

bologna process

BFUG8 4a
April 2006

Interim report of Bologna Stocktaking working group to BFUG meeting in Vienna, Apr 6-7, 2006

Activities.

During the period between Manchester BFUG meeting and the current BFUG Board meeting the Stocktaking working group:

- had two group meetings on Dec 9 in Riga and one on Feb 27 in Brussels
- carried out consultations with other organisations
- carried out electronic discussions/consultations among the group members

Work done/ work in progress

Indicators for 2007

The working group has analysed the experience of the previous stocktaking and the requests for widening stocktaking in the Bergen ministerial communiqué.

The Working group took account of the new needs for a widened stocktaking, the wish to keep the indicators used in 2005 where practicable, as well as the wish to keep a reasonable size of the scorecard.

The group came to a final list of 11 indicators for the 2007 stocktaking (Annex 1) – which implies merging some of the previous indicators and shifting some of the issues to the textual part of the report. Progress on areas such as the stage of implementation of the third cycle and establishing flexible learning paths are not considered to be quantifiable at this stage and therefore these areas were not considered suitable for the scorecard approach. Progress on these areas will therefore be reflected in the text of the stocktaking report, based on information drawn from National Reports.

The 11 indicators have been prepared by the Stocktaking working group through WG meetings and intense e-mail consultation within the working group.

When drafting the indicators, the group paid attention to the fact that while ministers expect e.g. the work on the degree system to be completed by 2007, some other issues like introduction of qualifications frameworks and full implementation of standards and guidelines for quality assurance should be started by 2007 but their full implementation should rather be expected by 2010.

Revising/amending 2005 indicators.

With regard to the indicators that were already included in the previous Stocktaking, the 2007 stocktaking should reflect progress after Bergen. For this reason some indicators have been recalibrated: i.e. the level for “green” in 2005 has become “light green” for 2007 and the other levels amended accordingly.

Indicators on the 3-cycle system. Two indicators “Stage of implementation” and “Level of enrolment” have been merged with the reasoning that it was necessary to

accommodate an indicator on introduction of qualifications frameworks, but it did not seem feasible to keep 4 indicators for the degree system alone. The indicator on “Implementation of national qualifications framework” was drafted with input from the Qualifications Frameworks Working Group.

The levels within the indicator on qualifications frameworks reflect the fact that countries are expected to have started work, rather than to have a fully operational qualifications framework in place by 2007. Therefore e.g. the level of “green” corresponds to principles of national qualifications frameworks nationally approved while the institutional implementation and the self-certification with the overarching framework is left for the period after 2007.

Indicators on quality assurance. To keep no more than 3 indicators for quality assurance and to accommodate an indicator on implementation of Standards and Guidelines, there is now one indicator on the external quality assurance instead of two indicators in 2005 stocktaking. As well, indicators “Student participation” and “international participation” will be integrated into one in the scorecard¹.

Indicators on recognition. The indicator on ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention has been replaced by one on “Implementation of principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in the national legislation”. This indicator was drafted in cooperation with ENIC-NARIC networks and it is supposed that the information will be gathered through the new Council of Europe electronic reporting system on the implementation of conventions and from the National Reports.

The issue of the remaining countries that have not ratified the Convention as well as the institutional implementation of the Convention were decided to be dealt within the text of the Stocktaking report.

New indicators. A new indicator has been prepared in the area of lifelong learning to reflect success in recognition of prior learning². Another new indicator has been prepared in the area of establishing and recognition of joint degrees.

Timeline

Working group has prepared a draft timeline (Annex 2) of the stocktaking exercise to be presented to the BFUG for adoption.

Cooperation with partners

Qualifications framework WG provided advice to Stocktaking WG on the issue of the principles and format of the draft new indicator for implementation of national qualifications frameworks.

Eurydice. The working group chair had an early consultation meeting with Eurydice and Eurydice representatives participated in the WG meeting on Feb 27.

Stocktaking WG had the opportunity to comment on the questionnaire Eurydice and the questions have been coordinated between the Eurydice questionnaire and the template for national reports. Stocktaking WG chair raised an issue whether this early data collection will allow Eurydice report to fully reflect the changes in countries between the two

¹ For practical reasons however the computing of scores will be still done separately for student and international involvement.

² For the reasons explained above the introduction of the flexible learning paths will be reflected in the text of the report

ministerial conferences. It was clarified that Eurydice had ad-hoc mechanisms in place to be able to integrate most recent information in their presentations by country and comparative analysis until the Eurydice report is sent to the printer i.e. end of March 2007.

EUA representative in the Stocktaking working group informed the WG regarding the methodology of Trends V, in particular, the questionnaires EUA is sending out to HEIs and Rectors' conferences.

ENQA was consulted with regard to the survey it is carrying out among its members to find out what are the plans of national QA agencies in implementation of standards and guidelines. The survey results will also be used by the Stocktaking group.

Given that not all national agencies of the Bologna countries are members, the ENQA survey cannot provide all the national information needed for stocktaking so national reports will have to be used as information source for a least part of the countries.

ENIC/NARIC. Chair of stocktaking group participated in the annual meeting of the NARIC network to discuss the stocktaking on the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The Networks provided advice on the new draft indicator and confirmed their readiness to assist in information gathering for stocktaking where appropriate.

Council of Europe has come with an initiative that will help providing comparable information of the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. CoE has developed an electronic tool for information gathering and automatic generation of reports on implementation of a certain convention. It has been tested and is found useful. Council of Europe has offered to adapt the electronic tool for information gathering on the Lisbon Convention. The issue was discussed on Jan 31 when Chair of Stocktaking WG took part in the bureau meeting of CoE higher education and research committee.

Involvement of expert

Ms Cynthia Deane who worked as expert in the previous stocktaking phase has been appointed also for the current phase of Stocktaking and has been involved as of February, 2006.

*Prepared by
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