

BFUG10 8c
5-6 March 2007

**BOLOGNA PROCESS: UPDATE ON CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS
RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
17-18 MAY 2007**

Introduction

1. This paper asks BFUG to note the progress being made with preparations for the London conference, and to offer any comments on the background paper for the panel sessions. It also asks for volunteers to lead the discussions in the panel sessions.

Update on preparations for the London conference

2. Project planning for the event continues to progress well:
- The programme has been updated to reflect the comments offered by BFUG (Annex A).
 - The conference website is now up and running: <http://livegroup.co.uk/bologna/>
 - Formal invitations have issued to all country delegates (Annex B)
 - Key note speakers have been secured
 - Interpretation has been arranged for English, French, German and Russian.
3. BFUG members are asked to ensure that their Ministers agree their delegations and register for the conference **by Friday 20 April**. Details of accommodation options are given on the conference website. BFUG members are asked to note that all delegates are expected to make their own travel arrangements to their accommodation and to and from the QEII conference centre. There will however be transport from all the hotels on the website and the QEII conference centre to and from the conference dinner on the Thursday evening.

Panel sessions

4. As indicated previously, in order to make the London conference as participative as possible, all delegates will be asked to take part in a small discussion session in the afternoon of the first day. Each group of some 40-60 delegates will be asked to discuss the definitive characteristics of the EHEA. The discussion will be lead by a panel drawn from conference delegates comprising: a Minister; a Rector; a student; a business or staff representative; and possibly an academic from outwith the EHEA.
5. Each panel session will discuss the same topic, based on the draft paper attached for any comments at Annex C.
6. Consultative members will be asked to provide a Chair and a rapporteur for each of the 6 panels from within their delegations.

7. BFUG country members are also asked to help identify Ministers to lead the panel discussions.

Secretariat report

8. In line with previous practice, the Secretariat will prepare a short report for publication on the Bologna Secretariat website, giving an overview of the work of BFUG over the period 2005-2007. An outline draft is attached at Annex D.

9. Consultative members, the EC, Working Group Chairs and seminar organisers have been asked to provide contributions detailing how they have contributed to the delivery of the BFUG Work Programme for 2005-2007.

10. Country members have also been given the option of submitting a short contribution to the report, as a means of sharing their experience of implementing Bologna reforms. Newer country members have been asked to focus in particular on any assistance they may have received from other BFUG members. This offer was in recognition of the fact that there will not be any opportunity to give oral updates on progress at national level during the Ministerial conference.

Conclusion

11. BFUG is invited to:

- offer any comments on the draft paper for the panel discussions at the London conference
- advise the Secretariat of Ministers or other delegates who might lead panel discussions
- note the progress being made for the London event.

Bologna Secretariat
February 2007

Bologna Process – Draft programme for Conference of Ministers, London May 2007

Timetable	Timings	
16 May		Arrival/informal reception
17 May: first session	9 00 – 10 30	Welcome speeches – from UK, Germany, European Commissioner, Council of Europe (10 minutes each) Keynote speech: Bologna in a global context: future challenges and opportunities for the EHEA. (30 minutes) Short Q&A if time permits
Coffee	10 30 - 11 00	
17 May : second session	11 00 – 12 30	A session on progress made since Bergen including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktaking (15 minutes each) • Trends V • Bologna through Student Eyes • General progress report (from the Secretariat covering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions from all consultative members • Qualification Framework Working Group • Social Dimension and Data on Staff and Student Mobility Working Group • Portability of Grants and Loans Working Group • External Dimension Working Group • EUA project on doctoral studies • ENQA project on European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies) Open discussion (30 minutes)
Lunch	12 30 – 14 00	Separate lunch arrangements for Ministers and other delegates within the QEII
17 May: third session	14 00 – 15 30	Panel discussions: 6 groups of c50: panels to comprise: a Minister; a Rector; a student; a business representative; and an academic from out with the EHEA; a chair (from the consultative member organisations) and a rapporteur.
Coffee	15 30 - 16 00	
17 May: fourth session	16 00 - 18 00	Feedback from the panel discussions and initial discussion of Communiqué
Conf dinner	19 30	
18 May: fifth session	9 00 - 10 00	Keynote speech – responding to the EHEA; future challenges and opportunities from an external perspective (30 minutes) Q&A (30 minutes)
18 May: sixth session	10 00 – 12 00	Final discussion and agreement of the Communiqué
18 May seventh session	12 00 – 12 45	Closing remarks from Benelux and the European Commissioner Forward look – from UK
Photocall	12 45 – 13 00	
Informal lunch	13 00	

EXAMPLE OF LETTER TO BOLONGA MINISTERS

I wrote to you last summer to give you advance notice of the dates for the Bologna Conference of Ministers. I am now writing to invite you to take part in the fifth Bologna Conference for Ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The conference will take place in the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster, London, starting at 09.30 on Thursday 17 May and concluding with lunch the following day. I hope that representatives from all parts of the EHEA will be able to attend.

It is now only three years until 2010. The conference will be an important milestone in the realisation of the EHEA, providing an opportunity to review the progress we have made both individually and collectively towards our common goals and to set clear priorities for the next two years.

At the same time, I am also keen to ensure we use the opportunity to identify future challenges and opportunities for the EHEA, as we look ahead to 2010 and beyond. Identifying the definitive characteristics of a successful EHEA at this stage will help set the background for the remainder of the Bologna Process and inform discussions about how we might work together in future to maintain the strength and coherence of the EHEA. European higher education systems will continue to need to adapt and develop in response to new societal, economic and global demands, if we are to ensure the continuing attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education.

You are invited to send a delegation of **five** members to the conference. Delegations should include the Minister responsible for higher education, a regular member of the Bologna Follow Up Group, and a representative of the national rectors' conference and the national student union(s). There will be a small number of exceptions to this limit for countries where more than one Minister is responsible for higher education¹. There is no scope to increase delegations further, due to space constraints at the venue.

I am enclosing the preliminary programme which provides more detailed information, including information on the proposed panel sessions and the social events.

Registration

To assist preparations for the event, I should be grateful if you would now arrange for your delegation to register for the event by completing the online booking form at livegroup.co.uk/bologna by **Friday 20 April**. For practical and security reasons the registration form must be completed for each delegate. During the registration process you will have the opportunity to include the names of those who are attending as security personnel or personal assistants. Please also indicate any additional requirements so that we can ensure comfort on the day.

¹ Belgium (Flemish Speaking Community); Belgium (French Speaking Community); Denmark; Switzerland

If you have any queries in the meantime please visit the website or contact our Conference Office:

Website:	livegroup.co.uk/bologna
Telephone:	+44 (0) 20 8481 3380
Typetalk UK:	18001 020 8481 3380
Typetalk International:	+44 151 494 1260 for Textphone users
Fax:	+44 (0) 20 8481 2020
E-mail:	bologna@livegroup.co.uk

I look forward to welcoming you to London in May.

(DRAFT – 15 February 2007)

**CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
17-18 MAY 2007**

BACKGROUND PAPER FOR PANEL SESSION

Purpose: to define the overall vision for the EHEA in a more coherent and outcome focused way, and identify the definitive characteristics of a strong, dynamic, diverse, coherent and attractive European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Timing: 14:00 to 15 30

Venue: room in QEII conference centre

Format: open, participative discussion session, led by a Chair and a panel comprising a Minister, a Rector, a student, a business or staff representative and [an academic from outwith the EHEA].

Chair: [from Consultative member]

Rapporteur [from Consultative member]

Panel members: to be listed (from delegates)

Support: from the Secretariat/UK

Each panel member will initially be asked to talk for 5 minutes, offering their views on definitive characteristics of the EHEA. Panel members will be asked to identify:

- their overall vision for the EHEA; and
- what the definitive characteristics of the EHEA might be.

This will be followed by comments and questions from the floor to panel members.

Based on the discussion, the Chair and Rapporteur will be asked to identify a number of definitive characteristics of a successful EHEA. The outputs from the discussion will be collated with the outputs from the other panel sessions taking place at the same time and posted in summary format on the Bologna Secretariat website. The summary will provide the background for the future work of BFUG.

Background to discussion on the definitive characteristics of a strong, dynamic, diverse, coherent and attractive EHEA

When the European Ministers of Higher Education met in Bologna in June 1999, they agreed to work collaboratively to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010. They identified the following 6 Action Lines to help realise that vision:

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles

3. Establishment of a system of credits
4. Promotion of mobility
5. Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance
6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education.

Three further Action Lines were introduced, when the Ministers met in Prague in May 2001. These are:

7. Lifelong learning
8. Higher education institutions and students
9. Promoting the attractiveness of the EHEA.

A tenth Action Line was added in Berlin in September 2003:

10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and the European Research Area.

Essentially, these Action Lines describe processes, primarily to be taken at national level, to underpin the realisation of the EHEA. Working toward these objectives, in line with the inter-governmental, partnership approach characterised by the Bologna Process, has resulted in substantial changes at national and institutional level to create a series of independent, but increasing compatible, higher education systems.

These Action Lines are increasing the quality of European higher education, supporting curricula reform, increasing the autonomy for higher education institutions, and creating greater openness and transparency through compatible qualifications frameworks based on learning outcomes and robust quality assurance systems. Taken together, these Action Lines are increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education.

Now that we are approaching 2010 and the achievement of these individual objectives, there is a need to define our overall vision for the EHEA in a more coherent and outcome focused way. This vision should take cognisance of the fact that higher education systems will continue to need to adapt and develop in response to new societal, economic and global demands, if we are to ensure the continuing attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education beyond 2010.

Definitive characteristics of the EHEA might include:

- good governance and fully autonomous universities
- a quality improvement culture in universities
- relevant curricula, leading to highly valued qualifications, recognised throughout the EHEA and beyond by employers and universities
- increased student and staff mobility
- equitable access for all and a strong social dimension
- an increasingly strong link between higher education and research
- effective knowledge transfer and better engagement between universities and business, industry and the wider community.

Identifying the definitive characteristics of a successful EHEA at this stage will help set the background for the remainder of the Bologna Process and inform discussions about how we might assess the overall progress made and work together in future to and maintain the strength and coherence of the EHEA.

Bologna Secretariat
April 2007

Secretariat report: from Bergen to London

Draft outline

- Context for, and key achievements of, the Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007
- Activities of BFUG/Board
- Key outcomes from Bologna Seminars (half page summary of each and link to website and full documentation)
- Key outcomes from Working Groups, ENQA and EUA projects (half page summary of each and link to website and full documentation)
- Contributions from the EC and Consultative members (max one page each, plus links as required)
- Contributions from country members (optional) – to share good practice in implementing Bologna reforms (max of half page each, plus links as required)
- Sign off from UK Secretariat