

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR BFUG WORKING GROUP ON STOCKTAKING

Background and mandate

In Berlin on 19 September 2003, Ministers with responsibility for Higher Education established the Bologna stocktaking exercise that *"would provide reliable information on how the Process is actually advancing and would offer the possibility to take corrective measures, if appropriate."*

In Berlin they also agreed that *participating countries will allow access to the necessary information for research on higher education relating to the objectives of the Bologna Process*

In their conference in Bergen on 19 -20 May 2005 the Ministers *charged the Follow-up Group with continuing and widening the stocktaking process and to continue stocktaking in the fields of the degree system, quality assurance and recognition of degrees and study periods."*

In the further text of the Bergen communiqué Ministers gave the BFUG an explicit mandate on a number of issues that should be included in the stocktaking for 2007. According to the mandate given in Bergen there were a number of issues were included in 2007 stocktaking exercise compared to the 2005 one. Particularly, new quantifiable indicators were designed for:

- implementation of the national frameworks for qualifications
- implementation of the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area
- awarding and recognition of joint degrees
- procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

More additional issues were included in the analytical part of the stocktaking report:

- Progress on implementing the third cycle
- Increasing the employability of graduates with bachelor qualification
- Creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education

The ministerial mandate from 2005 also included considering inclusion of the social dimension of the Bologna process in the future stocktaking. In the 2005-2007 period a separate Social dimension working group was established to analyse this issue.

In their London Communiqué of 2007 Ministers asked BFUG

"to continue the stocktaking process, based on national reports, in time for our 2009 Ministerial conference"

Ministers also confirmed that they

"...expect further development of the qualitative analysis in stocktaking, particularly in relation to mobility, the Bologna Process in a global context and the social dimension".

In the Communiqué section stocktaking Ministers state that should continue to include the

- *degree system and employability of graduates,*
- *recognition of degrees and study periods and*

- implementation of all aspects of quality assurance in line with the European Standards and Guidelines”.

Ministers also underlined that with a view to the development of more student-centred, outcome-based learning,

“the next exercise should also address in an integrated way national qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and credits, lifelong learning, and the recognition of prior learning.

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

In order to realise the stocktaking objectives set by the Ministers, the Working Group shall:

1. Identify the key issues to be addressed through the stocktaking and identify which issues should be covered by the quantifiable indicators
2. Develop the methodology to be used in this exercise, in particular addressing the requests by the ministers as stated in the London communiqué:
 - identify the ways to further development of the qualitative analysis in stocktaking and
 - identify the ways to address in an integrated way national qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and credits, lifelong learning, and the recognition of prior learning
3. Collaborate with partner and other organisations in order to maximise the use of data sources;
4. Prepare the structure for the national reports to be submitted by member States and used in the 2009 stocktaking;
5. Prepare a report for approval by the BFUG in advance of the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Conference in 2009.

The Working Group will be supported in its task by the Secretariat, and shall draw on expertise as it considers appropriate.

The Group shall submit reports to the BFUG, and shall make its draft reports and other relevant documents accessible for all BFUG members on the web.