

towards the european higher education area  
**bologna process**

BFUG4 13  
22 February 2005

**DRAFT BERGEN COMMUNIQUÉ**

**The European Higher Education Area:  
Renewing the Vision - Achieving the Goals**

Draft Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education  
Bergen, 19-20 May 2005  
*Draft 08.02.05 with comments from BFUG Members*

**-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

**The European Higher Education Area: Achieving the Goals of a Dynamic Vision**

**End of comments from the Council of Europe –**

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

The title of the Communiqué should state clearly that we have a clear vision. This vision has not changed; this vision has been developing, getting more and more mature, which is dynamic.  
From this reason we suggest the title: The European Higher Education Area: Achieving the **Goals of a Dynamic Vision**

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

## I. The vision

1. We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, have the vision of a European Higher Education Area in which learners and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole.

### -- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":

1. ....and social life of Europe "enabling Europe be continuously build upon its plurality in order to become more united".

End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --

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### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

1. We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, ~~have the vision of aim to establish~~ a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) ~~in which learners and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole,~~ an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. ~~It is~~ will be an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands and societal priorities. It will address the four main purposes of higher education in a lifelong learning perspective:

- preparation for the labour market;
- preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies;
- personal development;
- the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base.

End of comments from the Council of Europe --

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### -- Comments from Sweden:

1. We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, have the vision of a European Higher Education Area in which students and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life as well as contributing to the economic development of Europe as a whole.

End of comments from Sweden --

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### -- Comments from Belgium, French Community:

1. We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, have the vision of a European Higher Education Area in which learners and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole and of their national and regional environment in particular.

End of comments from Belgium, French Community--

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### -- Comments from ESIB:

1. We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, have the vision of a European Higher Education Area in which students and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole.

End of comments from ESIB --

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

We support the suggestion which has already been made by the Council of Europe, which stress the multi-purpose role which higher education has in the changing societies and especially because it is massified education. We believe that the future EHEA must reflect it. From this reason we also suggest changing the order of the paragraphs and following amendments in the text (the same as in the Council of Europe suggestion)

1. We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, ~~have the vision of aim to establish~~ a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) ~~in which learners and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole,~~ an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. It ~~is~~ will be an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands and societal priorities. It will address the four main purposes of higher education in a lifelong learning perspective:

- preparation for the labour market;
- preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies;
- personal development;
- the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted.

Comment :

This paragraph as well as paragraphs two and three could be shortened in view of shortening the overall text and rephrased by also referring to the "acquis" of the Bologna declaration and the ensuing communiqués in the following way:

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from Estonia:**

Article 1 the vision. We support the Swedish proposal extend the vision with the higher education contributing to the economic development. But we feel that European Higher Education Area has to have an additional pillar, namely coherence. So, we propose to read the para " ...., thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life as well as contributing to the coherent economic development of Europe as a whole".

**End of comments from Estonia--**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. It is an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands and societal priorities.

**-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

2. ....and to develop and deliver "a wide range" and a "high"quality education programs....

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

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**-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

2. In the EHEA learners and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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**-- Comments from Sweden:**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. It is an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands, labour market needs and societal priorities.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. It is an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands, societal priorities and cultural needs.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from Lithuania:**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity, transparency, flexibility and openness and its rich tradition and diversity. It is an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands and societal priorities.

**End of comments from Lithuania --**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on the principles of quality, integrity, equality, social cohesion and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. It is an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands and societal priorities.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

2. In the EHEA learners and staff can move freely and avail themselves of opportunities based on their qualifications and experience, thus enriching the educational, cultural and social life of Europe as a whole.

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

Having regard to our strategic goals as laid out in the Bologna Declaration, the Prague and the Berlin Communiqués we, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, have the vision of a European Higher Education Area based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency while cherishing its rich tradition and cultural diversity thus contributing to a knowledge-based society. As higher education is situated at the crossroads of research, education and innovation, it is also key to Europe's competitiveness.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place ~~on the global stage worldwide~~, based on the principles of quality, integrity and transparency, and its rich tradition and diversity. It is an area which enjoys the widest participation and support of its citizens in a variety of higher education institutions with the autonomy needed to develop and deliver high quality education programmes to meet challenges emerging from forefront research, individual demands and societal priorities.

French comments : France would avoid the adjective "global" which is too much focused on and unnecessarily reminding of the economic globalization.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from the Holy See:**

2. It is an area where European higher education can confidently take its place on the global stage, based on a longstanding historical experience, the principles of quality...

**End of comments from the Holy See--**

3. It is an area where Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument not only to enable learners to reach their personal potential, but also to deliver wider social and economic benefits.

**-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

3. ~~It is~~ The EHEA will be an area where Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument ~~not only~~ to enable learners to reach their personal potential and ~~but also~~ to deliver wider social, ~~and~~ economic and cultural benefits.

**Argument:**

While these proposals are to some extent editorial, we believe it is important to underline that the EHEA is something to be created and developed. The Bologna Process leads toward the EHEA, which does not yet exist. Therefore, it is important that in the "visions" part, the EHEA be referred to in future tense. In para. 1, Ministers should state that they aim to transform their vision into reality, and in para. 3, we believe the cultural dimension should also be included. Not least, we believe an explicit reference to the four main purposes of higher education would strengthen the EHEA, and that this would be important also in relation to elements such as lifelong learning and the social dimension.

We also suggest changes in the order of para.s 1 and 2 since what we want to create is rather described in the former para. 2 – now 1 - and then, in this European higher education there is free movement.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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**-- Comments from Sweden:**

3. It is an area where Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument not only to enable students to reach their personal potential, but also to deliver wider social, cultural and economic benefits.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

3. Delete. The meaning of this paragraph is expressed above in other words

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

3. It is an area where Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument not only to enable students to reach their personal potential, but also to deliver wider social, cultural and economic benefits for society.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

3. ~~It is~~ The EHEA will be an area where Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument ~~not only~~ to enable learners to reach their personal potential and ~~but also~~ to deliver wider social, ~~and~~ economic and cultural benefits.

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

3. ~~It is an area where~~ In this aim, Higher education is defined as a public responsibility and as such Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument not only to enable learners to reach their personal potential, but also to deliver wider social and economic benefits.

French comments : cf §15 for explanation

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from the Holy See:**

3. It is an area where Governments are committed to using education policy as a key instrument not only to enable learners to reach their personal potential, but also to deliver wider human, social and economic benefits.

**End of comments from the Holy See--**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 3: ~~(it is an area where Governments)~~ "It is an area where Member States"

**End of comments from Italy--**

### **Building the Higher Education Area**

4. Building on achievements so far in the Bologna Process, we see the following structures emerge, shaping transparency in the European Higher Education Area:

#### **-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

Para 4-7 moved to para 36

Argument: we suggest these paragraphs properly belong under IV. Preparing for 2010, as the three pillars of the EHEA (possibly, a fourth pillar should be added concerning the connection between higher education and research)

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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#### **-- Comments from Germany:**

4. Building on achievements so far in the Bologna Process, we see the following structures emerge, shaping transparency in the European Higher Education Area where necessary and not yet installed.

- Although the text is aiming at the design for the year 2010 we should express that in several or even many member states there are already structures in place. -

**End of comments from Germany--**

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#### **-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted.

#### **Comment:**

This paragraph is superfluous in our proposed text as the following paragraphs have been merged in later sections.

**End of comments from Austria --**



5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the levels have a double function: to prepare the student for the labour market and for further competence building. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained may give access to higher levels.

**-- Comments from Finland:**

para 5: ...where the levels (add) MAY have a double function...

-because in many fields of university education, the main purpose of the bachelor's degree will be to prepare students for second-cycle studies, and, on the other hand, in polytechnics the main purpose of the first-cycle degree is to qualify students for direct entry at the labour market

para 5: ..and the qualification obtained (replace may by) SHALL give access to higher levels

-this is a significant amendment to reflect the idea of life-long learning

**End of comments from Finland --**

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**-- Comments from Latvia:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the levels have a double function: to prepare the student for the labour market and for further competence building. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained gives access to higher levels.

**Argument**

It is important to state that graduate of each level "has access" i.e. should be considered for admission in the next cycle. Already since Helsinki seminars on bachelor and master degrees it has been clear that "access" here is used in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and that it does not mean automatic admission. Such a setting has been discussed in various fora and accepted. It has been used in that way in the Berlin Communiqué (cf. page 4).

Let's not move back, please!

**End of comments from Latvia --**

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**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 5 – We would prefer the Bologna term "cycles" instead of "levels" – redraft as follows:

"Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the cycles have a dual purpose of preparing the student for the labour market and progression to professional practice and for development in active citizenship and lifelong learning. Each cycle builds on preceding cycles and allows for open and flexible progression."

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the levels have multiple functions: to prepare the student for the labour market and for further competence building, for active citizenship, cultural awareness and personal development. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained may give access to higher levels.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the levels have a double function: to prepare the student for active citizenship in democratic societies and for further competence building which will be useful for personal development and the labour market as well. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained may give access to higher levels.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from Lithuania:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the levels have a double function: to prepare the student for the labour market and for further competence building. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained may give access to higher level programmes (or for choice without "programmes").

(To avoid the possible meaning that to jump the cycle is simply allowed)

**End of comments from Lithuania--**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where the levels have a double function: to prepare the student for the labour market and for further competence building. The third cycle aims at qualifying for a scientific career and includes a link to research. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained may give access to higher levels.

- The third level does not necessarily prepare the students for the labour market. -

**End of comments from Germany--**

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**-- Comments from Turkey:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where each cycle may have a double function: to prepare the student for the labour market and for further competence building. Each cycle builds on the preceding cycle, and the qualification obtained may give access to higher levels. Access to the third cycle following the first cycle is possible. In this case, the workload of the taught part of the third cycle shall be increased by an amount equal to that of the taught part of the second cycle.

(With this change, comments in this paragraph are confined to higher education levels.)

**End of comments from Turkey --**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on at least the three cycles in higher education, where the levels have a variety of functions: personal development, to prepare the student for the labour market with a long term perspective, as an active and critical citizen and for further competence building. Each cycle builds on the preceding cycle, and the qualification obtained gives access to higher levels.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted as it is covered in the section on "frameworks for qualifications"

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from EURASHE:**

Paragraph 5

In the original draft:

Add after the text: "The same access will be safeguarded for the undergraduates from those short cycle programmes that would qualify for integration into the first cycle."

EURASHE fully endorses the second comment from Finland on this paragraph 5 ("because in many fields ..."), but would prefer to replace the term 'polytechnics' by 'university colleges'\*

\* Argumentation : As stated already in the BFUG Board meeting in Oslo on 9 December 2004, EURASHE would welcome a common name for those non-university- HEIs, in a number of countries, which comprise bachelor and masters programmes. The term 'polytechnics' may be too restrictive, in our opinion, as it is used only in a limited number of countries.

**End of comments from EURASHE--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

5. please rewrite : "where the levels have the (...) function to prepare for professional life or for further competence building, advanced learning or creation of knowledge."

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements implementing an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

**-- Comments from Latvia:**

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements with evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment and external review and a system of accreditation, certification or a comparable procedure, implementing an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

**Argument**

Berlin Communiqué was quite explicit on these issues. At least some of them could be taken over here.

I quote Berlin Communiqué:

"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. "

**End of comments from Latvia --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements and will be invited to implement an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA, once they have been validated by the countries.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Lithuania:**

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance system arrangements implementing an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

(For better correlation with Berlin Communiqué and Prague Communiqué provisions on quality assurance)

**End of comments from Lithuania--**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements implementing the agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted as it is covered in paragraph 23.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements implementing an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

French comments : France agrees with the use of "*quality assurance*" in the whole communiqué for common use reasons. However we would prefer the use of "quality assessment" for France will translate it in the French standard terminology by "évaluation de la qualité".

**End of comments from France --**

7. All higher education institutions in participating countries will recognise degrees and periods of studies according to the Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention).

**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

7. All higher education institutions or other competent bodies in participating countries will recognise degrees and periods of studies according to the Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention).

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted as it is covered in paragraph 29.

**End of comments from Austria --**

**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

3) We very much welcome the new countries and the openness of the EHEA. We welcome expression of the commitment with the principles and goals of EHEA in their policies accompanied by concrete steps visible from the reports delivered. However, it is difficult to imagine that real implementation (which is the core of EHEA) could mature in the "new" countries in 5 years if it did not matured in the "old" countries after 6 years. Some sentence opening wider time perspective for these new countries might be welcomed. Thus we could avoid stressing them by unrealistic goals. What we should require is next to the commitment real concrete action which has been taking place.

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

## II. The Cooperation: Participating countries and partners

### The coordinated actions of 45 European countries

8. Along with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine whose participation in the Bologna Process has been accepted at this conference, Ministers responsible for higher education in the 45 participating countries confirm their continued commitment to coordinating their policies through the Bologna Process to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

#### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

II The Cooperation: Participating countries and partners

8. ~~Along with~~ We welcome Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine whose participation as partners in the Bologna Process. ~~has been accepted at this conference,~~ Ministers responsible for higher education in the 45 participating countries confirm their continued commitment to coordinating their policies through the Bologna Process to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

Argument

This paragraph as proposed reads oddly: the five new countries are part of the 45, yet are singled out for special attention. This dilemma is solved by splitting the single long sentence. Welcoming the five new members is a separate action. Together all 45 parties then confirm their commitment, as equal partners, regardless of the date of their accession.

End of comments from the Council of Europe --

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#### -- Comments from the United Kingdom:

Paragraph 8 – insert “structural” before “policies” in the first sentence. This is to be clear that Bologna is about structural reform.

End of comments from the United Kingdom --

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#### -- Comments from Greece:

8 We welcome Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine whose participation in the Bologna Process has been accepted at this conference. Ministers responsible for higher education in the 45 participating countries confirm their continued commitment to coordinating their policies through the Bologna Process to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

End of comments from Greece --

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#### -- Comments from Germany:

8. Along with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine whose participation in the Bologna Process has been accepted at this conference (~~- still to be discussed -~~), Ministers responsible for higher education in the 45 participating countries confirm their continued commitment to coordinating their policies through the Bologna Process to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010. 9. It is a matter of satisfaction that we all share the common understanding of the principles, objectives and commitments of the Process as expressed in the Bologna Declaration and in the subsequent communiqués from the Ministerial Conferences in Prague and Berlin. Together, we also want to reinforce our links with other parts of the world.

End of comments from Germany--

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

We, Ministers responsible for higher education in the participating countries of the Bologna Process, accept the requests for membership of with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and welcome these states as new members thus expanding the process to 45 European Countries.

We confirm our continued commitment to coordinating our policies through the Bologna Process to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010 and to providing the necessary framework conditions to implement all the principles, objectives and commitments of the Process in our countries.

**Comment:**

The first part simply follows the "Berlin Communiqué" - tradition of accession.

The second part makes the commitment more specific.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

The French political stance regarding the entrance of 5 new countries in the Bologna process is in progress at this time; negotiations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will lead to an official position that will be communicated as soon as possible.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

8. agree with the COE proposal, where welcoming the new members is a separate action.

"We welcome Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine as new members in the process and commit ourselves to support our new partners in orienting their HE policies towards the realisation of the EHEA. Ministers responsible for HE in the 45 countries participating ..."

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

9. It is a matter of satisfaction that we all share the common understanding of the principles, objectives and commitments of the Process as expressed in the Bologna Declaration and in the subsequent communiqués from the Ministerial Conferences in Prague and Berlin. Together, we also want to reinforce our links with other parts of the world.

**-- Comments from Austria:**

The first part should be deleted.

**Comment:**

The first part is already covered in the new paragraph 8 .

Together, we also want to reinforce our cooperation with other regions of the world.

**End of comments from Austria --**

**Progress**

10. We note with satisfaction the continuing development of the Process in participating countries. We express our appreciation for the coordination carried out by the Follow-up Group and the support of the Secretariat provided by Norway as host country for this Ministerial Conference.

**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 10: ~~(the coordination carried out by the Follow-up Group)~~ "the coordination carried out by the Bologna Follow-up Group"

**End of comments from Italy--**

11. We take note of the National Reports and of the Report from the Follow-up Group on the development of the Bologna Process from Berlin to Bergen. We also take note of the Trends IV Report prepared by the European University Association (EUA) and the report from ESIB, the National Unions of Students in Europe.

**-- Comments from ESIB:**

Trends IV Report prepared by the European University Association (EUA) and the report from ESIB- the National Unions of Students in Europe.

**End of comments from ESIB --**



12. We take note of the results of the seminars which have been organised as part of the work programme between Berlin and Bergen by participating countries and organisations.

**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 12 – insert “official” before “seminars”.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

12. We take note of the results of the official Bologna seminars which have been organised as part of the work programme between Berlin and Bergen by participating countries and organisations.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

13. We acknowledge the support of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES for the implementation of the Process and its promotion on a pan-European scale and also outside Europe.

**Higher education institutions and students, partners in developing the European Higher Education Area.**

14. We underline the central role of higher education institutions and student organisations as partners in the implementation of the Bologna Process. We take note of the message from the EUA arising from its Glasgow Convention of European Higher Education Institutions, the contributions by the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the Luxembourg Declaration from ESIB. We encourage these organisations and their members to continue their efforts to achieve the European Higher Education Area.

**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

14. We underline the central role of higher education institutions and student organisations as partners in the conception, the building-up and the implementation of the Bologna Process. We take note of the message from the EUA arising from its Glasgow Convention of European Higher Education Institutions, the contributions by the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the Luxembourg Declaration from ESIB. We encourage these organisations and their members to continue their efforts to achieve the European Higher Education Area.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

Argument

As it was pointed out at the Salzburg seminar, it is imperative that EURODOC will be considered as potential partners in the implementation of the Bologna Process given that the third cycle of studies is the 10th action line of the Process.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

14. Please add :  
".. central role of higher education institutions, staff and students (...) as partners..."

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

## The social partners

15. Although higher education is a public responsibility, we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the private sector, and other members of society to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education and reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

15. ~~Although higher~~ Higher education is a public responsibility. ~~To fulfill this responsibility,~~ we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, ~~their~~ students and staff, the private sector, and other members of society and to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education and reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

#### Argument

As it stands, the paragraph sounds defensive, and it seems to imply that public responsibility can only be fulfilled through direct action by public authorities. A more modern view would be that in order to fulfill their public responsibility, public authorities must draw on the full range of actors in society in a concerted effort. Public responsibility does not imply that public authorities act alone; it does imply that public authorities have the responsibility for the framework within which other actors contribute. This is one of the key messages from the Bologna conference on the Public Responsibility for Higher Education and Research organized by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg in September 2004.

### End of comments from the Council of Europe --

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### -- Comments from Sweden:

15. Although higher education is a public responsibility, we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the private and public sectors, and other members of society to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education and reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

### End of comments from Sweden --

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### -- Comments from the EUA:

**Proposal:** restrict reference to the social partners as the central role of institutions and students is recognised appropriately in para. 14. - by deleting the first sentence i.e. "Although...goals of the Bologna process."

### End of comments from the EUA --

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### -- Comments from Belgium, French Community:

15. Although higher education is a public responsibility, we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the private sector, and other members of society to reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

### End of comments from Belgium, French Community--

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

15. Higher education is a public responsibility yet we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the private sector, and other members of society to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education and reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

15. Although higher education is a public responsibility, we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the private sector, and other members of society to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education and reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals, in particular referring to the two cycle structure and the process of life-long learning.

- The demand on activities should be more specific. -

**End of comments from Germany--**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

15. Higher education is a public responsibility. We must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the public and private sector, and other members of society to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education and reach the goals of the Bologna Process. We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from France:**

15. ~~Although higher education is a public responsibility~~ In order to reach the goals of the Bologna process, we must draw on the combined efforts of higher education institutions, students and staff, the private sector, and other members of society to make full benefit of the outcomes of higher education ~~and reach the goals of the Bologna Process.~~ We acknowledge the interest in the Bologna Process by organisations representing industry, employers and employees and ask for their continued cooperation in achieving the full scope of these goals.

French comments : "Although" needlessly weakens the idea of "public responsibility". France would suggest the above rewriting that makes "public responsibility" transferred in §3 as a key notion justifying the Governments' action.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from the Holy See:**

"... employers and employees as well as contributors to culture and ask for their continued cooperation ..."

**End of comments from the Holy See--**

### III. Progress and Actions

#### Taking stock

16. At our last meeting in Berlin, we asked the Bologna Follow-up Group for a mid-term stocktaking, focussing on three priorities – the degree system, quality assurance and the recognition of degrees and periods of studies. The key outcomes of this exercise are highlighted below, and we also identify some further work in these areas.

#### -- Comments from the EUA:

**Comments on Structure of III:** brings together 3 types of activities : stocktaking according to the Berlin Communiqué, other mandates given to the BFUG (EQF and QA related issues) to be followed up, and other issues that have grown in importance over the last two years and thus require action in the future

**Proposal:** split this section clearly into (1) the answers to the stocktaking requested by Ministers in 2003 on 3 priority issues, (2) the outcomes of the 2 key mandates given to the BFUG related to QA and to the EQF and (3) a separate section on the identification of issues that have grown in importance over the last two years and where there is consensus that they merit being indicated as priorities for the period 2005 – 2007

#### End of comments from the EUA --

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#### -- Comments from Austria:

The second part of the second sentence (“and we also identify some further work in this area”) should be deleted.

Comment:

Ministers call upon the relevant actors in charge to take concrete action.

#### End of comments from Austria --

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#### -- Comments from Italy:

Para 16: (~~the degree system~~) “the two cycle system”

#### End of comments from Italy--

#### The degree system

17. Status (*Awaiting the stocktaking report.*)

#### -- Comments from the EUA:

**Proposal (also for wording in para. 16: use the terminology of the Berlin Communiqué:** “adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles” and then specifically “two-cycle system” as the object of the stocktaking

#### End of comments from the EUA --

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#### -- Comments from Italy:

Subtitle for para 17 and 18: (~~the degree system~~) “the two cycle system”

#### End of comments from Italy--

18. Targets for 2007 (*Awaiting the stocktaking report.*)

### The third cycle

*(Preliminary text, awaiting the final recommendations from the Salzburg seminar:)*

19. We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes are designed to meet new challenges not only for research but also for professional careers. Although participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students, we underline that they also must be seen as early stage researchers, contributing to original research, and treated accordingly.

#### **-- Comments from Finland:**

para 19: the end of the paragraph (" , and treated accordingly"): what does it mean?

**End of comments from Finland --**

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#### **-- Comments from Russia:**

para 19: lines 5 - 4 from below: "...but also for a wider variety of professional careers" instead of "...but also for professional careers".

**End of comments from Russia --**

**---- 0000 ----**

#### **-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

19. ....We urge Universities to ensure that their "variety" doctoral programs are designed to meet new challenges "emerging from a changing and competitive European and worldwide learning environment and not only for effectively leveraging research but also for maximizing the professional careers opportunities". Although....., contributing to original research "and built Europe upon its knowledge".

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

**---- 0000 ----**

#### **-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 19 – replace “accordingly” in the final sentence with “as professionals”.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

**---- 0000 ----**

#### **-- Comments from the EUA:**

**Proposal:** remove here as does not belong under stocktaking for the reasons set out above; the linking of the EHEA and the ERA should be dealt with in a separate para. (cf proposal below for new para 34), as one of the issues that has been addressed for the first time in the last two years (cf Salzburg Bologna Seminar conclusions and recommendations), and needs follow up in the future

**Proposal :** replace present para 19 by a paragraph on stocktaking related specifically to implementation in institutions (TRENDS IV results) given that the BFUG agreed at the end of 2003 that there would be 2 separate stocktaking exercises and also in view of the priority to be attached to implementation in the future : this new para will be formulated for the next BFUG following publication of the TRENDS results at the end of March

**End of comments from the EUA --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

19. We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes are designed to meet new challenges for research and to prepare doctoral students for later use of their research ability in professional careers. Although participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students, we underline that they also must be recognised as researchers, contributing to original research, and treated accordingly.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

19. We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes are designed to meet new challenges for both research and professional careers. Although participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students, we underline that they also must be seen as early stage researchers, contributing to original research, and treated accordingly.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

19. We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes are designed to meet new challenges not only for research but also for professional careers requiring research experience. Although participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students, we underline that they also must be seen as early stage researchers, contributing to original research, and treated accordingly.

**End of comments from Germany--**

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**-- Comments from Turkey:**

What is meant by treated accordingly?

**End of comments from Turkey --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from ESIB:**

19. We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the attractiveness of European higher education. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes are designed to meet new challenges not only for research but also for professional careers. Participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students but they also must be seen and treated as early stage researchers, contributing to original research.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education as the core component of doctoral programmes is the advancement of knowledge through original research. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes - embedded in institutional strategies and policies and acknowledging the importance of diversity - are designed using innovative structures to meet new challenges not only for research but also for professional careers and to achieve critical mass. Ensuring appropriate funding and enhancing geographical, intersectorial and interdisciplinary mobility are further challenges. Although participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students, we underline that they also must be seen as early stage researchers, contributing to original research, and treated accordingly. Thus, the role of supervision and assessment is crucial.

**End of comments from Austria --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from France:**

19. We emphasise the importance of research and research training in maintaining and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education. We urge Universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes are designed to meet new challenges not only for academic research careers but also for professional careers in all economic sectors. Although participants in third cycle programmes may have the formal status as students, we underline that they also must be seen as early stage researchers, contributing to original research, and treated accordingly.

French comments : France totally agrees with the idea of training doctors in any kind of professions. Nevertheless France would prefer a rewriting that makes the academic careers appear just as professions.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from the Holy See:**

"...we underline that they also must be seen as early stage researchers, contributing to original research, ~~and treated accordingly.~~"

Reason: unclear with regard to what this means.

**End of comments from the Holy See--**

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**-- Comments from EURASHE:**

Paragraph 19

In the original draft:

Add to the text: Qualifications for doctoral programmes and the disciplines eligible for these must be brought in line with societal evolutions, in view of a valorisation of the capacities for research available in all Higher Education Institutions.\*\*

\*\* Argumentation: In those countries that have a binary system of higher education EURASHE favours a close cooperation for research between universities and other types of higher education having second-cycle programmes next to first-cycle ones.

**End of comments from EURASHE--**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Subtitle for para 19 and 20; ~~(The third cycle)~~ **"The third cycle"** (in bold)

Para 19: we support the question from Finland

**End of comments from Italy--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

19. Please add :

"not only for research but also for professional (research) careers in and outside academia"

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

20. With first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8 years.

**-- Comments from Finland:**

para 20: delete the latter part of the last sentence, starting from ", indicating that the average..."

**End of comments from Finland --**

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**-- Comments from Latvia:**

20. ~~With first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8 years.~~

Arguments

1. I know that Salzburg seminar didn't provide support to overall use of credits in the third cycle (but the discussions however demonstrated that some countries do use credits for the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle and that quite some participants saw "no harm" in using credits at least for taught course within 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle).  
Still, I would not see possible to just talk about years and not credits. Recognition calls for measuring workload, not duration. One of the central accents of the Berlin-Bergen phase is the qualifications frameworks where, again, it would even be strange to talk about years and not credits.
2. I would strongly argue against the last part of the sentence. Not only because it is not clear if possible sum really is fixed at 8 (e.g.  $3+2+4=9$ ).  
My main concern is that the sentence proposes a mathematical formula  $3(4)+2(1)+3=8$ , which resembles very much the old unfortunate  $3+2+3=8$ . Let us remember that before Bologna declaration was signed, the main arguments against were exactly against this formula. And then it was repeated thousand times that  $3+2+3$  was just a quote from a French report, that it was even not written in the Sorbonne declaration (and it has NOT been written in ANY official Bologna documents since!), that there has not been such intention, etc. What is the benefit in taking it out of the sleeve now- six years later?  
I am afraid that those who participated in the discussions from early enough stages might simply feel cheated.

**End of comments from Latvia --**

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**-- Comments from Russia:**

para 20: last but one line: "8 - 9 (years)" instead of "8 (years)"

**End of comments from Russia --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from the Netherlands:**

Proposal: delete point 20 completely.

This is falling back into the old procedure criterium of years.

Explanation: We are going to adopt a framework of cycles, generic descriptors for the cycles and credit points.

**End of comments from the Netherlands --**

**---- 0000 ----**



**-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

III Progress and Actions

20. With first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), ~~indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8 years.~~

Argument

This sentence does not add anything. We would have preferred to see the workload of each cycle expressed in terms of ECTS credits, but understand there is no consensus on assigning ECTS credits to doctoral studies.

We do not comment on the current version of para. 19, as we assume it will be modified following the Salzburg seminar on doctoral studies.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 20 – **We would question the value of this paragraph.** References to periods of study are not particularly helpful. We would suggest that it is against the spirit of lifelong learning, fails to recognise the growing number of part-time students and fails to acknowledge the importance of recognising qualifications based on learning outcomes rather than time spent studying. We would therefore propose deleting this paragraph.

If however there is felt to be a need to include a reference to duration, we would suggest a revised paragraph as follows:

"The normal pattern of doctoral studies across Europe is for a full-time duration of 3 to 4 years. After a first cycle with a full-time duration typically of 3 to 4 years, and the possibility of a second cycle qualification taken separately or within the doctoral cycle, the period from entry to graduation with a doctorate is likely to be at least 7 years, with exceptional candidates achieving a pure research doctorate after 6 years."

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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**-- Comments from the EUA:**

Para 20.....remains

Proposal: replace present para 19 by a paragraph on stocktaking related specifically to implementation in institutions (TRENDS IV results) given that the BFUG agreed at the end of 2003 that there would be 2 separate stocktaking exercises and also in view of the priority to be attached to implementation in the future : this new para will be formulated for the next BFUG following publication of the TRENDS results at the end of March

**End of comments from the EUA --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

20. While it is generally agreed that first cycle studies last 3-4 years and second cycle studies last 1-2 years, we believe that a recommendation for the duration of the third cycle should result from further discussions among European research institutions.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Lithuania:**

20. With first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), ~~indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8 years..~~ (Deleted part of the sentence is redundant).

**End of comments from Lithuania--**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

20. With first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), ~~indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8 years.~~ (should be deleted).

- The addition of a third cycle should not give the impression, that regular universities studies lead to a duration of all in all 8 years.

**End of comments from Germany--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Turkey:**

20. With first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8-9 years.

**End of comments from Turkey --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from ESIB:**

20. With first cycle studies lasting 180-240 ECTS and second cycle studies lasting 60-120 ECTS, we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time, equivalent to 180-240 ECTS), indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be equivalent to 480 ECTS.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

4) We suggest to delete most of the paragraph 20 which does not say much new.

We only suggest to keep **"We will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time)."** The other cycles including the short cycle are much better described within the QF, namely in the shifted no. 5 – see **below IV: Preparing for 2010**

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

We call upon EUA through its members to prepare a report under the responsibility of BFUG on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes mentioned above to be presented to Ministers in 2007.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

20. With, according to each specific national regulation, first cycle studies lasting 3-4 years (180 – 240 ECTS) and second cycle studies lasting 1-2 years (60 – 120 ECTS), we will consider the normal workload of the third cycle to correspond to 3-4 years (full time), indicating that the average duration of three consecutive cycles may be 8 years.

French comments : The number of ECTS should be clearly indicated for the two first cycles, if we do not want to create a false and unfair competition between national standards. France is not ready to accept the evaluation of the Doctoral Studies in ECTS.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from the Holy See:**

"20. With first cycle studies lasting at least 3-4 years ..."

Reason: no upper limits in first and second cycles necessary (cf. "autonomy" referred to in § 2), instead, the final end-limit should remain.

**End of comments from the Holy See--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

20. Please delete end of the sentence after "full time".

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

**Quality assurance**

21. Status (*Awaiting the stocktaking report.*)

22. Targets for 2007 (*Awaiting the stocktaking report.*)

Standards, procedures and guidelines for quality assurance

*(Preliminary text, awaiting the ENQA report:)*

23. We are pleased to adopt European standards, procedures and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB. We call on quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions to make these reference points operational within their own national and institutional context. We expect that this will facilitate comparability and recognition at the European level, whilst fully respecting national and institutional autonomy. We are equally pleased to adopt a review system for quality assurance agencies as proposed by ENQA and partners.

**-- Comments from the Netherlands:**

23. Proposal to add:

We encourage the development of mutual recognition of accreditation decisions

**End of comments from the Netherlands --**

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**-- Comments from the EUA:**

**Proposal:** remove all references to procedures in line with the ENQA Report

**End of comments from the EUA --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

23. We will be pleased to adopt European standards, procedures and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB once they become available and have been analysed by the participating countries. We will then call on quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions to make these reference points operational within their own national and institutional context. We expect that this will facilitate comparability and recognition at the European level, whilst fully respecting national and institutional autonomy. We would also be pleased to adopt a review system for quality assurance agencies as proposed by ENQA and partners.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

23. We are pleased to adopt European standards, ~~procedures~~ and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed by ENQA...

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

French comments : *Reserve for examination*. The unofficial text of the ENQA, that is circulating at this time behind the curtain, must be officially transmitted as soon as possible to the national authorities so that Ministers can make this text go into a question before they decide whether its content is acceptable or not. In any case this investigation should be led by well known experts in the field of academic evaluation.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

23. We would like to add at the end of the paragraph :

We welcome initiatives set up between several countries introducing mutual acceptance of quality assessment and accreditation decisions.

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

24. We endorse the establishment of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies. We expect that the European Register will enhance the credibility of quality assurance in higher education in Europe and improve the international visibility of European higher education institutions and programmes.

**-- Comments from Finland:**

para 24: impossible to comment at this point when we do not have enough information on the tasks and composition of the European Register.

**End of comments from Finland --**

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**-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

24a. "We pointed out the importance of inventing ways for allowing the countries still not members of the EU to become a members of ENQA".

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

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**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 24 – replace “visibility” in final sentence with “attractiveness”.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Sweden:**

24. We endorse the establishment of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies (**It is difficult to comment on this since the ENQA report has not been presented**). We expect that the European Register will enhance the credibility of quality assurance in higher education in Europe and improve the international visibility of European higher education institutions and programmes.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

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**-- Comments from the EUA:**

**Proposal:** at the end of the first sentence add: “and the establishment of a European Register Committee that will decide on admissions to the Register”.

**End of comments from the EUA --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

24. We will consider the establishment of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies. We expect that the European Register will enhance the credibility of quality assurance in higher education in Europe and improve the international visibility of European higher education institutions and programmes.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

- Comments on “quality assurance” will be given when we know the ENQA proposals. -

**End of comments from Germany--**

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**-- Comments from Turkey:**

The cooperation, interactions, relative positions and the roles of ENQA and European Register for quality assurance in higher education should be clarified in the current draft

**End of comments from Turkey --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from ESIB:**

24. We endorse the establishment of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies under the supervision of an European Register Committee. We expect that the European Register will enhance the credibility of quality assurance in higher education in Europe and improve the international visibility of European higher education institutions and programmes.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

5) Paragraph 24.

We are not happy with this paragraph. We do not understand the connection between the register and ENQA membership. We believe that the ENQA membership itself guarantees certain set of entrance criteria which are guarantee of quality system. Moreover it has the FOLLOW UP incorporated! We believe it will change or be clarified in the light of the E4 report.

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

We endorse the establishment of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies and the establishment of a European Register Committee that will decide on admissions to the Register.

General Comment: As the decision making process within the Community will not have been concluded before Bergen, this paragraph can only be seen as a preliminary expression of political will.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

24. We ~~endorse the establishment~~ approve the objective of establishing of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies according to conditions commonly defined by all participating countries. We expect that the European Register will enhance the credibility of quality assurance in higher education in Europe and improve the international visibility of European higher education institutions and programmes.

French comments : This is a key point for France. It's out of the question that an agreement may be concluded to establish such a European register for quality Assurance Agencies without any further or additional discussions about its nature, the modalities of its constitution and the obligations under which national authorities should be compelled to remain.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 24: we fully support the comment of Finland

**End of comments from Italy--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

24. Reservation. We can support the idea of a register, but need more clarification on  
(1) the management of the register  
(2) the criteria for application

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

## Frameworks for qualifications

25. We adopt the overarching framework for first, second and third cycle qualifications of the European Higher Education Area as submitted to us by the BFUG and entrust the BFUG with the maintenance and further development of this framework.

### -- Comments from Finland:

para 25: I don't think the BFUG should be entrusted with ongoing development and maintenance tasks like this. BFUG is an ad hoc structure to be responsible for organising the work programme and preparing the ministerials; there are different European structures to take care of these kinds of "permanent" tasks.

### End of comments from Finland --

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### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

25. We adopt the overarching framework for ~~first, second and third cycle~~ qualifications of the European Higher Education Area as submitted to us by the BFUG and entrust the BFUG with the maintenance and further development of this framework.

#### Argument

Ministers should adopt the full proposal as submitted by the BFUG, without further qualification. Including a reference to the first, second and third cycle of the overarching framework would require a reference to the short cycle within the first cycle, which would make the sentence unwieldy.

### End of comments from the Council of Europe --

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### -- Comments from Belgium, French Community:

25. Delete the paragraph

### End of comments from Belgium, French Community--

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### -- Comments from Turkey:

Maintenance and further development can be realized only if the job description of BFUG is redefined.

### End of comments from Turkey --

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### -- Comments from Austria:

We adopt the overarching framework for first, second and third cycle qualifications of the European Higher Education Area as submitted to us by the BFUG and entrust the NARIC/ENIC networks with the maintenance and further development of this framework.

#### Comment:

The further work needs to be included in the regular tasks of existing bodies or networks.

### End of comments from Austria --

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**-- Comments from France:**

25. We adopt the overarching framework for first, second and third cycle qualifications of the European Higher Education Area as submitted to us by the BFUG and entrust the BFUG with the maintenance and further development of this framework.

French comments : *Reserve for examination.* Same comments as above § 23. The Report *A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area* by the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks, Published by the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, is at this time under analysis.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from Estonia:**

We support the hesitance shown by Finland in regards to giving BFUG tasks like maintaining and developing European qualification framework (para 25, but comment applies to other similar initiatives as well, ie para 36). Tasks like this can be entrusted to the structures that already exist.

**End of comments from Estonia--**



26. We underline the importance of linking the overarching framework of the EHEA to the broader European framework of qualifications for lifelong learning encompassing general education as well as vocational education and training now being developed in the EU context by the European Commission, and ask the Commission to consult all parties to the Bologna Process in this work.

**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 26 – Redraft as follows:

“We underline the importance of linking the broader European framework of qualifications for lifelong learning, encompassing general education as well as vocational education and training, now being developed in the EU context by the European Commission to the agreed overarching framework of the EHEA, and ask the Commission to fully involve all parties to the Bologna Process in this work”.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

26. Delete the paragraph

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Germany:**

- The EU COM should be asked to adapt the EU framework to the Bologna Process framework. -

**End of comments from Germany--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Austria:**

The last part of the last sentence (“ . . . and ask the European Commission to consult all parties to the Bologna Process”) should be deleted.

**Comment:**

This procedure would mingle Community- and Bologna-dossiers.

**End of comments from Austria --**

*(Subject to wording of final EQF report:)*

27. We commit ourselves to elaborating national frameworks of qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 27 – delete paragraph as it is merely a repetition of paragraph 5.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

27. Delete the paragraph

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Germany:**

National frameworks in place should be adapted to the overarching framework of the EHEA.

**End of comments from Germany--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted.

**Comment:**

This has already been agreed upon in Berlin.

**End of comments from Austria --**

## Lifelong learning

28. We urge participating countries and all higher education institutions to recognise relevant qualifications from lifelong learning as elements in higher education programmes. We see the development of national frameworks as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning within all levels of the education system, and in particular higher education.

### -- Comments from Finland:

para 28: needs to be clarified

**End of comments from Finland --**

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### -- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":

28. We suggest this paragraph to be divided in two parts and be replaced to the paragraphs on "recognition" (29) such as: We urge participating countries and all HEI to recognize relevant qualifications from LL as elements in HE programs, "regardless it occurs in formal or non-formal institutional settings, but also to recognize the professional expertise or experience as an inevitable aspect of the entire lifelong education issue".

(Explanation: firstly, in the paragraph "the vision" (1) the free moving is based on "qualifications and experience". Secondly, the validation of previous learning acknowledges that working in itself leads also to skills and knowledge, meaning on the ground of experience along with the conventional education).

The second sentence: We see the development of national frameworks....so on, to be moved to the paragraph "Framework for qualifications" (25-27).

(Explanation for the next paragraph: taking account the global economy which is increasingly based on information, the technology which is a part of information society and at least demographics, adult learning comprises an important and necessary activity for today's adults).

So, our proposal for a new paragraph will be:

"participating countries and HEI should take an action to provide the regulatory provisions and to implement the lifelong learning education at all levels and degrees, types and forms of higher education. Directly related: "countries should create their legal provisions in the way to facilitate the access to lifelong learning education and programs. HEI on their side, should tailor the LL programs in accordance to the way of learning adults are most likely to undertake, taking account busy working adult life, their existing experience and academic foundation. That mean: "less structured and more flexible programs responsive to meet their individual needs widen the career opportunities and make contribution to the society".

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

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### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

28. We urge participating countries and all higher education institutions to recognise relevant qualifications from lifelong learning as elements in higher education programmes. We see the development of national frameworks of qualifications as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning paths within all levels of the education system, and in particular higher education.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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### -- Comments from the EUA:

Proposal : remove title 'lifelong learning as this belongs to the section on the EQF

**End of comments from the EUA --**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

28. Ministers reaffirm their commitment for making LLL a reality and to take steps to make it an integral part of HE activities.  
We urge participating countries and all higher education institutions to recognise relevant qualifications from lifelong learning as elements in higher education programmes. We see the development of national frameworks as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning within all levels of the education system, and in particular higher education.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

**--- 0000 ---**

**-- Comments from EURASHE:**

Paragraph 28

In the original draft:

Add to the text:Where available, short-cycle programmes leading up to the first cycle, may be instrumental in creating opportunities for the accreditation of non-formal education.

**End of comments from EURASHE--**

**--- 0000 ---**

**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

28. Please add :

“... HE institutions to set up mechanisms for the validation of prior learning and to recognise relevant qualifications...”

Please add at the end of the paragraph : “As a concrete step to the creation of an open EHEA and as a specific action to integrate the perspective of LLL in higher education, we call for more accessible higher education provision for adult learners, including through distance education and e-learning, enabling them to combine study and work”.

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

## Recognition of degrees and study periods

29. We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge participating countries that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to accept joint degrees recognised by two or more countries in the European Higher Education Area.

### -- Comments from Finland:

para 29: delete the words "without delay"

End of comments from Finland --

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### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

29. We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge participating countries that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We further urge that, where needed, the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention be embedded in national legislation. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to accept joint degrees recognised by two or more countries in the European Higher Education Area.

#### Argument

This is one of the key recommendations from the Riga seminar on recognition in December 2004. This is a key point because the status of international treaty with regard to national legislation varies between countries. Whereas in some countries international treaties become national law upon ratification, other countries require explicit amendment to national legislation.

End of comments from the Council of Europe --

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### -- Comments from Latvia:

29. We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge participating countries that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We undertake to ensure that the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention be embedded in national legislation and applied in national and institutional recognition practices. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to ~~accept~~ recognise degrees awarded jointly by recognised (legitimate?) institutions in joint degrees recognised by two or more countries in the European Higher Education Area.

#### Arguments (first proposal)

The discussions at Riga seminar showed that signing and ratification of the Lisbon recognition Convention is far not all that has to be done. There are still countries that have signed and ratified but have left clauses in their national legislation that are contradictory to the LRC principles (having procedure of "nostrification" is a bright example of that).

The second part of the proposed sentence reflects another Riga seminar conclusion that, especially when it comes to institutional level, a more welcoming (or "forgiving") attitude should be developed towards foreign qualifications.

#### Arguments (second proposal)

"Accept" is a term that has no clear meaning. What we want is that a degree awarded jointly by universities in 2 or more EHEA countries is recognised by any third EHEA country.

(In fact, the original sentence does not necessarily talk about joint degrees – one could read in a way that any degree that has been already recognized by two countries, should be recognized by all others, too – which, I guess, was not the intention)

End of comments from Latvia --

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### -- Comments from the United Kingdom:

Paragraph 29 – Redraft third sentence as follows -

"We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to give effect to these provisions on joint degrees".

End of comments from the United Kingdom --

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

Argument: Greece expresses reservations about the second phrase

29. We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge participating countries that have not already done so to ratify the Convention ~~without delay~~. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to accept joint degrees recognised by two or more countries in the European Higher Education Area.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from ESIB:**

29. We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge participating countries that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay and to take the appropriate measures to implement it. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to accept joint degrees recognised by two or more countries in the European Higher Education Area.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

We note that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge participating countries that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We express support for the ongoing work of the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region and call upon all National Authorities and other stakeholders as appropriate in each country to fully implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention and to eliminate still existing recognition problems as identified by the ENIC-NARIC networks.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

29. Agree with the COE that the principles of the LRC should be embedded in the legislation to be effective.

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

30. In accordance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention, we urge all participating countries to recognise degrees and study programmes from other participating countries on equal terms with corresponding degrees and programmes in their own system, unless there are significant differences. Participating countries should work towards eliminating persistent recognition problems as identified by the ENIC-NARIC networks. Correspondingly, we urge all higher education institutions to recognise courses at Bologna partner institutions on equal terms with their own. We expect recognition decisions in future to be fair, fast and transparent, as a direct result of the comparability and transparency introduced by Bologna-related reforms.

**-- Comments from Finland:**

para 30: delete the paragraph, because this is the essence of the Lisbon Convention, so the action needed is already in para 29. (There will be a great need to shorten the text anyway once we have the points still missing included)

**End of comments from Finland --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 30 – Delete third sentence. It does not add anything that is not already covered in the first sentence.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

30. In accordance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention, we urge all participating countries to recognise degrees and study programmes from other participating countries on equal terms with corresponding degrees and programmes in their own system, unless there are significant differences. Participating countries should work towards eliminating persistent recognition problems as identified by the ENIC-NARIC networks. Correspondingly, we urge all higher education institutions to assess the equivalence of courses at Bologna partner institutions on equal terms with their own. We expect recognition decisions in future to be fair, fast and transparent, as a direct result of the comparability and transparency introduced by Bologna-related reforms.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Greece:**

30. Delete the paragraph.

**End of comments from Greece --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Turkey:**

30. Delete the paragraph.

**End of comments from Turkey --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Austria:**

This paragraph should be deleted-

**Comment:**

Part of the text has been merged with paragraph 29; the other part is repetitive and the basic essence of the Convention.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 30: we fully support the proposal of Finland and UK **End of comments from Italy--**

**Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

31a. "Investigating students' and staffs' availability to participate in a certain EU mobility programs (for SEE countries which are not members of the EU) by amending in the same time the regulatory provisions for obtaining visa and especially for those students and staff that are already financially supported by some host countries."

Intensifying the discussions about the European fund for students' support.

(Explanation: Through the Ministries initiative along to the Governments, so than preventing brain-drain to the other continents. This problem problem affects both, the home country but Europe as well.)

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

30bis : we would like to add a paragraph on the perspectives beyond the LRC  
"We consider the emerging national and overarching qualification frameworks and the good practices in mutual acceptance of quality assessment and/or accreditation decisions as crucial steps towards a context of mutual trust, thus encouraging automatic recognition of degrees and qualifications."

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

**Mobility**

31. Providing better conditions for student and staff mobility through structural reform is one of the objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many challenges to be overcome to further increase mobility between participating countries we underline the need for further studies of these challenges. In particular, we recognise the importance of simplifying visa requirements and procedures for students and scholars from other countries and continents.

**-- Comments from the Netherlands:**

31. Please add:  
The support of the EU to enable the portability of loans and grants is highly appreciated.

**End of comments from the Netherlands --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 31 – Replace “Providing better conditions” in first sentence with “Facilitating”. Amend final sentence to read “In particular, we recognise the importance of calling for further discussions on simplifying...”

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Sweden:**

31. Providing better conditions for student and staff mobility through structural reform is one of the objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many challenges to be overcome to further increase mobility between participating countries we underline the need for further action to meet these challenges. In particular, we recognise the importance of simplifying visa requirements and procedures for students and scholars from other countries and continents.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

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**-- Comments from the EUA:**

Proposal : include new subsection entitled: "Taking stock of progress for 2007

Proposal : be more specific on need for further study on obstacles to mobility given the various Action Plans already formulated and followed up at EU level (Education and Research)

**End of comments from the EUA --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Greece:**

31. Providing better conditions for student and staff mobility through structural reform is one of the objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many challenges to be overcome to further increase mobility between participating countries we underline the need for further studies of these challenges. ~~In particular, we recognise the importance of simplifying visa requirements and procedures for students and scholars from other countries and continents.~~

**End of comments from Greece --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Germany:**

31. Providing better conditions for student and staff mobility through structural reform is one of the objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many challenges to be overcome to further increase mobility between participating countries we underline the need for further studies of these challenges. **In particular, we recognise the importance of simplifying visa requirements and procedures for students and scholars from other countries and continents** (transfer to number 35).

**End of comments from Germany--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from ESIB:**

We also ask the BFUG to establish a Working Group in order to explore the possibility of establishing a European mobility fund in order to reduce financial obstacles to mobility.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from France:**

31. Providing better conditions for student and staff mobility through structural reform is one of the objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many challenges to be overcome to further increase mobility between participating countries we underline the need for further studies of these challenges. In particular, we recognise the importance of simplifying visa requirements and procedures for students and scholars from other countries and continents. Correspondingly, we encourage all participating countries to work toward a compatible organization of their semester breaks that facilitate the semestrial mobility for students and staff.

French comments : In order to facilitate mobility, France suggests as desirable that can be experienced in the middle term the organization of a "european period" for compatible semester breaks". Besides France would stress the fact that the term "mobility" must be seen as referring to a coordinated mobility and should exclude free-mover students.

**End of comments from France --**

-- Comments from UNESCO-CEPES :

31b

**Legal framework**

Achieving of the objectives of the Bologna Process depends also on a national legislative framework of the respective country participating in the Process. Thus we encourage those legislative initiatives which reflect a general thrust and specific goals of the Bologna Process. Reporting on those developments should be an integral part of taking stock exercise.

End of comments from UNESCO-CEPES --

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-- Comments from the Czech Republic:

**6) The paragraphs 32 and 33 dealing with Social Dimension.** We believe in correspondence with the outcomes of the Paris seminar that the social dimension is important topic for the future and necessary precondition for the higher education development in long run also influencing the economic and social development. We think that we need stronger paragraphs in the Bergen Communiqué, which will reflect the conclusions of the Paris Seminar.

End of comments from the Czech Republic--

## The social dimension

*(Preliminary text, awaiting the final recommendations from the Paris seminar:)*

32. We renew our commitment to making higher education equally accessible to all and stress the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for the students, so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background.

### -- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":

32. "With an impact to the legal provisions" we renew our commitment to "equalize higher education opportunities and reduce every disparities in access to higher education tying HE intimately to the capacity"

(Explanation: disparity still exist on the basis of ethic, social and gender diversity)

End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --

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### -- Comments from the United Kingdom:

Paragraph 32 – delete "studying and living".

End of comments from the United Kingdom --

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### -- Comments from Germany:

32. We renew our commitment to making higher education equally accessible to all and stress the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for the students, so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. Especially we need portability of grants and loans awarded by the home countries in all Bologna member states.

End of comments from Germany--

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### -- Comments from the Czech Republic:

New 32.

We affirm our commitment to making equal opportunity in higher education a fundamental building block of the European Higher Education Area. We acknowledge that together with other aspects the effective implementation of equal opportunities is an important sign of quality of higher education. We urge higher education institutions as well as national quality assurance agencies /consortia, to elaborate quality assurance mechanisms, internal as well as external, which will integrate the social dimension including all aspects of living and study conditions and relate them to the multiple outcomes of higher education.

End of comments from the Czech Republic--

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### -- Comments from France:

32. We renew our commitment to making higher education equally accessible to all and stress the need for appropriate studying and living conditions for the students, so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. The policy for the international opening up of institutions must care for integrating mobility in a successful learning path of every student and sees to develop a mobility of quality, notably with the development of appropriate linguistic preparations, counselling geared to student academic and social needs, financial support in order to allow mobility including post-graduates. Within Europe and towards third countries, the development of mobility which is a key principle of the EHEA must be done on the basis of balanced exchanges aiming to strengthen higher education and economic growth in the countries mobile students and researchers come from.

French comments : The recommendations of the Paris Seminar (27-28 January 2005) stress the fact that the development of EHEA is substantially linked with the increasing demand for languages learning and with adapted facilities helping students — notably from the lowest social origins — to find the way of experiencing periods of European study mobilities.

End of comments from France --

33. As the socio-economic situation varies greatly between countries, comparable data for all participating countries will be needed for our further considerations regarding the social dimension of the European Higher Education Area.

**-- Comments from Finland:**

para 33: what would this entail?

**End of comments from Finland --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

(Explanation: disparity still exist on the basis of ethic, social and gender diversity)

33. As...varies greatly between countries, "reestimate the price level of HE which appears as access barrier to HE, and exploring the range of social benefits in order to fill the financial gaps that prevent access".

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

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**-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

Comment

This is undoubtedly true, but it is not very operational. The logical consequence would be either to ask the BFUG to oversee a study – and to commit to making national data available – or to include the social dimension in the stock taking exercise for 2007.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 33 – Like Finland, we are not sure what this would entail nor to what end. Need to clarify the purpose of it.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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**-- Comments from the Czech Republic:**

New 33.

As the socio-economic situation varies greatly between countries, and as social cohesiveness creates the basis for sustainable policies in higher education in Europe, we ask the BFUG building on existing initiatives to organise an analytical study based on collection of comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in all Bologna Member Countries and report back at the next conference in 2007. On this basis we shall stimulate creation of comprehensive frameworks within Bologna countries as well as at particular institutions for funding the objectives of social equity and equal opportunities for all citizens, using for this purpose all sources of funds, public as well as private.

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

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**-- Comments from Estonia:**

Similarly to the colleagues from Finland and UK we are not clear about the purpose of para 33, and like to see/ hear the clarification.

**End of comments from Estonia--**

-- Comments from the EUA:

**Proposal: Add new para on European Higher education Area and European Research Area – two pillars of the knowledge based society:**

We underline the importance of promoting these links and emphasise the importance of research and research career development in strengthening Europe's research capacity and improving the quality and enhancing the competitiveness of European higher education. We recognise the ownership felt by European universities for the organisation of doctoral programmes and research training, and endorse the ten basic principles adopted in Salzburg. These principles recognise that doctoral training must increasingly meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia and underline the status of doctoral candidates as early stage researchers with commensurate rights.

End of comments from the EUA --

### The European dimension

34. We see the new overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area as a manifestation of the European dimension in higher education and the synergy with the European Research Area as a further manifestation. Within this emerging framework, we encourage concrete actions such as the widening of institutional co-operation through joint degrees and joint research projects. We urge our higher education institutions to offer a wide variety of language programmes to facilitate mobility of students and staff.

-- Comments from Finland:

para 34: delete the first sentence. European dimension is much broader concept than the mere QF.

End of comments from Finland --

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-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":

34. ...Within this emerging framework.....of institutional co-operation through "the integrated curriculum delivers" joint degrees and joint research projects. We urge.....variety of language programs "and the programs leading to acquisition the skills required" to facilitate mobility of students and staff, "such as communication, adaptability, flexibility and social responsibility".

End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --

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-- Comments from the EUA:

**Comment:**

The European dimension implies more.

End of comments from the EUA --

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-- Comments from the United Kingdom:

Paragraph 34 – Amend paragraph sentence as follows:

We see the new overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area as a manifestation of the European dimension in higher education and the synergy with the EU European Research Area as a further manifestation. Within this environment, we encourage concrete actions such as the widening of institutional co-operation through collaborative activities, including joint degrees and joint research projects. We urge our higher education institutions, working with relevant European associations, to offer a variety of language programmes to facilitate mobility of students and staff".

End of comments from the United Kingdom --

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**-- Comments from Sweden:**

34. We see the new overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area as a manifestation of the European dimension in higher education and the synergy with the European Research Area as a further manifestation. Within this emerging framework, we encourage concrete actions such as the widening of institutional co-operation through joint study programmes, joint degrees and joint research projects. We urge our higher education institutions to offer a wide variety of language programmes and other concrete actions to facilitate mobility of students and staff.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

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**-- Comments from the Netherlands:**

to be added at the end of paragraph 34

"As many countries are currently implementing the full recognition of joint degrees in their respective legislation, a lot of serious operational issues are encountered. We intend to discuss these issues in the period 2005-2007 with a view to additional proposals to the next Meeting in London in 2007, if this is deemed necessary."

**End of comments from the Netherlands --**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from Greece:**

34. "The European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area constitute the cornerstones of the European Knowledge edifice. In order to promote the European dimension, we encourage the synergy between the two areas through concrete actions such as the widening of institutional co-operation through joint programmes and degrees, joint research projects, and joint doctoral programmes. We urge our higher education institutions to offer a wide variety of language programmes to facilitate mobility of students and staff.

**End of comments from Greece --**

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**-- Comments from Lithuania:**

(The proposal could be to replace this whole paragraph "The European dimension" after the paragraph with a title "Frameworks for qualifications" as it seems to be more consequent considering the content of both.)

**End of comments from Lithuania--**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

34. We see the new overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area as a further manifestation of the European dimension ...

**End of comments from Germany--**

**---- 0000 ----**

**-- Comments from ESIB:**

34. ...We urge our higher education institutions to offer a wide variety of language programmes to facilitate mobility of students, staff and graduates.

**End of comments from ESIB --**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

We welcome the new overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area and the progress made in synergies with the European Research Area as vital elements of the European dimension in higher education. ...

**Comment:**

The European dimension implies more.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from France:**

34. We see the new overarching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area as a manifestation of the European dimension in higher education and the synergy with the European Research Area as *a further manifestation*. Within this emerging framework, we encourage concrete actions such as the widening of institutional co-operation through joint degrees and joint research projects. We urge our higher education institutions to offer a wide variety of language programmes to facilitate mobility of students and staff.

French comments : See under § 38 for the necessity of an integrated European Area for Higher Education and Research.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from EURASHE:**

Paragraph 34.

EURASHE agrees with the comment from Finland that the European dimension in Higher Education entails more than an overarching qualifications framework.

In the original draft:

Add to the text: It is recommended that studies of the European integration process be an integrated part of the curriculum in Higher Education.

**End of comments from EURASHE--**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 34: we fully support the proposal of Finland. Consequently, the paragraph should start: "Within the emerging European Qualification Framework..."

**End of comments from Italy--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

34. Please add :

"... institutional cooperation through integrated curricula, joint degrees and ..."

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

**-- Comments from Sweden:**

35a. We reaffirm the importance of enhancing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area to students from Europe and other parts of the world. The quality of higher education and research should be the core of the attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

**The external dimension of the Bologna Process**

35. We want the European Higher Education Area to be a partner to higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of mutual understanding and respect. We declare our willingness to contribute to the perception of the Bologna Process in other continents and to share our experiences with reform processes in neighbouring regions.

**-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

35. We want...of the world, stimulating student and staff exchange and cooperation "by involving scholars concerned with intellectual, social and economic development in various intercontinental programs" and cooperation between the HEI.

We underline....We declare.....in neighboring regions, "aiming in building bridges across continents".

End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --

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**-- Comments from Norway:**

35. (to replace the proposed text)

We recall the obligation undertaken in Berlin that the EHEA should be open and attractive to the rest of the world, and find its place in the development of knowledge and understanding for the global common good of humanity. The development of Higher Education is a prerequisite for achieving Education for All, which is a common responsibility for all our countries. Our contribution to this should be based on the principles of sustainable development, and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation and exchange, academic values should prevail.

Building on these ideals we welcome students and academic staff from other countries and regions to share Europe's Higher Education experience, through mobility for students and staff and cooperation in education and research between higher education institutions. We furthermore wish to share the European thinking and developments within Quality Assurance with other regions, contributing to the positive global effects of cross-border provision in Higher Education.

We declare our willingness to contribute to the awareness of the Bologna Process in other continents and to share our experiences with reform processes in neighbouring regions. We will therefore - within the limited means of the process - take initiatives to strengthen the contacts with other countries and regions. In the course of the coming working period we will give priority to a global Bologna seminar discussing questions of mobility, quality assurance and recognition which arise between the European Higher Education Area and other countries and regions. We welcome the invitation from .....to host such a seminar.

**End of comments from Norway --**

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**-- Comments from the Council of Europe:**

35. ~~We want the~~ The European Higher Education Area is taking shape and is now in a position to be a partner to higher education systems in other regions of the world. We affirm our commitment to cooperation and partnership with other regions and countries, based on mutual understanding and respect and stimulating student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of mutual understanding and respect. We declare our willingness to contribute to the perception improved awareness and understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents regions and to share our experiences with reform processes in neighbouring regions. At the same time, we urge European higher education institutions and bodies to apply the principles of the Bologna Process in their relations with other regions of the world, in particular in the fair recognition of qualifications earned outside of the EHEA.

**Argument**

The comments aim to underline that the Bologna Process has now come far enough to constitute a new reality that has implications for the relations between “bologna countries” – the future EHEA – and the rest of the world. Therefore, the Ministers need to undertake a collective commitment to open and fair cooperation with the rest of the world as well as to increase awareness and understanding of the Bologna Process. (In this context, it should be noted that awareness is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for understanding). Thirdly, we believe it is important for Ministers to underline that the basic principles of the EHEA are not only for internal consumption, but that they should also be applied in our relations with the rest of the world.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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**-- Comments from Latvia:**

35. We want the European Higher Education Area to be a partner to higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of mutual understanding and respect. We declare our willingness to contribute to the perception of the Bologna Process in other continents and to share our experiences with reform processes in neighbouring regions. We therefore call upon the European organisations and networks engaged in creation of the EHEA to use their channels to intensify dialogue with their counterparts in other regions of the World.

**Comment.**

I strongly support the amendments proposed by the Council of Europe. I recommend accepting CoE proposals but adding the above sentence before the last sentence proposed by the CoE.

**End of comments from Latvia --**

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**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 35 – replace “perception” in final sentence with “understanding”.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 35: ~~(in neighbouring regions)~~ “in other regions of the world”

**End of comments from Italy--**

-- Comments from the Council of Europe:

#### IV. Preparing for 2010

**Current paragraphs 4- 7, with some modifications (in red), should be moved here:**

4. The Bologna Process is a cooperative venture between the participating countries to achieve the European Higher Education Area by 2010. Building on achievements so far in the Bologna Process, we see the following structures emerge, shaping common European framework:

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where ~~the levels have~~ each level has a double function: to ~~prepare~~ qualify the student for the labour market and for further competence building. Short cycle higher education may be provided within the first cycle. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained ~~may~~ gives access to ~~higher levels~~ the following level.

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements implementing an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

7. All higher education institutions in participating countries will recognise degrees and periods of studies according to the Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention).

36. While we recognise the commendable commitment to this process, we ask the Follow-up Group to explore whether alternative arrangements might be needed to support our efforts to reach the common reference points in the Bologna Process in and beyond 2010. The results of the BFUG's preliminary consideration should be presented for an open discussion at the next Ministerial Conference in 2007.

Argument:

For the moving of paragraph 4 – 7, see above.

The modifications to paragraph 5 have two aims. On the one hand, it is important to include mention of short cycle higher education, and the wording is consistent with the report from the Working Group on Qualifications Framework, which includes short cycle higher education within the first cycle as an option, but not an obligation, for national frameworks. Secondly, the suggestions are intended to reinforce the notion that each qualification offers two options: either entry into the labor market at an appropriate level or further study. In this sense, we believe it is important to indicate that all qualifications should give access to the following level. We are, of course, using "access" as defined in the Lisboa Recognition Convention; actual admission to a given study program may be made conditional on the availability of study places.

**End of comments from the Council of Europe --**

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-- Comments from the Czech Republic:

7) To keep the structure of the material coherent we think that the contemporary paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7 rather belong under IV: **Preparing for 2010**. Thus we will have 3 basic pillars for 2010 giving the frame of the 2010 EHEA. The paragraphs should be moved after 35. The amendments in the former text are in red (they are the same as in the Council of Europe suggestion). Furthermore we believe that there is the 4<sup>th</sup> pillar of EHEA in 2010 and that is the connection of higher education and research & development. We strongly recommend adding a paragraph after that which was in old draft was 7 (dealing with recognition) and which will immediately precede the former 36. These four paragraphs should be the frame of EHEA 2010.

4. The Bologna Process is a cooperative venture between the participating countries to achieve the European Higher Education Area by 2010. Building on achievements so far in the Bologna Process, we see the following structures emerge, shaping common European framework:

5. Within the overarching framework for the EHEA, all participating countries will have a national framework of qualifications based on three cycles in higher education, where ~~the levels have~~ each level has a double function: to ~~prepare~~ qualify the student for the labour market and for further competence building. Short cycle higher education may be provided within the first cycle. Each level builds on the preceding level, and the qualification obtained ~~may~~ gives access to ~~higher levels~~ the following level.

6. All participating countries will have national quality assurance arrangements implementing an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines for the EHEA.

7. All higher education institutions in participating countries will recognise degrees and periods of studies according to the Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention).

Number 36. will continue.

**End of comments from the Czech Republic--**

#### **IV. Preparing for 2010**

36. The Bologna Process is a cooperative venture between the participating countries to achieve the European Higher Education Area by 2010. While we recognise the commendable commitment to this process, we ask the Follow-up Group to explore whether alternative arrangements might be needed to support our efforts to reach the common reference points in the Bologna Process in and beyond 2010. The results of the BFUG's preliminary consideration should be presented for an open discussion at the next Ministerial Conference in 2007.

#### **-- Comments from Finland:**

para 36: is this to make the Bologna process an ever-on-going exercise?

Shouldn't we hand the further development over to existing European organisations and structures to be included in their work programmes - EU and Council of Europe and the relevant NGOs which have a major role in developing HE, and at international level UNESCO and why not OECD could take the baton for the next decade.

**End of comments from Finland --**

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#### **-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 36 – Amend final sentence to read:

"Following wider EHEA stakeholder discussions, BFUG's preliminary considerations should be presented before the next Ministerial Conference in 2007".

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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#### **-- Comments from Sweden:**

36. The Bologna Process is a cooperative venture between the participating countries to achieve the European Higher Education Area by 2010. While we recognise the commendable commitment to this process, we ask the Follow-up Group to explore whether alternative arrangements (**What does this mean? An explanation is needed**) might be needed to support our efforts to reach the common reference points in the Bologna Process in and beyond 2010. The results of the BFUG's preliminary consideration should be presented for an open discussion at the next Ministerial Conference in 2007.

**End of comments from Sweden --**

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#### **-- Comments from Turkey:**

For the implementation of this paragraph the redefinition of BFUG's job description will be needed.

**End of comments from Turkey --**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

The Bologna Process is now a cooperative venture of 45 participating countries to achieve a European Higher Education Area by 2010. While we recognise the overall strong commitment to this process and the remarkable progress, more efforts will be needed to reach all our ambitious aims by 2010. We therefore ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to explore whether additional alternative arrangements might be needed to support our efforts to reach the common reference points in the Bologna Process in and beyond 2010. The results of the BFUG's preliminary consideration should be presented for an open discussion at the next Ministerial Conference in 2007.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 36: proposed rephrasing of the entire paragraph:

"The Bologna Process is an intergovernmental semipermanent Conference among Member States aiming at achieving the European Higher Education Area by 2010. While we recognise the commendable commitment to this process, we ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to define, with the assistance and the advice of experts, the new great challenges higher education will have to face in the second decade of the millennium. The results of this preliminary survey should be presented at the next Ministerial Conference in 2007".

- Examples of these new challenges could be:

- A pervasive multiculturalism, and the fundamental role of Higher Education Institutions, as places of dialogue among different cultures, in order to build up a genuinely inclusive and cohesive society.
- The new role of HEIs vis à vis the growing expectations of new generations and the sophisticated needs of society and the labour market (e.g. HEIs should equip themselves with counselling and placement).

**End of comments from Italy--**

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**-- Comments from Estonia:**

See para 25.

**End of comments from Estonia--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

36 : clarification is needed on what is meant by : "*alternative* arrangements"

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**

## Taking stock on progress for 2007

37. With a view for the goals set for 2010, we charge the Follow-up Group with organising a stocktaking process on the progress and implementation of national qualifications frameworks, including the third cycle and provisions for joint degrees and diplomas, and report back to us at the next Ministerial Conference.

### -- Comments from the Council of Europe:

#### 37. Stock taking

We agree that qualifications frameworks would be an interesting area for stock taking. We would also like to submit to further areas for possible stock taking: the social dimension and the interaction between the European Higher Education Area and the rest of the world ("the external dimension"). The latter could have two foci: on the one hand, to what extent we will have succeeded in increasing awareness and understanding of the Bologna Process elsewhere, on the other hand to what extent European HEIs actually apply the principles of the Bologna Process in their relations with HEIs and students from elsewhere. This double focus seems necessary in order to avoid giving the impression that Europe only seeks advantages without reciprocity.

End of comments from the Council of Europe --

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### -- Comments from Sweden:

37. With a view for the goals set for 2010, we charge the Follow-up Group with organising a stocktaking process on the progress and implementation of national qualifications frameworks, including the third cycle and provisions for joint study programmes and joint degrees and diplomas, and report back to us at the next Ministerial Conference.

End of comments from Sweden --

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### -- Comments from Greece:

Recommendation: The interim targets by 2007 are not clear and stressed enough anywhere in the text.

End of comments from Greece --

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### -- Comments from Germany:

37. With a view for the goals set for 2010, we charge the Follow-up Group with organising a stocktaking process on the progress and implementation of national qualifications frameworks, including the three cycles and provisions for joint degrees, diplomas and quality assurance, and report back to us at the next Ministerial Conference.

- The stocktaking process should continuously include and cover the studies structure and quality assurance also in the future. -

End of comments from Germany--

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### -- Comments from EUA:

**Comment** – please refer to comments on the structure of Section III.

End of comments from EUA --

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### -- Comments from ESIB:

We also propose to include the Social Dimension in the stocktaking exercise towards 2007, following the recommendations of the Paris seminar.

End of comments from ESIB --

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**-- Comments from EURASHE:**

Paragraph 37

EURASHE endorses the idea of the Council of Europe to take stock of the social dimension in HE, in view of the role professional higher education plays in creating learning opportunities for underprivileged groups of society and in realizing an inclusive HE area.

**End of comments from EURASHE--**

**Establishing a base for further actions in priority areas**

38. We ask the Follow-up Group to establish a Work Programme for the period up to our next Ministerial Conference, coordinating the efforts of the further development of the Bologna Process based on this Communiqué.

**-- Comments from France:**

38. We ask the Follow-up Group to establish a Work Programme for the period up to our next Ministerial Conference, coordinating the efforts of the further development of the Bologna Process based on this Communiqué. In this respect, we consider as an essential objective to prepare from now onward the synergy between EHEA and ERA for 2010 and beyond.

French comments : From a strategic point of view, France sees as an ambitious but compulsory goal to fully integrate Higher Education and Research in the same common approach, since, for France, Research is an infeasible component of Higher Education Training from the Master level to the Doctorate level.

**End of comments from France --**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 38: ~~(We ask the Follow-up Group)~~ "We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group"

**End of comments from Italy--**

39. In particular, we charge the Follow-up Group with

- organising a study on the provision of better conditions for student and staff mobility through structural reform;
- establishing comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries.

**-- Comments from Finland:**

para 39: "through structural reform" what does this refer to?

-the second bullet point of the para I don't understand

**End of comments from Finland --**

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**-- Comments from the United Kingdom:**

Paragraph 39 - replace first bullet with "identifying any further structural reforms that could facilitate staff and student mobility".

We are not sure what the second bullet is intended to achieve.

**End of comments from the United Kingdom --**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, French Community:**

39. In particular, we charge the Follow-up Group with

- -organising a study on the establishment of guidelines and fair rules for student and staff mobility through structural reform;
- -establishing comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries
- initiating a proposal for a general framework of the third cycle.

**End of comments from Belgium, French Community--**

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**-- Comments from Germany:**

39. In particular, we charge the Follow-up Group with

- organising a study on the provision of better conditions for student and staff mobility by defining structural demands on mobility;
- establishing comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries.

**End of comments from Germany--**

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**-- Comments from Austria:**

In particular, we charge the Bologna Follow-up Group with

- organising a study with recommendations on the provision of better conditions for student and staff mobility taking into account the existing Action plans and instruments

**Delete “through structural reform”**

- establishing comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries

**Comment:**

One needs to clarify first what this would entail as far as comparability is concerned; and one should review which relevant data is already available and where.

**End of comments from Austria --**

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**-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 39: Proposed rephrasing of the entire paragraph:

“In particular, we charge the BFUG with the organisation of Seminars on the three following priority themes: Governance of Higher Education Institutions, Accreditation, Quality of mobility”.

**End of comments from Italy--**

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**-- Comments from Belgium, Flemish Community:**

39 : we would like to add :

- a study on the provision in the different countries of higher education for adult learners combining studies with professional and/or family duties.

**End of comments from Belgium, Flemish Community --**



### **Follow-up structure**

40. We find the steering structure set up in Berlin to function according to expectations and entrust the overall steering of the Bologna Process and the preparation of the next Ministerial Conference to the Follow-up Group, composed of the representatives of all participating countries of the Bologna Process and the European Commission, with the Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE, ESIB, UNESCO/CEPES (and XXX) as consultative members. As decided in Berlin, a Board shall oversee the work between the meetings of the Follow-up Group. The overall follow-up work will be supported by a Secretariat provided by the country hosting the next Ministerial Conference.

#### **-- Comments from Finland:**

para 40: is there really a need for a Board now that we have a secretariat?

**End of comments from Finland --**

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#### **-- Comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia":**

40. Finally, we would like to emphasise the role of the Council of Europe in stocktaking process which is leading to overall progress and implementation.

(Explanation: emphasizing the CoE role in the process we take consideration of the role of the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CD-ESR) as a meeting place for representatives from non - EU countries, both, Ministers responsible for higher education and representatives from higher education institutions.)

**End of comments from "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" --**

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#### **-- Comments from Italy:**

Para 40: the document should indicate explicitly the rules for the composition of the Board.

**End of comments from Italy--**

### **Next Conference**

41. Ministers decide to hold the next conference in London in May 2007.