 2015**

It highlighted the commitment to review national legislations for full compliance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention. It emphasised the importance of removing obstacles to the recognition

of prior learning, improving recognition of qualifications held by refugees, and reviewing national qualifications frameworks. The Communiqué also established a group for facilitating professional recognition and emphasised the role of lifelong learning in providing relevant learning activities for different types of learners.

## “ Commitments

- to review national legislations with a view to fully complying with the Lisbon Recognition Convention, reporting to the Bologna Secretariat by the end of 2016, and asking the Convention Committee, in cooperation with the ENIC and NARIC Networks, to prepare an analysis of the reports by the end of 2017, taking due account of the monitoring of the Convention carried out by the Convention Committee;
- to remove obstacles to the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of providing access to higher education programmes and facilitating the award of qualifications on the basis of prior learning, as well as encouraging higher education institutions to improve their capacity to recognize prior learning;

- to review national qualifications frameworks, with a view to ensuring that learning paths within the framework provide adequately for the recognition of prior learning;

professional recognition;

” .

to establish a group of volunteering countries and organizations with a view to facilitating

## Paris Communiqué 2018

It emphasised the automatic recognition of higher education qualifications obtained in one EHEA country in others, ensuring full implementation of ECTS, and the adoption of transparent recognition procedures. The Communiqué encouraged the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, particularly for the recognition of qualifications held by refugees. It highlighted the revised Diploma Supplement and the need for interoperable digital solutions.

“ In order to further develop mobility and recognition across the EHEA, we will work to ensure that comparable higher education qualifications obtained in one EHEA country are automatically recognised on the same basis in the others, for the purpose of accessing further studies and the labour market. To this end we renew our commitment to ensure full implementation of ECTS, following the guidelines laid down in the 2015 ECTS Users' guide.

We will work to implement the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention and its Recommendations, in particular on the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation. We also urge the adoption of transparent procedures for the recognition of qualifications, prior learning and study periods, supported by interoperable digital solutions.

We approve the proposed revised Diploma Supplement and commit to working for its adoption in identical versions within the respective frameworks of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and

”

## Rome Communiqué 2020

The Rome Communiqué highlighted the reinforcement of the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the application of its principles to qualifications and study periods outside the EHEA. It emphasised the automatic recognition of academic qualifications and study periods within the EHEA to enable the free movement of students, staff, and graduates. The Communiqué called for necessary legislative changes to guarantee automatic recognition for qualifications delivered in EHEA countries with compliant quality assurance systems and operational national qualifications frameworks. It also emphasised fair recognition of qualifications held by refugees and supports the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees.

“ We will strengthen the implementation of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention and apply its principles to qualifications and periods of study outside the EHEA, using common assessment criteria and reports, in collaboration with the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee and the ENIC and NARIC Networks. We will ensure automatic recognition of academic qualifications and periods of study within the EHEA so that students, staff and graduates are able to move freely to study, teach and do research. We will make the necessary legislative changes to guarantee automatic recognition at system level for qualifications delivered in EHEA countries where quality assurance operates in compliance with the ESG and where a fully operational national qualifications framework has been established. We also encourage the application of agreed and secure systems of digital certification and communication such as blockchain, as well as the further development of the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) to facilitate automatic recognition. We commit to reviewing our own legislation, regulations, and practice to ensure fair recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in refugee-like situations, even when they cannot be fully documented, in accordance with Article VII of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We welcome the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees and will support further broadening its use in our systems. ”

## Social Dimension

### Prague Communiqué 2001

The Communiqué reaffirmed the importance of considering the social aspect of the Bologna process, as emphasized by students. Social Dimension was suggested as one of the areas to be explored.

“ Ministers also reaffirmed the need, recalled by students, to take account of the social dimension in the Bologna process. Ministers encouraged the follow-up group to arrange seminars to explore the following areas..., the social dimension, with specific attention to obstacles to mobility, and the enlargement of the

Bologna process, lifelong learning, and student involvement.

”

### **Berlin Communiqué 2003**

The Berlin Communiqué (2003) emphasized the importance of the social dimension in higher education, aiming to strengthen social cohesion and reduce inequalities. It highlights the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for students and the availability of comparable data on students' social and economic situation.

“ Ministers reaffirm the importance of the social dimension of the Bologna Process. The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area, aiming at strengthening social cohesion and reducing social and gender inequalities both at national and at European level. In that context, Ministers reaffirm their position that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility. They emphasise that in international academic cooperation and exchanges, academic values should prevail.

*Ministers stress the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for the students, so that they can successfully complete their studies within an appropriate period of time without obstacles related to their social and economic background. They also stress the need for more comparable data on the social and economic situation of students.*

*Ministers stress their commitment to making higher education equally accessible to all, on the basis*

*of capacity, by every appropriate means.*

”

### **Bergen Communiqué 2005**

The Bergen Communiqué (2005) focus remains on making quality higher education accessible to all and providing appropriate conditions for students. Governments are encouraged to take measures to support socially disadvantaged students, both financially and through guidance services. It also mentions the need for comparable data on mobility and students' social and economic situation.

“ The social dimension of the Bologna Process is a constituent part of the *EHEA* and a necessary condition for the attractiveness and competitiveness of the *EHEA*. We therefore renew our commitment to making quality higher education equally accessible to all, and stress the need for appropriate conditions for students so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. The social dimension includes measures taken by governments to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and to provide them with guidance and counselling services with a view to widening access. We also charge the Follow-up Group with presenting comparable data on the mobility of staff and students as well as on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries as a basis for future stocktaking and reporting in time for the next Ministerial Conference. The future stocktaking will have to take into account the social dimension as defined above.

*Social Dimension*

*Similarly, we will report on our national strategies and policies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to evaluate their effectiveness. We will invite all stakeholders to partic-*



ipate in, and support this work, at the national level.

#### *Data collection*

*We recognise the need to improve the availability of data on both mobility and the social dimension*

*across all the countries participating in the Bologna Process.*

”

### **London Communiqué 2007**

The emphasis was on higher education's role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities, and maximizing individuals' potential. It stressed the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their background. Efforts were directed towards providing adequate student services, flexible learning pathways, and widening participation based on equal opportunity.

“ *Higher education should play a strong role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. Policy should therefore aim to maximise the potential of individuals in terms of their personal development and their contribution to a sustainable and democratic knowledge-based society. We share the societal aspiration that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations. We reaffirm the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. We therefore continue our efforts to provide adequate student services, create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher education, and to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.*

”

### **Leuven Communiqué 2009**

The focus was on equitable access to higher education and providing equal opportunities for quality education. Efforts were directed towards widening participation and improving the learning environment. The goal was to reflect the diversity of populations and provide equal opportunities. Measurable targets for widening participation and increasing the participation of underrepresented groups are set.

“ *Social dimension: equitable access and completion*  
*The student body within higher education should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations. We therefore emphasize the social characteristics of higher education and aim to provide equal opportunities to quality education. Access into higher education should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies. This involves improving the learning environment, removing all barriers to study, and creating the appropriate economic conditions for students to be able to benefit from the study opportunities at all levels. Each participating country will set measurable targets for widening*

*overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in higher education, to be reached by the end of the next decade. Efforts to achieve equity in higher education should be*

*complemented by actions in other parts of the educational system.*

”

### **Bucharest Communiqué 2012**

The importance of widening access and raising completion rates in higher education was reiterated. Efforts were made to develop the social dimension by reducing inequalities, providing student support services, counselling, and flexible learning paths. The need for data improvement on mobility and the social dimension was recognized.

“

*Widening access to higher education is a precondition for societal progress and economic development. We agree to adopt national measures for widening overall access to quality higher education. We will work to raise completion rates and ensure timely progression in higher education in all EHEA countries.*

*The student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations. We will step up our efforts towards underrepresented groups to develop the social dimension of higher education, reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services, counselling and guidance, flexible learning paths and alternative access routes, including recognition of prior learning. We encourage the use of peer learning on the social dimension*

*and aim to monitor progress in this area.*

”

### **Yerevan Communiqué 2015**

The goal was to make higher education systems more inclusive, reflecting population diversity. Efforts were directed towards widening participation, enhancing the social dimension, improving gender balance, and providing opportunities for access and completion for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

“

*Making our systems more inclusive is an essential aim for the EHEA as our populations become more and more diversified, also due to immigration and demographic changes. We undertake to widen participation in higher education and support institutions that provide relevant learning activities in appropriate contexts for different types of learners, including lifelong learning. We will improve permeability and articulation between different education sectors. We will enhance the social dimension of higher education, improve gender balance and widen opportunities for access and completion, including international mobility, for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. We will provide mobility opportunities for students and staff from conflict areas, while working to make it possible for them to return*

home once conditions allow. We also wish to promote the mobility of teacher education students in view of the important role they will play in educating future

generations of Europeans.

”

### Paris Communiqué 2018

The focus was on strengthening the social dimension of higher education, improving access and completion for underrepresented and vulnerable groups. The BFUG was mandated to address this issue in the next Ministerial conference.

*“We recognise that further effort is required to strengthen the social dimension of higher education. In order to meet our commitment that the student body entering and graduating from European higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe’s populations, we will improve access and completion by under-represented and vulnerable groups. Therefore, we mandate the*

*BFUG to take this issue forward by the next EHEA Ministerial conference.”*

”

### Rome Communiqué 2020

The Rome Communiqué (2020) reaffirmed the commitment to socially inclusive higher education and emphasised the importance of providing opportunities and support for equitable inclusion of individuals from all parts of society. It highlights the need to reinforce social inclusion and enhance the quality of education while utilizing the new opportunities provided by digitalization. The document adopted principles and guidelines to strengthen the social dimension, encompassing a broadened understanding of social inclusion. It called for policy dialogue and support for higher education institutions in integrating these principles and guidelines into their core missions. The Communiqué also recognized the significance of safeguarding student rights through legislation and committed to developing dedicated measures and structures at the national level.

“

*An inclusive EHEA*

*Socially inclusive higher education will remain at the core of the EHEA and will require providing opportunities and support for equitable inclusion of individuals from all parts of society. Learners with diverse socio-economic, professional, cultural and educational backgrounds must have the possibility and the tools to seek out and avail themselves, at any time of life, of the educational options most useful for them.*

*We commit to reinforcing social inclusion and enhancing quality education, using fully the new opportunities provided by digitalisation. While our societies increasingly rely on innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence, we must ensure that these observe ethical standards and human rights and foster inclusion. We recognize that digitalisation does not offer ‘one size fits all’ solutions, and ask the BFUG to propose ways in which all learners can benefit from the new technologies.*

*We adopt the “Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA”*

*(Annex II) based on a broadened understanding of the social dimension, and commit to implementing them in our systems. We will engage in wide-ranging policy dialogue on how to implement the principles and guidelines fully at national level. We will support our higher education institutions in integrating them into their institutional culture and core missions: learning and teaching, research and innovation, knowledge circulation and outreach, institutional governance and management. We ask the BFUG to report back to us in 2024 on the steps taken and the related monitoring measures to assure evidence-based follow-up.*

*We recognize the importance of safeguarding student rights through legislation; we commit to developing and supporting them in our national systems through dedicated measures and structures, such as student ombudspersons or similar solutions that already exist in many EHEA countries.* ”

## **Qualifications Framework**

### **Prague Communiqué 2001**

Ministers recognized the importance of enhancing the readability and comparability of European higher education through the development of a common framework of qualifications, etc.

“ *The readability and comparability of European higher education degrees world-wide should be enhanced by the development of a common framework of qualifications, as well as by coherent quality assurance and accreditation/certification mechanisms and by increased information efforts.* ”

### **Berlin Communiqué 2003**

Communiqué encouraged member states to establish a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems. It was emphasized the need for different outcomes and orientations for first and second cycle degrees, as well as the importance of linking shorter higher education programs to the qualifications framework.

“ Ministers encourage the member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area. Within such frameworks, degrees should have different defined outcomes. First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs. First cycle degrees should give access, in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, to second cycle programmes. Second cycle degrees should give access to doctoral studies.

Ministers invite the Follow-up Group to explore whether and how shorter higher education may be linked to the first cycle of a qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area. Ministers furthermore call those working on qualifications frameworks for the European Higher Education Area to encompass the wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and tech-

niques and to make appropriate use of the ECTS credits.

”

### **Bergen Communiqué 2005**

The Communiqué adopted the overarching framework for qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) consisting of three cycles. It was committed to elaborating national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching framework and ensuring complementarity with the broader framework for lifelong learning.

“ *The degree system*

*We note with satisfaction that the two-cycle degree system is being implemented on a large scale, with more than half of the students being enrolled in it in most countries. However, there are still some obstacles to access between cycles. Furthermore, there is a need for greater dialogue, involving Governments, institutions and social partners, to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications, including in appropriate posts within the public service.*

*We adopt the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. We commit ourselves to elaborating national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA by 2010, and to having started work on this by 2007. We ask the Follow-up Group to report on the implementation and further development of the overarching framework.*

*We underline the importance of ensuring complementarity between the overarching framework for the EHEA and the proposed broader framework for qualifications for lifelong learning encompassing general education as well as vocational education and training as now being developed within the European Union as well as among participating countries. We ask the European Commission fully to consult all parties to the Bologna Process as work progresses.*

*To achieve these objectives, doctoral level qualifications need to be fully aligned with the EHEA overarching framework for qualifications using the outcomes-based approach. The core component*

*of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. Considering the need for structured doctoral programmes and the need for transparent supervision and assessment, we note that the normal workload of the third cycle in most countries would correspond to 3-4*

*years full time.*

”

### **London Communiqué 2007**

It was acknowledged the importance of qualifications frameworks in achieving comparability and transparency within the EHEA. It was committed to fully implementing national qualifications frameworks certified against the overarching framework by 2010.

“

*Qualifications Frameworks*

*2.7 Qualifications frameworks are important instruments in achieving comparability and transparency within the EHEA and facilitating the movement of learners within, as well as between, higher education systems. They should also help HEIs to develop modules and study programmes based on learning outcomes and credits, and improve the recognition of qualifications as well as all forms of prior learning.*

*2.8 We note that some initial progress has been made towards the implementation of national qualifications frameworks, but that much more effort is required. We commit ourselves to fully implementing such national qualifications frameworks, certified against the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA, by 2010. Recognising that this is a challenging task, we ask the Council of Europe to support the sharing of experience in the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks. We emphasise that qualification frameworks should be designed so as to encourage greater mobility of students and teachers and improve employability.*

*2.9 We are satisfied that national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA will also be compatible with the proposal from the European Commission on a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.*

*2.10 We see the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA, which we agreed in Bergen, as a central element of the promotion of European higher education in a global context.*

”

### **Leuven Communiqué 2009**

It was aimed to have national frameworks implemented and prepared for self-certification against the overarching framework by 2012.

“

*We have also seen the creation of a European register for quality assurance agencies and the establishment of national qualifications frameworks linked to the overarching European Higher Education Area framework, based on learning outcomes and workload.*

*12. The development of national qualifications frameworks is an important step towards the implementation of lifelong learning. We aim at having them implemented and prepared for self-*

*tification against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area by 2012. This will require continued coordination at the level of the EHEA and with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. Within national contexts, interme-*

*diate qualifications within the first cycle can be a means of widening access to higher education.* ”

## **Bucharest Communiqué 2012**

The Communiqué highlighted the progress in developing qualifications frameworks and emphasized the need for their everyday implementation. School leaving qualifications to give access to higher education was considered of being EQF level 4, or equivalents in other systems. It was suggested to explore ways to take account of short cycles.

“ We welcome the progress in developing qualifications frameworks; they improve transparency and will enable higher education systems to be more open and flexible. We acknowledge that realising the full benefits of qualifications frameworks can in practice be more challenging than developing the structures. The development of qualifications frameworks must continue so that they become an everyday reality for students, staff and employers. Meanwhile, some countries face challenges in finalising national frameworks and in self-certifying compatibility with the framework of qualifications of the EHEA (QF-EHEA) by the end of 2012. These countries need to redouble their efforts and to take advantage of the support and experience of others in order to achieve this goal. A common understanding of the levels of our qualifications frameworks is essential to recognition for both academic and professional purposes. School leaving qualifications giving access to higher education will be considered as being of European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level 4, or equivalent levels for countries not bound by the EQF, where they are included in National Qualifications Frameworks. We further commit to referencing first, second and third cycle qualifications against EQF levels 6, 7 and 8 respectively, or against equivalent levels for countries not bound by the EQF. We will explore how the QF-EHEA could take account of short cycle qualifications (EQF level 5) and encourage countries to use the QF-EHEA for referencing these qualifications in national contexts where they exist. We ask the Council of Europe and the European Commission to continue to coordinate efforts to make the respective qualifications frameworks work well in practice.

We welcome the clear reference to ECTS, to the European Qualifications Framework and to learning outcomes in the European Commission's proposal for a revision of the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. We underline the importance of taking appropriate account of these elements in recognition decisions.

*Setting out priorities for 2012-2015*

*Having outlined the main EHEA goals in the coming years, we set out the following priorities for action by 2015.*

*At the national level, together with the relevant stakeholders, and especially with higher education institutions, we will:*

- *Ensure that qualifications frameworks, ECTS and Diploma Supplement implementation is based on learning outcomes;*

- *Invite countries that cannot finalise the implementation of national qualifications frameworks compatible with QF-EHEA by the end of 2012 to redouble their efforts and submit a revised roadmap for this task;*

*At the European level, in preparation of the Ministerial Conference in 2015 and together with relevant stakeholders, we will:*

- *Coordinate the work of ensuring that qualifications frameworks work in practice, emphasising their link to learning outcomes and explore how the QF-EHEA could take account of*

*short cycle qualifications in national contexts;*

”

### **Yerevan Communiqué 2015**

It was committed to include short cycle qualifications in the overarching framework of qualifications for the EHEA, reviewing national qualifications frameworks to recognize prior learning adequately.

“

#### ***Commitments***

- *to include short cycle qualifications in the overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), based on the Dublin descriptors for short cycle qualifications and quality assured according to the ESG, so as to make provision for the recognition of short cycle qualifications in their own systems, also where these do not comprise such qualifications;*
- *to review national qualifications frameworks, with a view to ensuring that learning paths*

*within the framework provide adequately for the recognition of prior learning;*

”

### **Paris Communiqué 2018**

It was acknowledged the increasing role of ECTS-based short cycle qualifications and included them as a stand-alone qualification within the overarching qualifications framework of the EHEA. It was suggested to focus on reinforcing and supporting quality and cooperation, and the integration of short cycle qualifications within national frameworks.

“

*In many of our systems, ECTS-based short cycle qualifications play an increasingly important role in preparing students for employment and further studies as well in improving social cohesion by facilitating access for many who would otherwise not have considered higher education. We are therefore including short-cycle qualifications as a stand-alone qualification within the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA (QF-EHEA). Each country can decide whether and how to integrate short cycle qualifications within its own national framework.*

*In 2018-2020, thematic peer groups will focus on three key commitments crucial to reinforcing and supporting quality and cooperation inside the EHEA:*



*a three-cycle system compatible with the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA and first and second cycle degrees scaled by ECTS*

*Measures adopted:*

*Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA).*

”

*Short cycle qualifications as a stand-alone qualification level within the overarching Qualifications*

## **Rome Communiqué 2020**

It was committed to complete and further develop national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching framework of qualifications for the EHEA.

“

*We commit to completing and further developing the National Qualifications Frameworks compatible with the Overarching Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) and ask the BFUG to update the criteria for self-certification to include a stronger element of peer review of national reports.*

*We mandate the Network of QF correspondents to continue its work, contributing to the further development of the QF-EHEA and the self-certification of national qualifications frameworks against it.*

”

## CONCLUSIONS & TAKE-AWAYS ON STYLE AND CONTENT

- The stylistic analysis was focused on tone (aspirational, narrative, narrative and prescriptive), point of view (first person plural, third person plural), other features (bullet points, paragraph numbering, presence of bibliography and indexes) and overall organization, which was generally composed of the following elements: introduction, reporting progress, future priorities, and future commitments.
  - Most Communiqués were either narrative, or a combination of narrative and prescriptive. Only two Communiqués (Bologna Declaration and Yerevan Communiqué) were aspirational.
  - The Communiqués were written in a third person point-of-view until the Berlin Communiqué; from the Bergen Communiqué, the first person plural was employed.
  - Most Communiqués tended to abide by the organization described above, with the exception of the Bologna Declaration (where all elements were combined in one Joint Declaration), the Yerevan Communiqué (where the introduction was defined, but reporting progress, future priorities and future commitments were merged in one category), and the Rome Communiqué (where reporting progress and future priorities were integrated seamlessly).
  - The Communiqués began including appendices starting from the Yerevan Communiqué.
  - Only the Bucharest Communiqué had a bibliography.
- The content format of the Rome Communiqué is explicit: vision, implementation, conclusions, and annexes.
- There are gaps between each subsequent Communiqué. Some subjects lack continuity or have no specific steps taken to carry out the commitments. For instance: Bucharest Communiqué mentions many details on Qualification Framework, while the Yerevan Communiqué uses only two commitments without any other explanation in the text.
- The Spring 2018 BFUGs were the first to propose a structure for the Communiqué (last updated document: 24 May 2018).
- In the same meetings, towards Paris2018, it was suggested that the Communiqué should be “more political and more ambitious, providing a vision for the years to come, including concrete commitments and ways to achieve them.”
- Since spring 2018 (towards Paris 2018), it has been proposed **to employ the verbs: “we commit to”** (first used in the Bergen Communiqué up to Paris one, 1-2 times, and multiply time at the Rome one ), **“we ensure”** (used almost in every Communiqué, more in the Rome one but not as “we ensure” but it ensure/they should ensure) **instead of “we promote”** (used in all of the Communiqués without the “we”, not used at all in Rome) and **“we believe”** (only used in the Leuven one).
- The Yerevan Communiqué advocated a “renewed vision,” although this term was not employed in subsequent Communiqués.
- The term “vision” was used as a term and as a pledge in the Rome Communiqué, along with the words “inclusive,” “innovative,” and “interconnected,” with the target of 2030. Only in the last three Communiqués has the term “inclusive” been used. “Innovative,” along with “learning” and “teaching,” has been used in several Communiqués, but only in the Rome one as “innovative EHEA.” “Interconnected” has been used only in the Rome Communiqué in its vision and implementation goals.
- The term “sustainable” has been used in almost all the comuniqués as an adjective to the “economy” , “society” ”and “development”. In Paris and Rome Communiqués the focus was to meet the **United Nations Sustainable Developments Goals**.



1999 Bologna Declaration

2001 Prague Communiqué

2003 Berlin Communiqué

2005 Bergen Communiqué

2007 London Communiqué

**Tiranë: 11.04.2024**

**Report of potential problems for the EHEA.info website:**

1. **Security Vulnerabilities:** Older PHP versions (5.6) may have known security vulnerabilities that can be exploited by attackers to compromise the website's security, leading to data breaches, malware infections, and other security incidents.
2. **Lack of Support:** Older PHP versions may no longer be supported by the PHP development team, which means that critical security patches and updates are not provided. This leaves the website vulnerable to security threats and makes it difficult to maintain and update.
3. **Compatibility Issues:** Websites built with very old PHP versions may encounter compatibility issues with newer software components, libraries, frameworks, and server configurations. This can lead to functionality problems, errors, and failures.
4. **Performance Limitations:** Older PHP versions may lack performance optimizations and improvements found in newer versions. This can result in slower website performance, longer response times, and decreased user experience.
5. **Deprecated Features:** PHP evolves over time, and older features may become deprecated or removed in newer versions. Websites built with deprecated features may experience compatibility issues and may require extensive refactoring to work with newer PHP versions, which can take a long time to address.
6. **Dependency Issues:** Websites built with very old PHP versions may rely on outdated third-party libraries, plugins, and extensions that are no longer maintained or supported. This can create dependency issues and make it difficult to update or replace these components. This was the case with the file upload library used in the website which is not working and a temporary replacement has been made which sometimes introduces bugs to files uploaded with the previous library. Issue can be fixed manually but takes time.
7. **Decreased Stability:** Older PHP versions may be less stable and reliable compared to newer versions. This can result in increased downtime, crashes, and errors, negatively impacting the website's availability and reliability.
8. **Difficulty Upgrading:** Upgrading from a very old PHP version to a newer version may require significant effort and resources, especially if the website relies on deprecated features or custom code that needs to be rewritten or refactored. This can result in downtime, disruption, and potential data loss during the upgrade process.
9. **Incompatibility with Hosting Providers:** Some hosting providers may not support very old PHP versions or may have restrictions on their usage. This can limit the choice of hosting providers and increase hosting costs for websites built with outdated PHP versions.

Endri Dafa

MC Networking





Tiranë: 11.04.2024

**Report of potential problems for the EHEA.info website:**

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Endri Dafa



## **Annex VIII: Staff Resume**

### ***Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi***

#### **Head of the Albanian BFUG Secretariat**

Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi was born in 1972 in Kruja, Albania. Adi lived in Jerusalem, Israel from 1997 until 2019, when she moved to Rome, Italy. She is a graduate of two Master's degrees, in German language from the University of Tirana in Albania and Political Science, Public Administration and Local Governance from Bar Ilan University in Israel.

Her work experiences span 32 years, with 25 years specifically in the internationalisation of higher education, recognition of academic qualification and human capital development. Adi is fluent in several languages: Albanian as native language, highly proficient (C2) in English, Hebrew and Italian; proficient in German (C1), and fluent in Spanish (A2), French and Portuguese (A1). She is mother to Alon, her 19 years old son.

Adi worked at the Department for Evaluation of Foreign Academic Degrees (ENIC Israel), Division for External Relations and UNESCO at the Ministry of Education, in Jerusalem, holding several responsibilities (as Desk Manager, Senior Credential Evaluator, Expert on EU funded Programmes and Program Manager for the Contracting Authority on Decentralised Implementation of EU funded Euromed Youth Programme IV, to mention a few). From November 2018 to December 2020, she worked as a Senior Expert on Higher Education in the Italian BFUG Secretariat in Rome, Italy. Between March 2021 to September 2023, she worked as a Senior Expert on Higher Education for the Western Balkans, in the framework of AdReN Secretariat, implementing automatic recognition in the Adriatic Region. Adi has been a member of several panels and international conferences on the topics of her professional expertise and the know-how and has trained hundreds of Israeli stakeholders on higher education topics as well as EU funded project management. She has used her knowledge and expertise on EU funded programmes to design many activities, from single events to large scale projects, which were very successfully implemented to a wide Israeli audience, spanning from national authorities to the Israeli third sector stakeholders. She is actively involved in volunteering work with several associations on social matters close to her heart.

Adi joined the Albanian BFUG Secretariat in January 2023 in the position of Deputy Head and was appointed as Head of the Secretariat in March 2023

[LinkedIn profile](#)

### ***Dr. Aida Myrto***

#### **Senior Expert**

Dr. Aida Myrto is a Linguistics professor and a qualified e-Learning Expert, with a wealth of expertise in curriculum development, due to her long experience as a professor at Tirana University, a curricula co-author, as well as her involvement in a myriad of programs and degrees.

She has a Bachelor and Master's Degree in French Philology from Tirana University in 2005, an MBA from Montesquieu Bordeaux IV University and Tirana Polytechnic University in 2007, a Master's degree in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language from Pablo de Olavide University in Spain 2011, and a Ph.D. in Modern Language, Didactic, and Translation from the same university in 2016. She is also a certified international DELE examiner at all levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages from the Cervantes Institutions in Rome, Italy. She holds e-Learning and b-Learning certifications from UNED University, Nebrija University in Madrid, and Salamanca University in Salamanca, Spain, and she is highly fluent in Spanish, English, French, Italian, and fluent in Portuguese.

Aida's expertise was crucial in successfully adapting the national teaching curriculum into a distance and e-Learning format during the Covid-19 lockdown. She played an important role in completing the report on the internal accreditation process for her faculty department at the University of Tirana in 2022, focusing on learning and teaching standards, evaluation, and competencies. Aida has also made significant contributions to a range of areas of expertise, including conducting comparative and analytical research for the BPIR report and the National Strategy for Higher Education issued by the Ministry of Education in 2021.

As a member of the Secretariat, Aida has demonstrated excellent managerial and knowledge-based skills. She is responsible for ensuring that various content on the EHEA website is clearly and accurately published, and has carried out research for the first draft of the 2027 Ministerial Roadmap, which was sent to the Co-chairs in August 2022. Aida has also drafted the first proposal agendas for BFUG and Board Meetings from early 2021 to the present. With her extensive academic and professional background, Aida Myrto is a highly respected and valued expert in her field, and her contributions to curriculum development and e-Learning are widely recognized.

## ***Dr. Enis Fita***

### **Project Manager Expert**

Dr. Enis FITA, was born in Tirana on 18.06.1975. He achieved outstanding results (106/110) in both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Political Science and International Relations from the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Siena in Italy from 1999 to 2004. In 2002 – 2003, as part of the Erasmus/Socrates exchange program, Enis completed an academic year at the Faculty of Law at the University of Nantes in France. He is fluent in several foreign languages, including English, Italian, and French.

Enis completed his Master's degree in European Studies in EU Politics and Governance at the University of Tirana from 2010 to 2012. He holds the degree "Doctor of Science" in Management (2017) rated "excellent", completed at the Faculty of Economics and Agribusiness at the Agricultural University of Tirana. Currently, he is a candidate for the title of Associate Professor.

Enis started his career as a lecturer in 2006, in several universities such as the University of Tirana, the Agricultural University of Tirana, University "Aleksandër Moisiu" Durrës, University College of Business, etc. Over the years, he has also been a leader with administrative leadership functions (Head of the Security and Internal Quality Unit; Departmental Responsibility; Deputy Dean for Science and Learning) in the activities of higher education institutions. He is working as an external expert for Licensure of Programmes and Higher Education Institutions at the Ministry of Educa-

tion and Sports, and as an external evaluation expert for Programme and Higher Education Institution Accreditation at the Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. He is the author of several journalistic and scientific articles published both at home and abroad. Author of two university texts: “Communication and Effective Writing” and “Basics of Sociology and Psychology”.

Currently, he works as a Project Management Expert in the Secretariat of BFUG (Bologna Follow Up Group).

## ***Manjola Hasa***

### **Senior Communication Expert**

Manjola Hasa graduated from the Faculty of History-Philology at the University of Tirana with a Bachelor’s degree in Journalism and a Master’s degree in Public Relations. She has a well-established experience as a journalist in the visual media and in writing in the most popular media outlets in the country, in the role of reporter and show host for almost two decades.

Manjola has also conducted trainings in Journalism, Communication, and Public Relations both locally and internationally. She is an accomplished designer of communication strategies for public institutions and non-governmental organisations and has received several professional awards for her objective reporting and attention to marginalised communities or victims of human trafficking.

In addition to her work in journalism and communication, Manjola has contributed to the academic field as a lecturer at the Faculty of Law at the University of Durrës, where she teaches Academic Writing. She is also involved in various academic initiatives and collaborations, including training and mentoring young journalists.

Currently, Manjola serves as the Director of Media Information at the Media and Information Agency, Council of Ministers. Since March 2022, she has also been engaged as an external communication expert in the Bologna Follow Up Group Secretariat in Tirana.

## ***Kristina Metallari***

### **Senior Expert**

Kristina Metallari has a proven track record as a successful professional, providing strategic guidance and developing effective communication strategies for project implementation. She has worked with prestigious organisations such as the British Embassy, OSCE Presence in Albania, Yunus Social Business, and Erasmus Student Network UK.

In addition, she has extensive experience as an educational consultant, advising and consulting on BFUG Secretariat Hosted by Albania



educational practices by matching students with appropriate learning environments and education programs tailored to their preferences. She has also guided students through the college selection and application processes, offering consulting sessions regarding university help.

She holds a First-Class Honours Bachelor of Science in Management from Cass Business School, City University London, and has successfully completed a Bachelor of Business Administration Exchange Year at WU (Vienna University of Economics and Business) as well as a Business Studies Foundation Program at CATS Cambridge.

Ms. Metallari is a dedicated volunteer who has contributed to the Red Cross Youth in Albania, where she provided valuable administrative support. Additionally, she has served as a Study Abroad Advisor for Cass Business School. She is fluent in Albanian, English, Greek, and Turkish.

Ms. Metallari is recognized for her excellent communication skills, organisational abilities, and co-ordination prowess. She is deeply committed to education and firmly believes in its transformative power to effect positive change in individuals and communities alike.

## ***Dr. Jora Vaso***

### **Senior Expert**

Jora Vaso is an accomplished professional with extensive experience in academia and international organisations. She joined the Albanian BFUG Secretariat in April 2022 as a Senior Expert, where she brings her expertise and personal experience in academia and higher education initiatives to her role.

Jora's academic background is multidisciplinary. She completed her PhD in Comparative Literature, specialising in English Philology, from the Pomeranian University in Slupsk, Poland in 2021. She also holds two Bachelor's degrees, one in Comparative Literature and the other in Advertising, from the University of Georgia in Athens, GA, USA. Additionally, she earned a Master's degree in International Business from Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA, USA.

With a strong foundation in academia, Jora is a lecturer, published scholar, writer, translator, and editor. Her expertise in Comparative Literature and her fluency in English, Albanian, Italian, and French enable her to communicate and engage with diverse audiences. Most recently, she taught English and Comparative Literature at higher education institutions in Poland, including the University of Slupsk and the Gdansk Banking College.

Jora has also made significant contributions to her home country. In 2015, as the Director of Projects at the NGO Global Opportunities Albania, she organised the very first international summer school of entrepreneurship (BIESS), which has been held successfully every summer since then. Her passion for promoting educational opportunities and entrepreneurship reflects her commitment to making a positive impact in her community.

Currently based in Tirana, Albania, Jora continues to actively engage in research, writing, and guest lecturing on literary studies in various universities.

## ***Ana Zhibaj***

### **Senior Expert**

Ana Zhibaj comes from a background in urban planning and architecture, with a strong focus on public policies and international development. She graduated with a Master of Science in Architecture (with High Honors) and a Master in Urban Planning (with Distinction) from Harvard Graduate School of Design.

She has three years of experience in urban planning and development, where she facilitated the coordination of multi-level, multi-disciplinary actors, which equipped her with a good understanding of institutional and legal frameworks, as well as local and national public policies. Her previous work experiences include organising municipal staff trainings on street design practices that promote public health and early childhood development, coordinating stakeholders (namely, the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Albanian Peace Corps) in organising post-trauma recovery trainings with teachers at primary schools in Albania, and drafting a strategy to promote gender mainstreaming in transportation policies, specifically walking and cycling.

Her interest in education policies began during her time at Harvard, when Ana worked closely with the head of the Department of Urban Planning, Ann Forsyth, as a research assistant for the curriculum committee, a structure consisting of students, alums, and staff, tasked with identifying and analysing the needs of students and alums, through bi-weekly meetings, qualitative and quantitative analysis. At Harvard, she also served as Senior Editor of the Harvard Real Estate Review and was elected President of the Harvard Urban Planning Organization.

Ana joined the Bologna Follow-up Group in February 2023, as an external junior expert, to move later as senior expert within the BFUG Secretariat.

## ***Blerina Caslli***

### **Expert**

Blerina Caslli is an accomplished project management expert with a background in Economy and European Studies. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Economy and Finance from the University of Tirana and has worked for many years in the field of finance, project management, and communication industry.

Additionally, she has also pursued a Master of European Studies program from the University of Parma in Italy, which was providing advanced academic training in the field of European Union law, economics, and policies. Following this experience, she ran various employment training programs besides EU institutions and agencies like EUIPO and the European Commission.

Her professional background includes working for international corporations and the private sector in financial and project management roles, as well as engaging in implementing communication projects for the EU or UNICEF Albania and providing expertise in the Media Monitoring field.

She has been actively engaged in different non-profit organisations in the community such as the Initiative Group Alpbach Albania promoting European integration and the European Forum Alpbach.

## ***Enkelejda Mezini***

### **Expert**

Enkelejda is a mathematician specialised in accounting and protocol standards. An interpreter and event coordinator, engaged in public and private projects, she has working experiences in Albania, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

From 2019-2023, she had work experiences and internships in the Veneto Region, Italy as well as in Albania, namely in an accounting studio and recently in the National Coastal Agency, Ministry of Tourism of Albania as a finance specialist. With her recent work experience at the Digital Cadastre Center, State Cadastre Agency, she has held the responsibilities of protocol and official correspondence in accordance with the relevant legal and normative provisions in force in the public information field, personal data, and archives.

Enkelejda had worked as an associate and translator at the court of Vicenza, Italy, where she contributed to the translation of materials written in English and Albanian, but also, she has cooperated with several practitioners. Her experience as a translator and event coordinator was enhanced with her commitment to the Sustainable Rural Development Project, implanted by GIZ with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. Some of her vital responsibilities were the arrangement of meetings and workshops, as well as the translation of documents for the international project team (from Albanian to English and vice versa).

Enkelejda has lived for nearly 20 years in London, United Kingdom and has been engaged in a series of companies in the capacity of agent/manager/sales consultant, mainly for the KODAK EXPRESS company, consultant/sales assistant at the Children Book Center company, as a consultant and sales assistant at the Wholefoods company.

Enkelejda graduated in Mathematics at the University of Tirana, Faculty of Natural Science in 1995 and has attended several accounting courses in Italy and the United Kingdom. Enkelejda is fluent in English, Italian and Albanian.

## ***Xhulia Balla***

### **Communication Expert**

With over five years of dedicated experience in the field of communications, Xhulia Balla has established herself as a proficient expert, particularly renowned for her strategic approach to media relations and communication planning. Her career began in earnest in 2018 when she took on a pivotal role within the Press Office of the Prime Minister of Albania, laying the foundation for her expertise as a media specialist.

Xhulia holds a Bachelor's degree in English Language from the University of Elbasan, evidencing her strong foundation in effective communication and critical analysis. She is currently furthering her specialisation through a Master's degree in Communication Science at the University of Tirana,

underscoring her commitment to continuous professional development.

Her tenure at the Press Office of the Prime Minister was marked by a series of successful communication initiatives, showcasing her ability to manage high-stakes information dissemination and public relations efforts. This role capitalised on her capacity to work under pressure and her dedication to impactful communication strategies.

Presently, Xhulia serves as a Media Specialist at the Media and Information Agency, Council of Ministers. Here, her responsibilities have broadened to include the oversight of comprehensive communication campaigns and the representation of the institution at major events. Her contributions in this capacity have not only demonstrated her exceptional performance but also her ability to significantly impact the institution's public engagement efforts.

In September 2023, Xhulia joined the Secretariat as a Junior Communication Expert. This role has allowed her to expand her purview, contributing to broader communication strategies and further honing her skills in media liaison and public information dissemination.

Xhulia's professional journey is characterised by her relentless work ethic, initially demonstrated through her tenure with an energy company during her undergraduate studies, and her substantial contributions to the Prime Minister's press office. Her expertise in crafting and executing comprehensive communication strategies stands out as a testament to her role as a distinguished communication expert.

## ***Patrik Bardhi***

### **Project Management & Logistics Expert**

Patrik Bardhi is an accomplished project management and logistics expert, with a track record of delivering successful projects across a diverse range of industries. With a passion for technology and a deep understanding of international economics and finance, Patrik brings a unique blend of skills to his work, enabling him to develop and implement effective strategies that drive results.

Patrik's educational background includes a BA in International Economics and Finance from Bocconi University in Milan, combined with an exchange semester in the University of Virginia and a Masters in Business Administration from UMT in Tirana. This strong foundation in economics and business has provided him with the tools and knowledge necessary to succeed in project management and logistics, where he has gained extensive experience over the past four years.

Throughout his career, Patrik has demonstrated a broad range of skills in need assessment, planning, implementation, coordination, communication, capacity building, reporting, and evaluation procedures in the project implementation area. He has a proven ability to navigate complex project requirements and meet specific milestones, while maintaining a high level of stakeholder satisfaction.

Patrik's proficiency in English and Italian has enabled him to work effectively with government counterparts and international institutions, including the EU, UNICEF, Gartner, and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). He is a highly trained professional who is adept at managing projects from start to finish, with a focus on delivering results that meet the needs of his clients.

Patrik's passion for technology is evident in his work, where he has leveraged the latest tools and platforms to streamline project management and logistics processes. He is skilled in the use of

project management software, supply chain management tools, and logistics management platforms, enabling him to optimise operations and drive efficiencies.

Overall, Patrik Bardhi is a highly skilled project management and logistics expert with a broad range of skills and experience. His ability to deliver successful projects on time and within budget, combined with his passion for technology and economics, make him a valuable asset to any organisation.

[LinkedIn profile](#)

