

BOLOGNA 2020

Foreword

In the London Communiqué dated May 18th, 2007, the ministers for higher education of the Bologna Process asked “BFUG as a whole to consider [...] how the EHEA might develop after 2010 and to report back to the next ministerial meeting in 2009.”

It is recalled that the structure of this report was agreed upon at the BFUG meeting in Brdo on 13-14 March 2008. It was to contain three main parts. Part 1 relates to the initial Bologna objectives that will require further attention after 2010. Part 2 deals with new challenges for the next decade. Part 3 fleshes out the future arrangements for the decade to come.

A number of issues were mentioned for each part of what was then called a non paper. This had been done in order to indicate the kind of issues that would need identifying in the different stages leading up to the finalizing of the report. The Ghent conference of May 19th-May 20th has led to a more precise definition of those issues and has added new ones. The “non paper” has been rewritten in order to take into account the presentations and recommendations of the conference.

The paper now also includes the recommendations from the working group on “European higher education in a global setting” that had been asked by BFUG at its last meeting to prepare proposals how to react to the growing interest in the Bologna Process from countries that are not eligible for membership (see Annex 1).

Part 1 considers the present policy areas and action lines of the Bologna Process. The underlying assumption is that not all the action lines will have been completed by 2010. The Ghent conference corroborated that evidence and strongly warned of a two-speed implementation of the Bologna Process. The independent assessment which will be available for 2010 will still give a clearer indication as to what extent these action lines will need completion.

Part 2 is based on the assumption that if the Bologna Process is to be continued it will need to provide relevant, concrete and operational answers to issues affecting higher education in the second decade of the 21st century. The challenges mentioned tend to be global ones. The question that the Bologna Process needs to address is what the specifically European response is going to be.

Part 3 discusses the follow up structure.

The perspective from which this proposal has been drafted is a thematic one so that there is no chapter on the stakeholders. Indeed the Bologna Process has by definition rested upon a co-operation between the various stakeholders (Governments, academic community, society at large) and this should also be the case in future. Therefore, what matters most is identifying the challenges and finding the appropriate answers before specifying the role each stakeholder should play.

The paper also raises a number of questions, both direct and indirect ones. The answers that will ultimately come out of the consultation process under way will have to be along the following lines: What are the distinguishing features of the European Higher Education Area? What are the European answers to global problems or at the smallest scale to local ones? The answers will have to stress what European cooperation in higher education can do for the global good.

BOLOGNA BEYOND 2010

The contribution of European higher education to the global public good

Introduction

At its inception the Bologna Process was meant both to strengthen European integration and the competitiveness of European higher education through the introduction of a system based on undergraduate and postgraduate studies and to foster student mobility through easily readable programmes and degrees. Quality assurance has played an important role from the outset, too. The various ministerial meetings since 1999 have broadened this agenda and have given greater precision to the tools that have been developed. The undergraduate/postgraduate degree structure has been modified into a three-cycle system, which now includes the concept of qualifications frameworks with an emphasis on learning outcomes – what people know, understand and can do – as well as how different qualifications articulate. The concept of the social dimension of higher education has been introduced and the recognition of qualifications is now clearly perceived as central to European higher education policies.

The Bologna Process has been successful in so far that it has created a number of instruments that have given European higher education greater coherence and have placed it on the worldwide map. At the same time though, progress has been uneven, as can be seen from the various stocktaking exercises. We should be prepared for the eventuality that not all participating countries will have implemented all policies and reached all stated goals by 2010. Perceptions differ between countries, between institutions as well as between disciplines. An independent assessment has been asked for to clarify what has been really achieved and to what extent this has been done. This report is to be ready for 2010.

However, prior to that publication the ministerial meeting of 2009 is to give political orientations for the future of the Bologna process. The present document proposes the structure of the report and the possible, main foci these orientations could take.

Chapter 1. Finalising the initial agenda

As has been stated above, not all the objectives will have been reached by all the participating countries by 2010; it is, therefore, necessary that the Bologna Process should continue after 2010 so that its implementation can be finalized. However, greater differentiation is needed between action lines with clearly defined operational outcomes and underlying policy areas.

1.1. Action lines

This category comprises the degree structure, recognition, qualifications frameworks and quality assurance.

1.1.1. The degree structure

It is assumed that a full implementation of this action line will result in higher education being organized in three cycles, with a possibility of intermediate qualifications, and with proper progression from one cycle to the next; each cycle is defined in terms of ECTS based on learning outcomes and student workload.

Qualifications frameworks certified against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the EHEA and designed to encourage mobility as well as employability will be fully implemented, self certification procedures will be completed and the self certification reports made accessible to partners.

The following years will still require a better understanding of the nature of learning outcomes and the development and formulation of curricula based on learning outcomes will still have to draw upon the continuing allocation of resources.

However, it is the third cycle which will have to become the focus of attention. The heterogeneity of motives and purposes of doctoral education is leading to a diversification of models. Doctoral education is currently being reformed to give it more structure and ensure a systematic research training that prepares for jobs also in non-academic positions. At the same time the focus shifts away from the dominance of the product (thesis) on to the process. A further internationalisation of doctoral education is expected as part of the increase in degree mobility.

- How is the third cycle to be defined?

1.1.2. Recognition

As far as recognition is concerned, the completion of this action line will result in recognition practices being coherent across the European Higher Education Area. These will ensure that all learners are given fair recognition of their qualifications, as underlined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

However, there is a general perception that recognition practices are not yet coherent across the EHEA and that variations in programmes are defined as substantial differences and thus as impediments to recognition. Furthermore, there is inconsistency between recognition for academic purposes and recognition of professional qualifications.

What further measures need to be taken to advance recognition practices and thus to meet the citizens' expectations?

1.1.3. Quality Assurance

Maintaining the quality of European higher education at a high level and raising it even further has been one of the major goals of the Bologna Process.

In the area of quality assurance, the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) will be fully operational and national quality assurance agencies will implement the European Standards and Guidelines (which will be a requirement for agencies to be included in the register).

Furthermore, the ownership of quality assurance is embedded in the world of academia. Internal quality assurance is the responsibility of the institution and is directly linked to the latter's status of autonomy.

However, beyond these operational goals the issue of quality and excellence remains of paramount importance. The definition of quality is related to the topic of the selection or non selection of students and it is deeply influenced by the diversification of providers.

Furthermore, the effects of the changes made within the Bologna Process on quality need investigating. There has been a proliferation of quality assurance and accreditation agencies and this trend is likely to continue into the future with the advent of more subject based accreditations. The register certainly acts as a tool to create transparency in the sector and to guarantee the quality of the accreditation and the evaluation tools used by the various agencies. Nevertheless, norm-based trust in European higher education (e.g. recognition based on estimates of equivalence) has been replaced by rationalist and instrumentalist forms of trust based on measurement and assessment. The effects of this shift have been an "agencification" of quality assurance and an emerging influence of private actors. Rankings support this shift and turn trust into a commodity.

- How do we make sure that having programmes accredited does not become more important than offering the courses?

Generally speaking, as far as these action lines are concerned, the degree structure and the qualifications framework, recognition and quality assurance are those that have led to structural reforms and to the institutionalization of the Bologna Process. It is worth recalling that the European register for quality assurance agencies, which is the very product of the Bologna Process, is a legal structure based on Belgian law. The degree structure and the qualifications framework have direct legal implications for the participating countries. The Bologna process has thus had direct implications on the way the participating countries organise their own systems.

1.2. Policy areas

The social dimension, employability and the Bologna Process in its global dimension are defined as policy areas in the sense that they define objectives that are not likely to be translated into laws or into a regulatory framework.

1.2.1. Social dimension

The definition given to the social dimension is one that includes all provisions needed for having equitable access into, progress and completion of higher education. By emphasizing the social characteristics of higher education, the political objective aims at reducing social gaps, at providing equal opportunities to quality education and at strengthening social cohesion.

The Bologna Process has increasingly heightened its policy attention on the social dimension. The policy messages are manifold:

- In a knowledge-society higher education is important to the development of successful economies and in providing opportunities for all individuals to participate in and benefit from a successful economy;
- Equity and social justice issues are imported into higher education which becomes a driver for social cohesion and social citizenship.

While participation rates vary considerably between European countries, measures to expand enrolments have not necessarily increased social equity. Inequalities remain large. The reasons given can be found both inside and outside the higher education sector. It is argued that universities come far too late in a system where choices have to be made earlier on in a pupil's career. Institutions of higher education thus cannot overturn a student's former social and cultural experience. Barriers to equitable access within the higher education sector include the cost of participation, entry qualification requirements, a lack of flexible learning opportunities, limited availability of support services and an institutional "culture".

The vision of higher education as contributing to social cohesion is part of the welfare state model of social cohesion. Education, and higher education institutions by extension, act as public instruments for the re-distribution of wealth through investing in social mobility and above all through public investment in the younger generation. This welfare state model defines and measures how far the university has met its obligations of social cohesion in terms of groups defined by social background or relative disadvantage.

- How can institutions of higher education continue this tradition in the face of growing internationalization?
- The social dimension with its agenda of equitable participation in higher education will need to be further developed on the basis of the data that will become increasingly available from 2009 onwards.

1.2.2. Employability

Employability has been defined as the empowerment of the individual student to seize opportunities on the labour market. It involves the teaching and learning of generic skills and competencies like analytical skills, communication skills as well as the capacity to reason at a level of abstraction. The balance between the teaching and learning of knowledge on the one hand and the acquisition of transferable skills on the other hand is a delicate one. Not only does it raise a question about the relationship between the depth of knowledge and the ensuing accurate mastery of skills and not only does it mean restructuring whole curricula, it also has a direct impact on the way the scholar or teacher perceives his/her role which can no longer be compared to the one in which the teacher merely acts as a lecturer. The life of the university department is changed because of this new paradigm. This will require further development.

Employability also refers to people staying in employment, not only to recent graduates. University training needs further invest in life long learning if it is to address this issue properly.

Considered from the perspective of the labour market, employability also entails a rethinking on the employers' side, be they private or public ones. We need to realize that in many countries the full potential of bachelor degrees is not yet fully developed. The prevailing expectation still is that a specific diploma prepares for a specific job and that the longer the study programme the better the preparation for the job. This is short sighted. In a changing economic environment the degree holder must be capable of summoning knowledge and skills that make it possible for him to adapt to manifold situations. But businesspeople must be open to this perspective and especially smaller and medium sized enterprises still have a long way to go. A realization that a great many jobs are generated in the small business and voluntary sectors has led to the tailoring of appropriate degree programmes. It is essential that degrees testify to abilities and capacities that go beyond the immediate needs and at the same time degrees do not lead to unemployment. Any employability measure will have failed if it does not lead to employment.

- How do we get a better understanding of bachelor programmes?
- How do we integrate employability into a lifelong learning experience?
- How do we get bachelor degrees better valued by employers without hampering progression between cycles?

1.2.3. Lifelong Learning

Goals like the social dimension and employability can only be reached if they are set within a perspective of lifelong learning. The concept of lifelong learning is a broad one where education that is flexible, diverse and available at different times and places is pursued throughout life. In its scope it is founded on the four 'pillars' of education for the future as they were identified by the Delors report (1996): learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together (and with others) and learning to be.

In late modernity, change and uncertainty are often seen as defining characteristics of the contemporary world. Lifelong learning is supposed to empower the individual, the citizen and the worker to address the different forms of change - economic, cultural, technological and demographic – in a positive manner. Lifelong learning puts emphasis on the need to become a “learning society” and lends support to the need for both economic competitiveness and social cohesion. Lifelong learning is both a cultural and economic commodity, located not only in the market place but the in the social system of class and status.

Lifelong learning is concerned with climbing higher up the qualifications ladder and improving knowledge, skills and competences. On the one hand, lifelong learning has thus become a policy goal for supporting economic growth.

On the other hand, lifelong learning is seen as having a social function to encourage democracy and active citizenship. Three major domains stem from this social function:

- a concern for social justice with an emphasis on educational fairness, equality and empowerment;
- a concern for social inclusion;
- a concern for reducing poverty (poverty being understood through the categories of income (relative and absolute), capability (deprivation of knowledge and skills for participation in public life) and indirect poverty caused by poor health, infrastructure, natural disaster, war).

If lifelong learning is to succeed it must be rooted in a social and economic climate in which learning is valued, used and rewarded. The more fundamental structural issues to face is in terms of building the kind of seamless robe of provision required for a system of lifelong learning. What does this seamless robe look like?

The conditions of learning could be created in the form of various incentives, mainly financial, such as vouchers or tax-breaks. What is the financing mechanism of lifelong learning?

1.2.4. The attractiveness of European higher education

The attractiveness of the EHEA is based on its striving for excellence and its openness; it hinges on a number of conditions, among which the following ones feature prominently:

- make it an attractive place for study and research,
- make it an attractive labour market for academics through the quality of the experience and the clearly defined career paths
- preserve its rich and diverse cultural heritage in terms of institutional cultures, teaching and learning styles and curricular diversity.

The external dimension of the Bologna Process is also about positioning the EHEA in the global world of higher education. By 2020, the role competition plays in higher education will have grown substantially on account of the international “arms race” in investments and in innovation. The EHEA will have to position itself vis-à-vis its competitors, but it is unlikely that it will succeed in anything more than partly closing the gap between the US supremacy as a leading knowledge economy and the European one. However, the EHEA should aim at becoming the most creative and innovative sector in a global setting (“Une civilisation ne repose point sur l’usage de ses inventions, mais sur la ferveur à inventer”, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry).

The Bologna Process clearly impacts on how higher education in Europe relates to higher education in other parts of the world. At the same time, it is clear that the global dimension of the Bologna process, seen from a European perspective, is a mix of what we have in common – the European Higher Education Area – and elements that are specific for each participating country, including strategies for marketing one's own national higher education.

As the Bologna Process developed, a growing interest in both the Process as such and the emerging European Higher Education Area could be noted worldwide and it becomes increasingly clear that the Bologna Process needs to react to this growing interest. While the EHEA should not appear as "fortress Europe", changing the criteria for membership or defining different categories for countries that expressed interest but are not eligible for membership do not seem to be feasible solutions.

- Nevertheless, mechanisms for contacts and cooperation with countries that express an interest in the Bologna Process need to be found (for concrete proposals see Annex 1).
- This also points to the fact that the global dimension of the Bologna Process balances – or needs to balance - cooperation and competition.

1.2.5. Mobility

Mobility is one of the fundamentals of European cooperation and it has been a dominant issue in the rationales of the various communiqués of the Bologna Process. Indeed, apart from the economic value of creating a mobile labour force, student and staff mobility also has a cultural value enhancing mutual understanding between countries and regions as well as personal fulfilment. Mobility has much to do with the internationalisation of the system and the institutions and it finds its corollaries in multinational faculty and in international curricula. However, progress in this area does not seem to match the initial expectations.

The original expectation was that the creation of a single space of education would give mobility a further boost. This does not necessarily seem to have happened. With regard to intra-European short-term programme mobility (Erasmus type mobility) the introduction of bachelor degrees seems to have acted as an obstacle to student mobility. It is argued that shorter degrees would make it more difficult to integrate a study period abroad and this latter argument has started massively to influence the debate about short-term mobility under the conditions of Bologna during the last years.

Moreover, it seems to appear that the comparative advantage of formerly mobile students in taking over work assignment with an international component is declining in some respects. This is due to the fact that studying abroad is less exceptional and students live in an increasingly international environment. It is therefore suggested that stronger curricular efforts should be made in order to make teaching and learning during the study period abroad more meaningful.

With regard to intra-European degree mobility, the positive expectations have remained in place. The existence of one and the same degree structure makes mobility from one country to another easier.

There is also growing emphasis on student mobility from other parts of the world. Growing proportions of mobile students from other parts of the world will impact on issues of quality, curricular change to accommodate their needs and expectations as well as the language in which the programme is delivered

However, mobility is also related to immigration issues and social security issues. These cannot be ignored as they define the relationships between the two groups of countries of the Bologna process, those who are members of the European Union and those who are not.

As far as academic mobility is concerned issues of careers, social benefits, job security and pensions need to be taken into account when promoting increased mobility and international recruitment of academic staff.

Generally speaking, data on both staff and student mobility leave much to be desired. More work on data collection still needs to be done.

Chapter 2. Bologna 2020

It is worth recalling one of the broad issues of the Bologna declaration: *“Meanwhile, we are witnessing a growing awareness in large parts of the political and academic world and in public opinion of the need to establish a more complete and far-reaching Europe, in particular building upon and strengthening its intellectual, cultural, social, scientific and technological dimensions.”* This initial vision still holds true as an overarching principle for 2020. Yet, the world has changed since the last decade of the previous millennium and the goal as set forth in the Bologna declaration needs to be related against a background of new challenges in order for relevant operational objectives to be defined.

2.1. Challenges at macro level

2.1.1 Globalisation

One of the most visible manifestations of globalisation is the **emerging ‘borderless’ higher education market**, which is the most evident trend in what is likely to be a continuing move toward a diversification of higher education provision. Traditional forms of provision, through organised programmes delivered by public and private higher education institutions belonging to a national education system and providing face to face interaction between learners and faculty are likely to remain the most important form of provision, but it is at the same time likely to meet competition and challenges from a range of other forms of provision, not all of which may even exist today. The huge increase in the world-wide demand in higher education, the budgetary and capacity problems of many countries to meet this demand, and on the other hand the opportunities created by new communication technologies and the Internet, shape an environment in which new, mostly for-profit providers can successfully expand the supply of educational services. Universities from North America, Europe and Australia take initiatives to reach out their educational provision to this international higher education market, by active recruitment of international, fee-paying students to the home institution, by establishing branch campuses or franchising and twinning agreements with local institutions. The international demand for higher education has also invited new providers from outside the higher education sector to enter the scene.

These market-like processes also entail that **higher education institutions will function more like an enterprise**. In their research function this translates into focusing on “Mode 2 knowledge production” at the expense of curiosity driven research. Commercialising research results can be used as a means to increase income, but can also endanger the autonomy of the researcher. Tenure is no longer guaranteed. In the past, two types of research were distinguished at university level, i.e. basic research and applied research. This is no longer the case. A wide range of different types occur. For example, free research and research with a purpose, oriented and not oriented research, industrial basic research and contract research, on the initiative of the researcher and/or the principal, etc. Universities provide incubation support, advice on legal, technical or financial issues, expertise and knowledge transfer. Spin-offs tend to grow faster and have lower failure rates than conventional business start-ups. In other words by engaging in “academic capitalism” institutions of higher education become fully embedded in what the European Commission calls the knowledge triangle, but they risk losing the sense of their own identity which has rested upon their perceived, distinctive contribution: teaching for personal/cultural development, long-term research programmes, critical and reconstructive scholarship, an institutional space not owned by one powerful social agent but obliged to relate to all.

The demand for more relevance might lead to a “commodification of knowledge” production on the one hand, and it might turn the relationship between teaching and learning into a provider-customer relationship on the other hand. This might constitute a

threat to the other functions of the university pertaining to critical, thinking, curiosity driven research and theorising.

The question arising out of these considerations is how to strike a balance between steering and market mechanisms. What is the scope of the market? Are higher education systems best seen as national ones in view of the increasing influences of globalisation? Is an international regulatory framework needed to transcend the eroded national policy contexts and to some extent steer the global integration of the higher education systems? The agenda of legal issues might be the following one: inventions and ownership; intellectual property; contract research; the rights of the researcher; the professional status and career of the researcher; ventures.

Moreover, global competition in higher education brings with it international league tables, rankings, benchmarks and other comparisons of the performance of higher education institutions. These trends invite **the creation of new groupings** whose reference points will be the need to maintain global reputations rather than to contribute to national or local needs. This will lead to a few rich research universities. However, for the majority of institutions these are goals beyond their reach and they would anyway distract them from other important purposes. The latter certainly include economic ones, but also roles in relation to social equity, social mobility, social cohesion, citizenship, cultural engagement. It is these which form the various potential "public goods" of higher education.

The question arising out of these considerations is whether greater differentiation in the mission statements of higher education institutions will be necessary to protect them from market forces. Indeed, as a spontaneous corollary to the convergence brought about by the Bologna Process, institutions have differentiated themselves. They start showing considerable variation in mission and ambition now. Mission differentiation seems to be a promising avenue for development contributing to the overall performance of the system as a whole. However, **institutional diversity should be made transparent**. The next phase should therefore consist in the development of instruments to really address diversity and make it readable and understandable. The tools used for this differentiation of institutions would be the development of relevant transparency instruments like classification and the acknowledgement of diverse policy contexts, like multiple reputation mechanisms.

2.2. Challenges at European level

2.2.1. Cultural diversity

European societies are increasingly diverse in culture, religion, language and ways of life. Diversity is seen as creative in a Europe that strikes a unique balance between unity and diversity. In today's Europe aspects of homogenisation due to an increasing cultural exchange as well as the world-wide use of the English language and the spread of commercial culture are set against elements of cultural differentiation as witnessed by increasing consciousness of the use of national, regional and minority languages as well as national and local traditions. The economic effect of globalisation leading to the creation of wealth is thus increasingly linked up with a capacity to handle differences and diversity.

At the same time these trends are scarred by conflict, intolerance and fear. Our societies are faced with a number of challenges requiring that their members have the intellectual ability to analyze challenges, see connections between different areas, devise solutions and act on the basis of incomplete information, but also that they have attitudes of citizenship: a will to solve conflicts through negotiation and majority decisions (with due regard to minority views) rather than violence, a recognition of the importance of human dignity and of minority rights, and also an ability and willingness to engage in the public sphere and to weigh the benefits to the community in relation to individual benefits.

Higher education institutions can play a special role in this context. They are particular places for debating fundamental issues and they, therefore, should develop:

- understanding of traditions of culture and beliefs in our societies,
- intercultural competencies
- understanding of different societies in Europe and beyond
- an ability to reason ethically
- responsible citizenship.

As a matter of “Bologna policy” all students should therefore be encouraged to take a number of credits outside their disciplines and thus develop intercultural competence. Study programmes and processes should help students to develop knowledge, skills and habits of mind to be able to reflect on their own beliefs and the choices they make; they should be aware and critical of their own assumptions and beliefs and engage open-mindedly with different cultural forms and historical moments.

2.2.2. Demography

The demographics are such that the average age of the European population is somewhere in the mid-forties. In ten years’ time it will be in the fifties. Against this background, the central questions are how we secure enough professionals to operate Europe as well as how we develop a civic culture that will include and preserve a measure of solidarity between generations.

European Higher Education has experienced massification during the last quarter of the previous century, without, however, giving access to children from culturally less privileged backgrounds. On the other hand, our capacity to address the societal issues of the 21st century, be they related to energy, climate change or social cohesion, will only be met if we manage to tap into intellectual resources that have hitherto been neglected.

Lifelong learning is another way of addressing the same issue. In an ageing population, advanced education for professionals aged after the age of 40 is of paramount importance if they want to remain creative and innovative within their field. We know that innovation and risk taking tend to decrease with the age. Lifelong learning is necessary to increase these skills and attitudes until a much later age.

- How do we manage to maintain an innovation capacity in an ageing and increasingly diverse population?

2.3. Challenges at meso level

2.3.1. *Public responsibility and the role of the nation state*

It is worth recalling that the modern university was put at the disposal of the nation-state by its German philosophical founders. One of the main functions of the university was to train future civil servants, which led to the nineteenth century nation building mission of the university. However, there is now a growing disentanglement in the relationship between institutions of higher education and the State. Moreover, the sole responsibility of the nation state has been nuanced by greater Community action within the European Union.

The Bologna Process has led to structural reforms that were not part of the agenda at the outset. University autonomy is one of them. Usually it is defined as less regulation, keeping government intervention at arm's length. The reform process leading to greater institutional autonomy has taken place in an environment of structural changes in the economy and was for some time accompanied by a serious economic crisis. At the same time the instrumentality of system steering through evaluating institutional performance, efficiency and achievement has been developed.

At the European level a growing "contractualisation" of relationships is expected and at the same time there will be an increasing penetration of international conventions and declarations into legal systems. Institutional autonomy is placed within this increasing number of interacting and overlapping layers of governance. So more market does not necessarily imply less State. Autonomy and regulation are not contrasting pairs.

The Council of Europe Recommendation on public responsibility adopted by the Council's Committee of Ministers suggests that the responsibility of public authorities for higher education and research should be nuanced and defined relative to specific areas. The text broadly recommends that public authorities have:

- *exclusive responsibility* for the framework within which higher education and research is conducted;
- *leading responsibility* for ensuring effective equal opportunities to higher education for all citizens, as well as ensuring that basic research remains a public good;
- *substantial responsibility* for financing higher education and research, the provision of higher education and research, as well as for stimulating and facilitating financing and provision by other sources within the framework developed by public authorities.

This recommendation points clearly at different roles public authorities can play as well as to the fact that public authorities may have an important role in some areas without claiming a monopoly. In other areas, the role of public authorities cannot be shared with other actors.

The state is thus increasingly seen as a regulator, a catalyst rather than a direct provider; this raises the question of the regulatory framework. Again, what is the proper role of public authorities, and how do we define autonomy in an age of greater interaction of – and hence less distinction between – public and private actors?

2.3.2. *Funding*

If we turn to American higher education, we realize that these institutions, both public and private, enjoy great autonomy combined with substantial public funding, and that especially the private ones can also rely on their endowments. We know that Europe does not have these great fortunes ready to endow foundations and that the tax system is not conducive to this practice. Yet, the government must behave as if it dealt with institutions that are as autonomous as the American ones and face the question of how to finance them. Moreover funding in the US tends to take the form of allocation of resources to students and researchers rather than to institutions.

One of the most hotly debated topics in Europe about the efficiency of higher education funding has to do with the main sources of financial support for the institutions.

Generally speaking, the funding of higher education in many countries takes place by means of allocating grants to higher education providers. In the past the main criteria to determine the amount of funding allocated to each institution by the State have been based on input. There has been a change over the last years from input funding to output criteria, through the introduction of output criteria in the calculation of funding and through the use of instruments such as performance-based funding and contract funding.

Furthermore, the sources of funding have been extended with the introduction of cost sharing in higher education, mostly associated with the introduction of tuition fees to cover part of the costs of instruction. Economists tend to consider that policies of low or no tuition fees are negative not only on efficiency grounds but on equity ones, since higher education is still to a large extent the preserve of students coming from wealthier social groups. In terms of redistribution policies, we face a re-distribution from low income groups to wealthier ones since all tax-paying citizens bear the cost. However, there is also concern about the possible negative effects for potential demand.

Future debates about the funding of higher education will continue to engage both the allocation of costs and also the legitimacy of those costs. At the same time there will continue to be pressures to find new revenues since in most countries tax revenues are already stretched. Certainly changes in tax policy encouraging private philanthropy would be a step forward. A diversification of funding mechanisms does not mean though that higher education ceases to be a public good. The responsibility of public authorities is not limited to providing direct funding. It includes laying down the rules under which alternative funding may be sought and provided.

In what sense is higher education expenditure and in how far is it an investment?

Bologna reforms need sustainable funding. The question is whether a target like the 3% of GDP for research in the Lisbon strategy should be adopted for higher education. Public funding should not be declined because of the entrepreneurial behaviour of institutions, reasonable tuition fee policies and other financial means invested from private sources.

- Should we agree on a target (e.g. 3% of GDP with 1 % public and 2% private) for higher education funding?
- Diversity of models and approaches must be kept. Could guidelines for funding models and analyses be of good help for countries and/ or institutions to find their specific way how to implement funding policies and consequent mechanisms?
- Should funding become one of the action lines on the road map to the EHEA?

2.4. Challenges at micro level

2.4.1. Institutional diversity

The outcome of the Bologna process seems to be convergence of systems as far as the structural elements are concerned, but behind this systemic convergence there is great diversity in the role of actors and their interests and in the institutional context in which the changes are introduced. However, this institutional diversity is not always fully endorsed. Today's emphasis on research tends to lead to a situation in which world-class research is to be concentrated in a small minority of universities and the ranking of universities is a sign of this trend. Creating a competitive environment that encourages the evolution of world-class institutions is clearly an objective of the European Research Council, which aims to implement a peer review system that recognizes excellence and

focuses resources accordingly. The challenge to mimic research intensive, top level universities is stronger than the challenge to be unique or different. On the other hand, in an environment in which differentiation of higher education institutions maps onto and thereby reinforces wider forms of social differentiation institutional diversity may become an issue of equity and social cohesion.

If that is the case, what explicit vision do we have to set out for the role of the remainder of the institutions that do not feature among the world top class institutions, but which constitute the numerical majority? To regard them as merely "teaching only" is surely not good enough. They, too, need to be invested with the same elements of innovation, creativity and purpose. The Bologna Process must help bring about a strategic planning capacity to steer elements of the sector that are not driven by research selectivity.

2.4.2. A new epistemology

The institutions have to be responsive to the needs of society. The global problems are such that they cannot be solved by the methodology or the knowledge gained in one science alone. The most interesting debates take place at the edge of scientific fields or at the crossroads of sciences. "Disciplinarity" increasingly shows its limits, while interdisciplinarity is very much needed to be able

- to address new investigations which are required by scientific developments in society, for example in bio-ethics, or by research opening up new fields at the cross-roads of subject areas, which is a must for our Knowledge society ;
- to contribute to higher education and research as 'global public goods'.

Interdisciplinary approaches are needed to have creative people and to make the most of all the talents left unexploited in society; interdisciplinary approaches empower students:

- to address an issue from a wider range of perspectives, from different angles;
- to communicate with each other, while over-specialization makes it increasingly difficult;
- to understand, to read better an ever-complex reality with different clues for reading it, which makes it really crucial now to have multi or inter-disciplinary research teams in a knowledge society.

However, the universities and policy-makers have not yet overcome past experience. The department or faculty structure of most universities reflects the classification of science rooted in the 19th century; the traditional organisation is not innovative enough and not rational enough either in terms of the use of resources (cf. splitting the teaching of the same fundamental disciplines in the earliest stages of various health related study programs). Organizational reform at institutional level must reflect a new epistemology. Curricula should build bridges between humanities and natural sciences. Content reform is needed if institutions are to be responsive to the needs of society.

Chapter 3. The follow-up structure

The first two chapters of this report have outlined the possible content of future Bologna Process cooperation. This third chapter will deal with the follow-up structure needed to support this cooperation, as requested by Ministers at their meeting in London:

We ask BFUG as a whole to consider further how the EHEA might develop after 2010 and to report back to the next ministerial meeting in 2009. This should include proposals for appropriate support structures, bearing in mind that the current informal collaborative arrangements are working well and have brought about unprecedented change.

(London Communiqué, paragraph 4.3)

In line with this request, BFUG will ultimately have to make concrete proposals concerning appropriate support structures but the precise nature of those proposals will of course depend very much on the goals that will be set for the development of the EHEA after 2010. The following text therefore is not so much a draft chapter of the report but should rather be seen as background information for the discussion to be held at the Sarajevo BFUG meeting.

Present support structures

Since 1999, Ministers have met every two years to assess progress made and to decide on new steps to be taken. The follow-up structure supporting the process in-between those ministerial meetings has emerged gradually; the arrangement as it exists now, was agreed upon by Ministers at their meeting in 2003 in Berlin (see quote of the Berlin Communiqué below). In 2005, Education International Pan-European structure (EI), ENQA and UNICE (now BUSINESSEUROPE) were accepted as additional consultative members of the Bologna Follow-up Group.

Berlin Communiqué

Ministers entrust the implementation of all the issues covered in the Communiqué, the overall steering of the Bologna Process and the preparation of the next ministerial meeting to a Follow-up Group, which shall be composed of the representatives of all members of the Bologna Process and the European Commission, with the Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE, ESIB and UNESCO/CEPES as consultative members. This group, which should be convened at least twice a year, shall be chaired by the EU Presidency, with the host country of the next Ministerial Conference as vice-chair.

A Board also chaired by the EU Presidency shall oversee the work between the meetings of the Follow-up Group. The Board will be composed of the chair, the next host country as vice-chair, the preceding and the following EU Presidencies, three participating countries elected by the Follow-up Group for one year, the European Commission and, as consultative members, the Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE and ESIB. The Follow-up Group as well as the Board may convene ad hoc working groups as they deem necessary.

The overall follow-up work will be supported by a Secretariat which the country hosting the next Ministerial Conference will provide.

In its first meeting after the Berlin Conference, the Follow-up Group is asked to further define the responsibilities of the Board and the tasks of the Secretariat.

The BFUG in Rome on 14 November 2003 reacted to this request by Ministers and further defined the responsibilities of Board and Secretariat (for details see Annexes 2-4).

Collective ownership based on informal cooperation and partnership

The main advantage of the Bologna Process and the present support structures is that they enable the key stakeholders to work together as partners. The present arrangement creates a sense of collective ownership among ministers (and ministries) as well as higher education institutions, students and staff.

EUA, EURASHE, ESU, Education International, ENQA and BUSINESSEUROPE, together with European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES, have greatly contributed to the process of policy formulation and also play an important role in facilitating the implementation of the Bologna Process reforms.

Another element of the present support structures that is often mentioned as strength (not least in the London Communiqué) is their relatively informal character, which further increases the sense of engagement and ownership among all participants.

Specific advantages of the current arrangements and issues arising

Membership

In terms of membership, the Bologna Process currently has two categories: members (the 46 countries and the European Commission) and consultative members. To become a member of the Bologna Process, countries have to be party of the European Cultural Convention and to declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education. For the criteria for consultative membership see Annex 5.

BFUG introduced the additional category of "BFUG partner" for organisations that wished to be involved more closely with the Bologna Process but were not interested in or not eligible for consultative membership (for the criteria see also Annex 5).

Issues arising:

In practice, being a BFUG partner essentially means receiving information about Bologna Seminars. Given that this information (as well as more general information about the Bologna Process) is widely available, the category of BFUG partnership becomes meaningless.

In recent years, a number of countries that were not eligible for membership have expressed interest in joining the Bologna Process. It has therefore been suggested to develop a category of "privileged partner" for countries interested in close cooperation with the Bologna Process. It does, however, not seem feasible to define meaningful categories and criteria for such privileged partnership.

- Should the category of BFUG partner be abolished?
- To keep the process manageable, it is recommended to confirm the present criteria for membership and consultative membership.
- Should alternative mechanisms of cooperation and contact be devised for countries not eligible for membership (such as policy dialogue on specific topics or information visits)?

Ministerial meetings

Ministers responsible for higher education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process meet on a regular basis (currently every two years) to assess progress made, to decide on new steps to be taken and to set priorities for the period leading to the

following ministerial conference. These meetings play an important role in overseeing the implementation and maintaining the momentum of the process but also allow Ministers to react to new challenges.

Issues arising:

Implementation as well as a serious assessment thereof takes time, as does the development of new policy proposals. Therefore, the question has been raised whether a two-year period as interval between the ministerial meetings is not too short.

- Should Ministers meet every three years rather than every two years?

Chairing the process

The Bologna Process is currently chaired by the country holding the EU Presidency, which rotates every six months. This means the EU Presidency country chairs and usually also hosts the meetings of Bologna Follow-up Group and Board, oversees the work in-between those meetings and represents the Bologna Follow-up Group at international events.

Issues arising:

The rotation every six months allows several countries to play their part, which in turn contributes to the dynamism of the process. Another advantage of the present arrangement is that there is a close connection between Bologna agenda and EU agenda. The disadvantage is that only EU countries have the possibility to chair the Process, and BFUG and Board meetings in particular.

- Should the current arrangement be maintained?
- What might be the impact of the Lisbon Treaty, which is currently being ratified by EU countries and which might lead to a different rotation system within the EU?
- Should a new mechanism be introduced (e.g. elections) to make all 46 countries eligible, possibly also involving European Commission and consultative members? How would the necessary funding be secured?
- Could co-chairing by two or more countries and/or organisations be a solution?

Bologna Follow-up Group

The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) oversees the Bologna Process between the ministerial meetings and meets at least once every six months, usually for one-and-a-half days. The BFUG has the possibility to set up working groups to deal with specific topics in more detail and also receives input from Bologna Seminars.

Issues arising:

- How can a close link be maintained between working groups and seminars on the one hand and BFUG on the other?
- What can be done to ensure active and continuous involvement of all 46 countries not only in ministerial conferences but also in BFUG meetings, working groups and seminars?

Board

The Board, which currently comprises 9 countries, the European Commission and 4 consultative members (see quote from Berlin Communiqué above), normally meets once before each BFUG meeting to assist Chair and Secretariat with preparing the BFUG agenda and other meeting documents.

Issues arising:

Given the democratic nature of the Bologna Process, and also in view of maintaining a wide-spread commitment and sense of ownership, continuous efforts have been made

to avoid that discussions at the Board, which only involve a small number of countries, foreclose discussions or even decisions at BFUG level.

Since the “troika” countries (past, present and future EU Presidencies) are by definition EU countries and EU countries can also candidate for the three places of elected Board members as well as for the place of host and vice-chair, non-EU countries risk being underrepresented.

- Could a more light-weight and also more transparent structure comprising only two levels be an alternative to the current three-level structure with BFUG, Board and Secretariat?

Secretariat

The central task of the Bologna Secretariat is to support the work of the Bologna Follow-up Group at four levels: seminar, working group, Board and BFUG. The Secretariat prepares draft agendas, drafts reports, notes and minutes and carries out the practical preparation for meetings as requested by the Chair. It is also at the disposal of the Chair to assist in its tasks of finding compromise solutions, coordinating work and summing up situations. While the Chair of the Bologna Process rotates every six months, the Secretariat provides continuity in proceedings.

Another task of the Secretariat that has become increasingly important is to provide up-to-date and reliable information about the Bologna Process (for both a European and a non-European audience) and to maintain an electronic archive. To fulfil those functions, the Secretariat makes use of the Bologna website as central tool.

Finally, the Bologna Secretariat is tasked to prepare the following ministerial conference. Up to now, the Bologna Secretariat has been provided by the country/countries hosting the following ministerial meeting, which led to a full rotation every two years. Seconding national experts has been a possibility that so far has not been used (see Annex 2).

Issues arising:

Since its primary function is to serve the Bologna Follow-up Group, the Bologna Secretariat should be neutral. This might be best achieved by way of transnational composition. Since the Bologna Secretariat also needs to prepare the following ministerial conference, the host country/countries should of course be represented.

In light of the discussion on possibly expanding the period between two ministerial meetings to three years and also taking into account the growing expectations vis-à-vis the Bologna Secretariat, it appears all the more sensible to pool resources and to involve several countries.

The currently practiced rotation of Host and Secretariat also allows involving several countries and contributes to the dynamism of the Bologna Process.

For reasons of efficiency, continuity and increased visibility, it has been suggested that a permanent Bologna website be set up. This would first of all require a permanent address but also continuous maintenance (by both IT experts and Bologna experts) and the necessary funding. It does, however, not preclude a rotation of responsibility, as long as certain continuity in terms of structure and content (especially with regard to the archives) is maintained.

In the context of the global dimension, it has also been proposed that the Bologna Secretariat be mandated to provide information on the EHEA specifically targeted at non-EHEA countries, which should include providing appropriate information on the EHEA website as well as facilitating coordinated information visits to and from non-EHEA countries.

- Should the Bologna Secretariat be tasked with maintaining a permanent Bologna website, including an electronic archive as well as information specifically targeted at non-EHEA countries?
- Should the Bologna Secretariat be mandated to facilitate coordinated information visits to and from non-EHEA countries (which would also include maintaining a database of European experts on various topics)?
- Which arrangement would be most appropriate for the Bologna Secretariat to best fulfil its three main functions of BFUG support, information/archive, and conference preparation? How could the necessary balance between continuity, shared responsibility and dynamism be best achieved?

Again, when developing concrete proposals on support structures, BFUG should take into account the envisaged development of the EHEA after 2010 (or rather 2009) and the goals to be achieved with continued cooperation. Which support structures can be considered to be "appropriate" as requested by the London Communiqué, ultimately depends very much on the purpose these structures are to serve.

**Recommendations
from the working group on
European Higher Education in a Global Setting
concerning the issue of cooperation based on partnership**

At its meeting in Brdo, 13-14 March 2008, with a view to applications of countries outside the geographical scope of the EHEA, BFUG asked the working group on European Higher Education in a global setting to prepare a proposal on the issue of cooperation based on partnership, including partnership arrangements, for the extraordinary meeting in Sarajevo.

The working group, at its meeting on 28 May 2008, noted the growing interest in the Bologna Process among countries outside of Europe, which in some cases has extended to applications for accession by countries that are not eligible for membership under the present criteria.

The working group did not find viable alternative criteria for membership, nor did it consider it feasible to define a different status or different categories for countries that expressed interest but were not eligible for membership. Nevertheless, the working group recognised the importance of devising mechanisms for contacts and cooperation with countries that express an interest in the Bologna Process.

In line with that, the working group therefore came up with the following recommendations:

1. It is proposed to confirm the present criteria for membership and consultative membership.
2. Cooperation mechanisms should be devised to further cooperation with countries that have indicated an interest in the Process but are not eligible for membership. These mechanisms should be of mutual benefit and can include the following:
 - Policy dialogue on specific topics, such as quality assurance, recognition, student involvement, governance etc.
 - Invitations to participate in Bologna-related conferences, seminars and other events;
 - Invitations to contribute to Bologna working groups where appropriate
3. In order to avoid duplication of structures and efforts, it is suggested that creative ways be found to make optimal use of existing EU policy fora (e.g. ASEM or EULAC).
4. The Bologna Secretariat should be mandated to provide information on the EHEA specifically targeted at non-EHEA countries, which should include providing appropriate information on the EHEA website as well as facilitating coordinated information visits to and from non-EHEA countries.
5. With information on the EHEA being widely available, the category of BFUG partnership becomes meaningless. European NGOs with relevant higher education activities should be invited to Bologna-related events as appropriate.
6. Embassies of EHEA countries, promotion offices, EU delegations should be equipped to be able to provide adequate information on the European Higher Education Area.
7. An offer should be made to contribute an analysis of the development of the EHEA to the UNESCO world conference on higher education in Paris in July 2009.

***Italian Presidency of
the Bologna Follow-up***

BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP

***Responsibilities of the Board - Tasks of the Secretariat
Final document approved by the members of the BFUG
during the meeting in Rome, the 14th November 2003***

"Ministers entrust the implementation of all the issues covered in the Communiqué, the overall steering of the Bologna Process and the preparation of the next ministerial meeting to a Follow-up Group... 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 which the country hosting the next ministerial Conference will provide. In its first meeting after the Berlin Conference, the Follow-up Group is asked to further define the responsibilities of the Board and the tasks of the Secretariat." (Berlin Communiqué, 19 September 2003).

Preamble

The main purpose of the Bologna Follow-up Group consists in raising the general awareness of the Bologna principles and in promoting the widest participation in the Bologna Process of all actors in Higher Education.

In order to achieve this, the process must be open, participatory and inclusive, while at the same time, generating debate and awareness. The full involvement of member countries must be encouraged at all stages, as each decides on the most appropriate means - legislative or otherwise - for implementing the objectives of the Bologna Process. Equally, the support of all of the partners in Higher Education is central to the realisation of these objectives. However, the genuine commitment to the process can only be maintained through a bottom-up approach, which will also preserve the progress achieved to date and improve it furthermore.

In the last few years, the Bologna Process has gained momentum and enlarged its boundaries in a way, which could not have been foreseen by its "founding fathers". The scale of involvement is such that this process can no longer function without a permanent support structure. However, such a structure needs not be large or excessively bureaucratic. On the other hand, it must be capable of dealing with complex or multifaceted issues, while allowing for flexibility of procedures and approach.

Against this background, the members of the Bologna Follow-up Group, during the meeting of 14 November 2003 in Rome, approved the following:

Responsibilities of the Board of the Bologna Follow-up Group

The Board supports the Bologna Follow-up Group in its activities and has the mandate to provide efficiency to the management of the Bologna Process, assuring at the same time its continuity. As such, the responsibilities of the Board consist of co-ordinating and monitoring the effective implementation of the work programme.

The following list, which is not exhaustive, illustrates the scope of this responsibility:

- overseeing the preparation of the next Ministerial Conference by means of supporting and coordinating the realisation of the Bologna events, as described and listed in the work programme 2003-2005;
- providing support and assistance to new members as they seek to meet the objectives of the Bologna Process and, at the same time, looking after the effective participation of representatives of the candidate countries in the Bologna events;
- maintaining contacts with ENQA as it undertakes the work defined in the Berlin Communiqué;
- co-ordinating actions for the preparation of the stocktaking exercise for 2005;
- organising Working Groups composed by BFUG members and/or experts on special issues decided by the BFUG.

The BFUG may also delegate to the Board tasks it deems appropriate and necessary to achieve the objectives of the Bologna Process.

In line with these responsibilities, the Board shall prepare issues for the BFUG. If urgent decisions have to be taken on specific matters, the Board will consult through e-mail the BFUG members before taking any decision.

Tasks of the Secretariat of the Bologna Follow-up Group

General mandate

The tasks of the Secretariat will include:

- administrative and operational aspects associated with the next Ministerial Conference, including the setting up of a web site;
- secretarial functions as directed by the BFUG and the Board;
- execution, under specific mandate from the BFUG or the Board, of special tasks concerning the implementation of the work programme
- function of reference point for information on the Bologna Process and the activities of the Bologna Follow-up Group.

The Secretariat is made up by persons of the Country hosting the next Ministerial Conference. There is also the possibility to second national experts to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat is under the authority of the Chair of the BFUG while, as to the administrative aspects, it is

responsible to the Country hosting the next Ministerial Conference.

Additional mandate for the present Secretariat

The Secretariat is organised as a special section within the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and operates under the administrative rules of the Ministry. Tasks performed under a mandate from the BFUG/Board will be reported back to the BFUG/Board.

ROLE OF SECRETARIAT: PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE 2005-2007

1. BACKGROUND

When the Bologna Secretariat was first established following the Berlin meeting of Ministers, the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) discussed and agreed its role and function. The proposals for the Secretariat were agreed at the BFUG Meeting in Rome in November 2003 (for further information please see BFUG paper 1 3 from the meeting).

2. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

For the period July 2005 until June 2007 we are proposing that the role and function of the Bologna Secretariat should continue along the same lines as the Norwegian Bologna Secretariat, as agreed at the BFUG meeting in Rome.

The primary functions of the Secretariat will therefore be:

- to provide administrative and operational support for the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) and its Board – including planning meetings; preparing papers; and minute-taking
- to assist the BFUG and its Board in the follow-up work for the period July 2005 to June 2007 – including planning of activities and following up on BFUG decisions; supporting Bologna Working Groups and carrying out any special tasks concerning the implementation of the work programme
- to maintain the Bologna Secretariat website and archives
- to act as an external and internal contact point for the Process
- to provide representation at external events

3. METHOD OF OPERATION

We will provide first draft agendas for BFUG meetings for decision by the BFUG Chair on which items are to be included for discussion. We will coordinate and provide discussion documents, liaising with relevant authors as appropriate. We will circulate Invitation, Agenda & relevant papers. We will take responsibility for practical arrangements for meetings in consultation with Chair. We will draft minutes of meetings for clearance by Chair and circulate minutes for comment and subsequent adoption by BFUG/Board at next meeting.

We will provide Secretariat support for each Bologna Working Group Meeting and carry out any special tasks. We will also coordinate follow up work, including monitoring of progress against work programme through on going liaison with appropriate parties. This will include attending Bologna seminars and other events, where appropriate.

We will maintain the website ensuring that up to date information is made available at all times.

4. WE ARE

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ROLE OF THE BOLOGNA SECRETARIAT: TERMS OF REFERENCE 2007-2009

1. BACKGROUND

When the Bologna Secretariat was first established following the Berlin meeting of Ministers, the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) discussed and agreed its role and function. The proposals for a Secretariat were agreed at the BFUG Meeting in Rome in November 2003 (for further information please see document BFUG1_3 from the meeting).

2. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

For the period July 2007 until June 2009 the role and function of the Bologna Secretariat will continue along the same lines as the Norwegian Bologna Secretariat, as agreed at the BFUG meeting in Rome (November 2003), and the UK Bologna Secretariat, as agreed at the BFUG meeting in Manchester (October 2005). The primary function of the Secretariat will therefore be to provide neutral support to further the Bologna Process under the authority of the Chair of the BFUG.

More specifically, the functions include:

- to provide administrative and operational support for the BFUG and its Board – including planning meetings; preparing papers; and minute-taking
- to assist the BFUG and its Board in the follow-up work for the period July 2007 to June 2009 – including planning of activities and following up on BFUG decisions; supporting Bologna working groups and carrying out any special tasks concerning the implementation of the work programme
- to maintain the Bologna Secretariat website and archives
- to act as an external and internal contact point for the Process
- to provide representation at external events

3. METHOD OF OPERATION

We will provide first draft agendas for BFUG meetings for decision by the BFUG Chair on which items are to be included for discussion. We will coordinate and provide discussion documents, liaising with relevant authors as appropriate. We will circulate invitation, agenda & relevant papers. We will send messages on practical arrangements for meetings in consultation with the Chair, and during meetings we could take responsibility for practical arrangements, if necessary. We will draft minutes of meetings for clearance by the Chair and circulate the minutes for comment and subsequent adoption by BFUG/Board at the next meeting.

We will provide Secretariat support for each Bologna working group and carry out any special tasks. We will also coordinate the follow up work, including monitoring of progress against the work programme through ongoing liaison with appropriate parties. This will include attending Bologna seminars and other events, where appropriate.

We will maintain the website ensuring that up to date information is made available at all times. Moreover we will turn the website into an information instrument for a wider public than the BFUG.

4. WE ARE

Marlies Leegwater	(Head of Secretariat)
Marie-Anne Persoons	(General coordinator)
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NEW CONSULTATIVE MEMBERS AND BFUG PARTNERS

1. BACKGROUND

In its meeting 1-2 March 2005, the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) adopted the following criteria for consultative members and for BFUG Partners:

1.1. Added value to the Bologna Process

Present consultative members are either inter-governmental organisations active in higher education or organisations representing higher education institutions or students. Any new consultative member or partner of the BFUG should give the process an added value, meaning that their contribution should be relevant to the work of the BFUG.

1.1.1 Additional criteria on added value for new consultative members

Any new consultative members should also meet the following criteria:

- their contribution cannot be easily covered by an existing consultative member;
- cooperation with the BFUG may not be better covered at another level.

1.2. Relevance of the stakeholder group

Organisations that may contribute to stronger links between higher education and the labour market are relevant to the Process. Organisations that may contribute to stronger links between higher education and other educational fields may also be relevant.

Organisations representing special professions do not match the BFUG, which deals with *general* principles and structures in higher education.

- Organisations should have higher education as a central field of interest.
- The stakeholder group should be relevant to the principles, action lines and goals of the Bologna Process.

1.3. Representativeness

A new consultative member or a partner should not be a sub-organisation of a member or consultative member of the Bologna Follow-up Group.

1.3.1 Additional criteria on representativeness for new consultative members

Any new consultative member should:

- be the most representative organisation in its field of interest,
- be a European organisation, or a European branch of an organisation,
- accept organisations from all the Bologna member states as full members,
- have full members from no less than 50 % of the Bologna countries,
- have full members from countries outside the EU/EEA and EU candidate countries.

1.4. Organisational form

A new consultative member or a partner should either be a non-governmental organisation (NGO) or an inter-governmental organisation.

1.4.1 Additional criteria on organisational form for new consultative members

Its mandate should reflect its relevance to the Bologna Process and its right to give an opinion on behalf of its members on matters relating to the Bologna Process.

1.5. Procedures

Potential new consultative members should send an application to the Secretariat of the BFUG, documenting that they satisfy the listed criteria for consultative members. The Secretariat will place the application on the agenda of the BFUG, which will advise Ministers. Decisions are made by the Ministerial Conference.

Relevant organisations may be accepted by the BFUG as BFUG Partners, provided they satisfy the listed criteria for such partnership.