

BFUG Work Plan 2009-2012

Input received by 21/08/2009

Introduction

In the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, the Ministers responsible for higher education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process identified the following higher education priorities for the coming decade:

- social dimension: equitable access and completion;
- lifelong learning;
- employability;
- student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education;
- education, research and innovation;
- international openness;
- mobility;
- data collection;
- multidimensional transparency tools;
- funding.

Strong efforts will be required, especially at national and institutional levels, to make progress in all those areas. To assess the progress made with the implementation of each of the priority areas as well as the “old” action lines (e.g. quality assurance and recognition), stocktaking will be further refined and combined with the joint data collection efforts of Eurostat and Eurostudent, in cooperation with Eurydice.

Specific tasks assigned to the BFUG for the period 2009-2012 (paragraph 26)

To take forward the priorities at European level, the Ministers entrusted the BFUG

“to prepare a work plan up to 2012 to take forward the priorities identified in this Communiqué and the recommendations of the reports submitted to this Ministerial conference, allowing the future integration of the outcome of the independent assessment of the Bologna Process.

In particular the BFUG is asked:

- *To define the indicators used for measuring and monitoring mobility and the social dimension in conjunction with the data collection;*
- *To consider how balanced mobility could be achieved within the EHEA;*
- *To monitor the development of the transparency mechanisms and to report back to the 2012 ministerial conference;*
- *To set up a network, making optimal use of existing structures, for better information on and promotion of the Bologna Process outside the EHEA;*
- *To follow-up on the recommendations of analysis of the national action plans on recognition” (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, par. 26).*

As a first step towards setting up the work plan, the document sent to BFUG for electronic consultation listed the **specific tasks assigned by the Ministers to the BFUG** for the period of 2009-2012 as well as the activities launched in the previous work period, the continuation of which had already been agreed.

As indicated above, progress needs of course to be made in **all priority areas** identified by the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué and it will be the task of the Stockholm BFUG to agree on the appropriate follow-up actions for each priority area.

The BFUG will therefore have to address two questions:

- Are the follow-up actions proposed appropriate to address the tasks assigned to BFUG in paragraph 26?
- Which other follow-up actions are needed to take further the priorities identified by the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué?

The work plan agreed upon at the Stockholm meeting will not be carved in stone but remain open for adjustments and additions after the 2010 Ministerial Conference in order to take into account the results of the independent assessment and any new orientations that will be given by the Ministers.

While in the end the work plan will focus on working groups (in the widest sense of the term) and reporting, any seminars or conferences that are relevant to the Bologna Process will be listed separately in a calendar of events that will be regularly updated and published on the Bologna website. The "roadmap" for drafting the Budapest/Vienna Declaration can be found in a third document.

Task assigned to BFUG in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué	Proposed follow-up action	Expressed interest in	
		acting as chair	participating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To define the indicators used for measuring and monitoring mobility and the social dimension in conjunction with the data collection (par. 26, bullet 1) ➤ To prepare an integrated report (by 2012) on the progress of the implementation of the Bologna Process, combining a refined stocktaking with the joint data collection by Eurostat and Eurostudent, in cooperation with Eurydice. (par. 27) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working group on implementation of the Bologna Process ➤ With subgroups on (balanced) mobility, social dimension, and refined stocktaking <p><i>Under general supervision of the BFUG, this group will work towards a joint report, coordinating and integrating the different data collection exercises and information sources on the implementation of the Bologna Process in the different countries, using common definitions and indicators.</i></p>	<p>Latvia (ready to chair the WG on implementation or alternatively a sub-group on the „refined stocktaking“ within a larger group on Bologna process implementation)</p> <p>Luxembourg (proposed draft terms of reference, see annex 1)</p> <p>Spain (chair or co-chair)</p>	<p>Armenia, Austria, Belgium/Flemish Community, Czech Republic (on indicators), France, Germany, Ireland (on social dimension), Montenegro, Netherlands (special interest in data on mobility and social dimension), Norway, Switzerland (indicators for measuring and monitoring mobility and the social dimension), UK/Scotland, Turkey, BUSINESSEUROPE, EI, ESU, (EUA)</p>
<p><u>Czech Republic:</u> We suggest to establish an ad hoc expert group on indicators For work on indicators on mobility and social dimension we suggest to work also with the recent publication prepared by the Centre for educational policy (Charles University) - see http://www.strediskovzdelavacipolitiky.info/ For data collection - we think we need the professional work of Eurostat and Eurostudent or Eurydice experts</p>			

We need a WG on Stocktaking benefiting from the ad hoc group results and from data collection.

And afterwards a small WG which prepares one joint concise report – possibly consisting of chairs/ representatives from previous structures in this item

Germany: As general comments we would like to point out that the task of the implementation working group seems to be a rather large one. Therefore it might be helpful to discuss at the BFUG-meeting in Stockholm the issue of subgroups.

Netherlands: Removing obstacles for mobility. Before further indicating our participation on the balanced mobility working group, we would like to know in which working group this will be dealt with. Is this in the data-collection working group or the working group on balanced mobility?

Norway: Norway has participated in all the previous stocktaking working groups. We believe that transfer of experience from the previous stocktaking working groups is important to the work of this new working group, and so we hope and believe we may contribute to this working group with our experience from the previous stocktaking exercises.

Spain: Social Dimension is one the themes that we will enhance during the Spanish Presidency and we will work in this subject since September.

European Commission:

1. An integrated report by 2012 on the progress of implementing Bologna

The Bologna Process is awash with reports, many of them providing overlapping information. In addition to the reports produced by stakeholder organisations and providing stakeholder perspectives (in particular *Trends* and *Bologna with Student Eyes*), there are also the reports established by the BFUG itself within the Bologna process framework. Most prominent of these is the official Stocktaking report, but in addition there are reports of subgroups established by the BFUG, including for the first time in 2009 a comprehensive study of *Key Indicators on the Social Dimension and Mobility* provided by Eurostat and Eurostudent (commissioned at the previous London 2007 Conference). And there are also Eurydice reports on higher education published for each Bologna Ministerial Conference.

This abundance of reports affects the content of the Ministerial Conferences as well as reduces the impact of each report. Organisations that have invested considerable effort and resources in producing a report hope that it will be presented to Ministers but this can lead to overcrowded conference programming, and insufficient time for Ministerial debate.

This is why the Leuven Communiqué (paragraph 27) hints that the future Stocktaking process should be better streamlined. Indeed it is mentioned that: "Stocktaking will further refine its evidence-based methodology" and "Eurostat together with Eurostudent and in cooperation with Eurydice" will be asked to contribute to this reporting through relevant data collection. "The work of reporting will be overseen by the Bologna Follow-up Group and will lead to an overall report integrating the aforementioned sources for the 2012 ministerial conference".

This Communiqué paragraph raises the major question of how this new overall Stocktaking report should be conceived and produced.

Several elements should be considered:

- The present Stocktaking report has a number of acknowledged limitations linked to the fact that it is based on government self reporting but aims at objective comparative judgment. In other words, the "scorecard effect" can create a bias that counteracts "objective national reporting" by providing an incentive to governments to present certain issues in the best light possible.
- The BFUG should maintain overall responsibility for the Stocktaking report. It could provide a Steering Committee whose role would be to advise on issues to tackle and to act as a sounding board in the development of the report, for example, rather than delegating BFUG members to be involved in the drafting of the report. Such a new role for the BFUG would be very similar to that of the BFUG Board with regard to the EU funded "independent assessment of Bologna".
- While the overall objective of the Stocktaking report should continue to assess progress towards defined objectives, the scorecard approach could be limited to issues where there is clear and verifiable evidence. "Ranking" of more "opinion-based" issues should be avoided.
- While the report should be a joint report of the collaborating organisations, it would make sense for one organisation to have overall coordinating responsibility. The Commission thinks that Eurydice would be well suited to act as technical coordinator for the report, working closely together with Eurostat and Eurostudent. This would of course mean that the future Stocktaking Report would also replace the "Focus on Higher Education" reports.
- So far, a working group of the BFUG dedicated to data collection supervised the development of indicators to measure mobility and social dimensions. In the Leuven Communiqué, the BFUG is asked "To define the indicators used for measuring and monitoring mobility and the social dimension in conjunction with the data collection". This is clearly related to the Stocktaking report. The BFUG will have to decide on how the sharing of tasks should be organised, including data providers and the proposed technical coordinator.

2. Stakeholders' reports

The Commission has, since the beginning of the Bologna Process, provided funding for the "Trends" reports, reflecting the institutional perspective, and since 2005 also for "Bologna with student eyes". Both reports have yielded very valuable information that complemented and completed the findings of the Stocktaking Report.

However, in the interest of reducing the large number of reports, thereby increasing the visibility and impact of future reports, the Commission would like to propose merging "Trends" and "Bologna with Student Eyes" into one stakeholders report from 2010 onwards – that is if both EUA and ESU are interested in continuing with this exercise.

EI would like to suggest the Terms of Reference for this group include the definitions of the social dimension and mobility that have been agreed on during earlier phases of the Bologna Process, which need to be used and built on.

ESU: General comments: We salute the intention to coordinate the efforts of data collection and stocking exercises, while making full use of the experience provided by partners such as Eurostat and Eurostudent. However, the final scope of the working group is indeed quite broad - preparing a report on the implementation of the overall Bologna Process. If this report is to be comprehensive, it will surely need the input of other working structures, tackling some of the topics missing in the current proposal, such as: social dimension, employability, student centered learning, the link between higher education and research etc.

Concrete proposals: ESU would like to join the working group, in light of our continuous work to incentivise the implementation of the Bologna Process and to measure its success through students' eyes within all the editions of the Bologna With Students' Eyes Survey. Also, we would like to suggest that the Terms of reference prioritise the areas to be tackled, since it will be quite difficult to touch upon all Bologna action lines with the same insight. As already indicated by paragraph 26, bullet 1 of the Leuven/ Louvain la Neuve communiqué, mobility and social dimension would be the primary foci, starting from the work already carried within the BFUG structures and the definition agreed by the ministers in various ministerial communiqués.

EUA proposes a separate working group on indicators to measure and monitor progress in mobility and the social dimension: Although the Communiqué does mention both indicators for mobility and the social dimension, and also asks for an integrated report of stocktaking and data collection by 2012, EUA does not share the analysis that both activities need to be done simultaneously. The definition of indicators and the collection of corresponding data is a long term project, and it will not yield results by 2012. Therefore a working group on mobility and social dimension indicators with a concise mandate seems more practical than a overall 'Working Group on implementation of the Bologna process' or a 'Working Group on balanced mobility'.

ON THE SOCIAL DIMENSION:

Czech Republic: The last issue with which we fight more or less successfully is the **social dimension**. In the Communiqué there is: *Each participating country will set measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in higher education, to be reached by the end of the next decade.* (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, II. Learning for the future: higher education priorities for the decade to come, para 9). We should say how we deal with it. There should be a **sum up (analysis) of the national "measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in higher education"** and it could be stressed that social dimension will have a prominent part in reporting – stocktaking, data collection etc.

ESU: General comments: Although they are a clear measure of political commitment, only benchmarks in the social dimension will not lead to the goals ministers set up within the Leuven/ Louvain la Neuve communiqué. Benchmarks can show us where we want to go, but not how we want to go there. ESU strongly feels that if we do not continue the work on how we want to go incentivize the national work on social dimension between 2009 and 2012, there will be even greater problems to reach the national benchmarks. This we surely cannot afford. Therefore we need to have a working group that has the aim to look into good practice all around Europe and share this expertise and the diverse national experiences within the BFUG. Furthermore, this work should be undertaken in parallel and complementary with the data collection/stocktaking working group in order to feed into the work on creating benchmarks. This approach would improve the way the benchmarks are formulated, since we would set up a connection to the practical work that has already been undertaken, through which one would also be able to identify where big problems are and what "traps" or "mistakes" have been done before when trying to set benchmarks or measure success. In this manner, we would avoid measuring something which actually does not show what we are looking for and which grassroot practitioners already know about. Another role of such a working group would also be able to support countries in improving their national action plans for the social dimension and point to areas which could be prioritised or actions that could be possible to use to address a specific problem identified by a certain country. Their work could serve as a basis for "working seminars" or for projects of different kinds. The working group should not be there to blame or shame any country, but should be there to support all countries in the EHEA to share good practice in the area and together move forward towards the situation all ministers have indicated that they want to have. We know that all countries have problems,

no matter what region in Europe they come from and it is clear that the political commitment is there, but the way to achieve equitable HE systems is not always straightforward.

Concrete proposals: ESU suggests the creation of a social dimension WG, complementary to the work on the implementation of the Bologna Process and perhaps encompassing the NESSIE network as a component. The SD WG is highly needed looking at the serious difficulties encountered to design and implement strategies for achieving equitable HE systems across the EHEA countries and the priority of this action line given by ministers when deciding the next decade Bologna Process in Leuven/ Louvain la Neuve.

Task assigned to BFUG in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué	Proposed follow-up action	Expressed interest in	
		acting as chair	participating
➤ To consider how balanced mobility could be achieved within the EHEA (par. 26, bullet 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Subgroup of the working group on implementation (see above) ➤ Seminar organised by DAAD, prepared by expert group and questionnaire (annex 2) 		Armenia, Austria, Belgium/French Community, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Spain, EI, ESU, (EUA)

Belgium/French Community: Mobility of students and staff is still one of the priorities of the French Community. We have participated in the CG during the previous period and therefore we would like to continue our work with our colleagues during the period to come. However, we would like to suggest broadening the scope of the WG. Even if the Ministers have strictly asked to consider how balanced mobility could be achieved, we think that the WG should consider the new mobility opportunities in order to reach the 20% benchmark.

European Commission: The Commission is not convinced that a working group is for the time being the appropriate approach to solving this problem, given that we do not have the necessary empirical data on mobility flows. It is worth noting that the Commission is about to commission a study on mobility flows in higher education that will be ready by mid-2010. It will look into existing problems and propose solutions.

EI argues that the mandate proposed for this working group is rather limited. While work on balanced mobility is indeed needed and also indicated in the Communiqué, however, the Communiqué also indicates a need to increase the possibilities for staff and students to be mobile in order to reach the goal of 20 % mobility by 2020 (para.18-20). EI therefore thinks that the working group should work on balanced mobility in addition to working on measures to increase possibilities for mobility of staff and students (e.g. in terms of staff mobility, to ensure appropriate access to social security; to facilitate the portability of pensions and supplementary pensions rights for mobile staff.

EI also suggests that in the Terms of Reference for this working group it is stated that experts from other areas, such as immigration and social policy, are invited to be part of the work.

In addition, EI would like to inform the BFUG about its part in a stakeholder initiative regarding mobility, following on the mobility campaign EI undertook with ESU ('Let's GO') over the past two years. Given the importance ministers attached to mobility in the Leuven Communiqué and the central role mobility plays for universities, students and staff, EUA, ESU and EI decided to join forces in order to move this topic forward from a stakeholder perspective. This joint initiative will provide input to the discussion in the Bologna Follow-Up Group on the indicators for measuring mobility; develop a set of commonly agreed mobility principles; and prepare a project to test these principles.

ESU: General comments:

Balancing mobility across the European Higher Education Area is indeed a priority recognised by the ministers and also highly supported by the ESU members. But in addition to balancing mobility flows, there is still a dire need to increase and diversify the mobile student population so as to achieve the newly adopted EHEA benchmark "20% mobile graduates by 2020". In this regard, we consider that the scope of the working group needs to be much broader, looking into how to incentivize student and staff mobility, while working closely with the working group on the implementation of the Bologna Process for defining the indicators on measuring mobility, with full respect to the various contexts and possible types of mobility.

In addition, ESU would like to inform the BFUG about its part in a new stakeholder initiative regarding mobility, following on the mobility campaign ESU and EI jointly conducted at the European level ('Let's GO') over the past two years. Given the importance ministers attached to mobility in the Leuven Communiqué and the central role mobility plays for universities, students and staff, EUA, ESU and EI decided to join forces in order to move this topic forward from a stakeholder perspective. This joint initiative will provide input to the discussion in the Bologna Follow-Up Group on the indicators for measuring mobility; develop a set of commonly agreed mobility principles;

and prepare a project to test these principles.

Concrete proposals:

ESU would like to join the working group in light of its consistent work on mobility carried at both European and national levels, recently embodied in the "Let's Go!" campaign, together with EI, and currently reinforced by the new "stakeholder coalition" aimed at continuing the struggle for removing mobility obstacles.

EUA proposes a working group on mobility and social dimension indicators instead (see above); following on from the information provided by EI, EUA confirms the importance attached to its partnership with EI and ESU and to moving this topic forward from a stakeholder perspective.

Task assigned to BFUG in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué	Proposed follow-up action	Expressed interest in	
		acting as chair	participating
➤ To monitor the development of the transparency mechanisms and to report back to the 2012 ministerial conference (par. 26, bullet 3)	➤ Working group on transparency mechanisms	Belgium/Flemish Community (proposed draft terms of reference, see annex 3)	Austria, Belgium/French Community, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, UK/EWNI, European Commission, BUSINESSEUROPE, Council of Europe, EI, ESU, EUA

Belgium/French Community: The diversity is one of the main characteristics of the higher education system of the French Community, where various institutions fulfil specific missions. The Ministry and the stakeholders have been working to make this diversity even more transparent and 'understandable'. Therefore we would like to join this WG. Moreover, under the BE presidency, the French Community is likely to organise a Conference (linked with the DGHE meeting) which will include this topic.

Czech Republic: We think that before the report is prepared **there should be for example a miniseminar added to/preceding the BFUG meeting? organized for the whole BFUG**, based on expert presentations (plurality of opinions preferably), developments within EC and interim results of projects supported by EC and giving space for some discussion.

Netherlands: We would like to explicitly mention the issue of quality assurance (as there is no proposal for working group in the field of enhancing quality) in the mandate of this working group

UK/EWNI: I'm not sure it is right to call this a "working group" as it will only monitor what is happening and prepare a report for Ministers in 2012!

UK/Scotland: as the group on transparency mechanisms has been tasked "to monitor the development of" these, it should be described as a Monitoring Group and not a Working Group.

ESU: General comments:

As indicated in the draft BFUG workplan, the ministers agreed in Leuven "to monitor the development of the transparency mechanisms and to report back to the 2012 ministerial conference". Looking at the character of the work to be carried, we believe that a Coordination Group structure would be more appropriate. The main characteristic of coordination groups is that this type of structures are created with the aim of monitoring and synthesizing developments and not necessarily aiming to create new knowledge on the topic. Looking at the direction of the last ministerial meeting debates, it is clear that there is no overall agreed ministerial desire or unequivocal statement pointing out to anything more than summarizing the existing developments and reporting back, which is in fact why we are suggesting to rescale the working group on transparency mechanisms to a coordination group.

Concrete proposals:

We suggest the set up a coordination group on multidimensional transparency tools, instead of a working group on transparency mechanisms, so as to respect the principles and the wording in paragraph 22 of the Leuven/ Louvain la Neuve ministerial communiqué. ESU would like to join this coordination group, in light of the already accumulated experience in projects aiming at increasing the information level and HEI transparency for students, such as: the OECD AHELO feasibility study, the set up of EQAR, the first phase of the typology project etc. The directions in which these projects develop have a great influence on other areas such as policy reform, financing, institutional strategies, mobility flows etc. and therefore the students' voice is essential in the careful monitoring of these tools.

EUA: Given that the Communiqué (par. 26, bullet 3) mandates the BFUG to “monitor the development of the transparency mechanisms and to report back to the 2012 ministerial conference”, the term ‘monitoring group’ seems more adequate to that purpose.

EURASHE has taken an unbiased and holistic view on the complex issue of transparency tools and mechanisms, taking into account both the institutions’ concerns for independency and the learner’s pressing needs for information. For the same reason, we are participating in the OECD’s AHELO project on the Assessment of Learning Outcomes Project in HE. We express our intention to contribute to the work to be done in this field.

Task assigned to BFUG in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué	Proposed follow-up action	Expressed interest in	
		acting as chair	participating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To set up a network, making optimal use of existing structures, for better information on and promotion of the Bologna Process outside the EHEA (par. 26, bullet 4) ➤ To prepare the 2010 Bologna Policy Forum (par. 16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working group on the EHEA in a global context 	Austria (until July 2010) Romania (from July 2010 onwards) (proposed draft terms of reference, see annex 4)	Belgium/Flemish Community, Belgium/French Community, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Spain, European Commission, Council of Europe, EI, ESU, EUA

Norway: Norway chaired the working group on the global dimension reporting to the ministerial meeting in London in 2007, and we would very much like to continue our contribution to what we consider to be a highly important dimension of the process.

ESU: General comments:

We salute the provisions in the circulated Terms of reference towards a more concrete set of measures to foster the cooperation between EHEA and non-EHEA countries on the Bologna Process. In this regards, we would appreciate a clear reference to stakeholders’ involvement both in the set up of the network and as an integral part of the experts’ pool aimed at supporting the Bologna Secretariat. If the dialogue on the Bologna Process is to be truly effective, it needs to look beyond structural measures and high-level ministerial contact, bringing the interaction to the level of the academic communities. In this regard, the stakeholders’ role in this process is essential, as proved along the implementation of the Bologna Process in the current EHEA countries.

Concrete proposals: ESU would like to join the working group, in view of:

- The work ESU has done so far on fostering global student dialogue, with full support from UNESCO, Education International and the Council of Europe. ESU has organized in 2009, through its International Cooperation Working Group, 2 meetings of the regional student platforms around the Globe, in which the policy dialogue including Bologna Process action lines such as: social dimension, quality assurance, student centered learning, recognition etc featured prominently. As a result of this intensive work, ESU has strong relations with student platforms across all continents and is in the position of conveying the student input with regard to the international policy dialogue on the Bologna Process;
- ESU’s participation as a member in the Programme Committee of the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, as well as in the WCHE+10 communique drafting committee and as a co-chair of the Academic community panel, together with the International Association of Universities and Education International;
- ESU being a partner in trans-continental projects such as ACCESS-Africa and ACCESS-ASEAN, aimed at fostering policy dialogue on topics such equity, diploma recognition, student participation etc.

EUA: with the practical demand by ministers (par. 26, bullet 4) to set up a network for information on and promotion of the Bologna process outside the EHEA, it is clear to EUA that this activity needs a practitioner based and task force like approach.

EURASHE is requesting to join this working group, on the following argumentation:

- our past efforts and initiatives on this issue, and scheduled future projects under the programmes of the E.C. directed towards the partner countries.
- we have developed partnership agreements with other (national/regional) associations in the world (USA, Canada, Central Asia, and soon also in Indonesia and South Africa). We plan seminars in those regions in a dual effort of informing them on the ongoing HE reform process, and promoting European professional HE, in cooperation with other actors.

Task assigned to BFUG in the	Proposed follow-up action	Expressed interest in
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Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué		acting as chair	participating
➤ To follow-up on the recommendations of analysis of the national action plans on recognition (par. 26, bullet 5)	➤ Joint BFUG and ENIC-NARIC working group	Latvia	Austria, Belgium/Flemish Community, Belgium/French Community, Montenegro, Council of Europe
<p><u>Czech Republic:</u> We need to define more clearly what the “follow up” means. We need something more “formal” for recognition. We feel recognition is crucial and should not be lost in several items on the agenda of BFUG. We need a follow up to the Analysis on national action plans.</p> <p>Would a smaller group composed of ENIC/NARIC (preferably also somebody dealing with professional recognition and EU directives); BFUG and NQF correspondents (see NQF) be a possible structure? Such a group would be focused on recognition issues and be connected to WG on QF.</p>			
➤ Continued coordination at the level of the EHEA and with the EQF-LLL to facilitate the implementation of the national qualifications frameworks and their self-certification against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the EHEA by 2012 (par. 12). ➤ Exchange of experience in the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks and to facilitate self-certification of national qualifications frameworks by 2012	➤ See discussion document prepared by the Council of Europe	Council of Europe	Austria, Belgium/French Community, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands, Turkey, UK/Scotland, European Commission, ESU, EUA, EURASHE
<p>The <u>Council of Europe</u> aims to organize a meeting of national contact points for qualifications frameworks in mid-November 2009, in Strasbourg. Similar events could be organized 1 – 2 times a year in the following years.</p> <p><u>Czech Republic:</u> We believe that two things/structures could be useful: For implementation of NQFs we need common understanding and interpretation of the principles and “standards” agreed at European level when working at national level (developing relations to EU activities at one hand and on the other hand dealing with quite contradictory practices across EHEA in recognition or elaborate more the principles and criteria for self-certification which should become the “entrance ticket” into EHEA (see the Tbilisi report)). We need a network of those who work on implementation of the NQF at home. However, we have to be careful about duplicity, overlaps or even contradiction with emerging EU-EQF-LLL structures.</p> <p>1) the working group established by BFUG : The task of this WG will be “policy and standard setting” oriented. Main issues to solve (without being exhaustive list) are maintaining and developing relations to EU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the EU-EQF-LLL, including the EU-EQF structures as national contact points, Advisory board; - relationship to regulated professions (EU directives); - cooperation with EC to the development of policy and practice within the EQF-LLL, in particular with a view to helping ensure compatibility and coherence between the QF-EHEA and the EQF-LLL; <p>elaborate more on self-certification (guidelines); built on the results of ad hoc/expert group(s) take some general policy on recognition of qualifications – set of good practices We can see two options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having probably two/three focused small groups (on recognition, recognition of prior learning and NQF and on QA and NQF) and “somebody” probably again on ad hoc basis putting the results together - having a working group rather than a coordination group. Such a group should consist (preferably) from the BFUG members + QA representative + recognition representative + EC representative preferably from EU-EQF-LLL structures + NQF correspondents. Be limited in size! CoE is the chair for such a group. <p>In comparison to the coordination group from the previous period this should be more a working process. The results should be kind of methodology, “guidelines” – discussed in the BFUG</p> <p>2) Definitely we need NQF correspondents’ network. Main tasks: e.g. sharing of information, experience and (good) practice; working on the basis of everyday contact if needed; where needed/appropriate, assisting with national development; maintain the QF Bologna web-site fresh; NQF-correspondents could benefit from national cooperation with EU –EQF-LLL representatives (if they are already not part of one centre). They should contribute to discussions on concrete issues.</p>			

Netherlands: Special interest in dialogue on development of ba/ma structure all over Europe

ESU would like to continue being a part of this Coordination Group. Our work in this area focused on how to improve stakeholders' contribution to the design and implementation of qualification frameworks in EHEA countries. Concretely, ESU has run the project "Towards an EQF: a stakeholders' perspective": <http://www.esuonline.org/index.php/projects/past-projects/533-towards-an-eqf>, whose results are in the dissemination phase.

EUA: after two years of excellent work, EUA can only welcome the willingness of the Council of Europe to continue this important information sharing activity.

EURASHE would like to continue its contribution to this coordination group, on the following argumentation:

We were active in the both the LLL & QF coordination groups in the previous work plan (2007-2009), and would like to continue this work, delegating our experts to the events planned on the national level and hopefully also on the European level.

In this context it is worth noting that EURASHE has received a proposal from three countries to make a major contribution to a (proposed) Bologna seminar, namely from the Hungarian government, for a seminar on aspects of LLL (SCHE), from the Irish government for a Bologna seminar on frameworks (QF-EHEA & EQF), to be organised in Dublin next spring 2010, and finally from the Scottish government for a seminar on RPL to be held in Brussels in 2010, a follow-up of the 2008 Amsterdam Bologna seminar.

The E4 group (ENQA, EUA, EURASHE, ESU) is asked:

- To continue its cooperation in further developing the European dimension of quality assurance
- To ensure that the European Quality Assurance Register is evaluated externally, taking into account the views of the stakeholders (par. 28).

Germany: With the regard to the point quality assurance we would like to make sure that it is guaranteed in one way or other that BFUG and countries are informed regularly and have a chance to discuss developments in this field.

ESU: Within the frame of the E4 the work on QA will be continued. The E4 group will specifically ensure that the EQAR will be subject to an independent review and report back to the BFUG. Furthermore, a revision process of the ESG will be induced. Certainly, the outcome of evaluation of the EQAR can contribute to this process regarding the European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies.

EUA would like to express its willingness to promote further cooperation within the E4 Group to deliver on the tasks described in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué. The 2010 European Quality Assurance Forum is currently being prepared.

The work on the independent assessment of the Bologna Process launched in the previous period will continue until 2010

- Meeting of BFUG advisory group, Stockholm, 29 September 2009
- Validation seminar, Brussels, 1 December 2009

Presentation of final results at the Ministerial Conference, Budapest, 11 March 2010

The Network of Experts on Student Support in Europe (NESSIE) will continue

- to exchange information and
 - to assist each other in facilitating the portability of grants and loans.
- All countries and organisations participating in the Bologna Process are invited to join the Network.

The Network is currently co-chaired by Austria, Denmark, Ireland

France, Germany, Netherlands, UK/EWNI, UK/Scotland, ESU

ESU: General comments:

As a relevant event in this area, ESU is organizing its 18th European Student Convention in Stockholm, 16-19th of October, under the label of the Swedish Presidency, on the topic of social dimension with a special focus on student support services. The results of the convention will be sent to the BFUG members. We would also like to ask for the Bologna label for this event.

Concrete proposals:

ESU would like to join this network, while underlining the need that its activity should be better linked with the work of the WG on the implementation of the Bologna

Process. If a WG on Social Dimension is to be set up, we should perhaps integrate the work of the network with that of the SD WG.

Priority areas identified by the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué without specific tasks assigned to BFUG

Lifelong learning
<p><u>Armenia</u> would like to join several working groups related to the action lines identified in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué: i) life-long learning, ii) employability, iii) education, research and innovation.</p> <p>During the Belgian Presidency, the <u>Flemish Community of Belgium</u> will organise a seminar on "Quality and Transparency as Interface between Vocational Education and Training, Higher Education and Schools". The seminar will take place in Bruges on 6 December 2010.</p> <p><u>Czech Republic</u>: We think we could possibly start work on Lifelong learning not only via NQFs. [following the logic of the Communiqué, QF would be part of the LLL priority]. Having a small group which would help to prepare a discussion on LLL Charter - how to work with it, what the governments should do to support etc.? We might benefit from a kind of "<i>European standards and guidelines</i>" (as wise as we have for quality assurance) to help national systems and institutions to prepare their policies. We probably need to think how to involve employers. Next to national representatives also representatives from EUA and EURASHE as well as BusinessEurope and an enterprise (employers practitioners) should be involved.</p> <p><u>UK/Scotland</u>: We would also like to propose an event for the calendar on Recognition of Prior Learning which could form the basis for the development of an RPL network. It would be led by our colleagues in the Quality Assurance Agency for Scotland and held in Brussels, probably at the Scottish Government offices in Scotland House. The proposal, which I attach (see annex 8), has been developed by QAA Scotland along with their colleagues from The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) and the Dutch Association of Higher Education (DASHE).</p>
Employability
<p><u>Armenia</u> would like to join several working groups related to the action lines identified in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué: i) life-long learning, ii) employability, iii) education, research and innovation.</p> <p><u>Education International</u>: In particular, EI would like to refer to the issue of Employability as a particularly important one, which needs to expand its focus beyond the bachelor's degree, particularly in view of the current context we find ourselves in of the global financial and economic crisis, and the need for higher education institutions to deliver graduates, at all levels, that are highly employable and that can contribute to the post-crisis regeneration.</p> <p><u>ESU: General comments</u>: Employability is an issue of major importance for students all over Europe. ESU believes that it should be dealt with as having a double-faced meaning: from the viewpoint of society it can be understood as to develop an adequate framework for employment and from the viewpoint of the individual it can be understood as the individual being able to fulfill a task which is meaningful for society as such and to be able to earn one's living by one's own work. As such, activity on employability should aim at providing broad possibilities and flexibility in terms of structure, content, orientation and profile of study as well as allowing for various learning paths. Naturally, high quality education, a sound recognition system and further work on the realization of mobility are prerequisites for achieving overall employability.</p> <p>Concrete proposal: ESU believes that a BFUG working group should deal with this area applying the above outlined understanding of the term and would like to join such a working group.</p>
Student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education
<p><u>The Flemish Community of Belgium</u> is ready to organize a seminar on the topic of Innovative higher education/Innovation in higher education. This seminar should pay attention to the priorities 14 'Student-centred learning' and 15 'Education, Research and innovation' of the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué. What is the impact of the new concepts (student-centre learning, active learning, inquiry-based learning, undergraduate research, knowledge triangle) on the design of the curricula and on staff development? The seminar may be organized in 2010 or 2011.</p> <p><u>ESU: General comments</u>: While overarching several action lines, the issue of student and learner centered education should remain in focus in the further work on the Bologna Process and consolidate the EHEA. We consider that it is important for most working groups, including the ones on Mobility, Social Dimension and Employability, to as part of their work tackle the degree to which education is focused on the student and is empowering him or her to take a being better able to develop their own academic path.</p>

(The issue of student-centered education is important in achieving progress in most areas. For example, there can be no progress on employability unless the student that will eventually seek employment is given greater control over his or her educational achievements.) Shifting to a student-centered approach should be a priority, given the fact that it is at the base of developing a flexible, balanced and mobility-friendly education system. Giving students more control over which competences they want to attain in their educational process will enhance already existing institutional work and will help bolster all the other areas of work in the Bologna process.

Concrete Proposal: In order to collect best practices on the European level and to more carefully analyze its impact on the issue areas within Bologna ESU and EI are leading a project called Time for a New Paradigm in Education: Student Centered Learning. As to provide an effective platform for the exploration on the outcomes of this project a stakeholders' forum will be organized in October 2010 and ESU would be glad to organize this in the frame of the Bologna calendar of events.

Education, research and innovation

Armenia would like to join several working groups related to the action lines identified in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué: i) life-long learning, ii) employability, iii) education, research and innovation.

During the Belgian Presidency, the French Community of Belgium will organise a seminar on "Modernising Higher Education" in Namur on 14-15 September 2010.

ESU: General comments: As stated in the Leuven/Louvain la Neuve communiqué higher education should be based at all levels on state of the art research and development thus fostering innovation and creativity in society. In order to strengthen this link and since attractive research conditions in Europe can only be fostered with regard to the general developments within the European Higher Education Area. ESU deems it as necessary that the developments of the EHEA and of the ERA are remaining in a dialogue. The two main areas we see for this dialogue are on one hand the conditions for PhD students and early stage researchers in terms of access, supervision, status, social benefits, mobility and academic freedom and on the other hand the employability factor of doctoral education and the possibility of mobility in doctoral education and research.

Concrete proposal: ESU would welcome to see more European events organized in order to develop recommendations on how to best to optimize the link between education, research and innovation.

Funding

Armenia would like to propose a conference on the issue of funding to be held in Autumn of 2011.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS:

Armenia There are also several questions that we would like to clarify: There are ten areas identified in the Communiqué by the Ministers for the next decade while the present work-plan (2009-2012) prepared by the Secretariat is proposing working groups only on the certain action lines. Probably, it will be good to have some more explanations how and why those action lines were selected.

Another concern is whether the change of the Secretariat in 2010 will have any consequences on the work plan.

Czech Republic:

1) **The work programme was agreed as opened**, mainly elaborating direct tasks in the **Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué**. That is for the moment. **However, all 10 priorities in the Communiqué should be part of the work plan**. Some priorities might still wait for the Vienna –Budapest conference for further findings and suggestions. **We should be able to add or “tune” actions according to the results of the independent assessment and results of the Budapest-Vienna conference**. We believe that an introduction to the work plan would be useful and this should be clearly stated in the introduction to the work plan.

2) **After the Vienna-Budapest meeting (in the agreed areas already now), in all priorities there should be clearly stated what the follow up is**. It could be different: WG, CG, seminar, discussion paper, we entrust somebody, we entrust the existing structure (e.g. ENIC/NARIC) or Eurostat, Eurydice,;

If we introduce action line we should say how we proceed and what the expected outcome is (not leaving it on the group itself).

[Some possible expected outcomes - information report, evaluation report, mapping paper, expert opinion, recommendations from a seminar, recommended guidelines, data/findings provided for further work of the WG on....,etc.]

Technical note: *Not necessarily but it could be technically useful to proceed according to the 10 Communiqué priorities + add what is not exactly under their headlines. Thus the follow up for QFs will be under lifelong learning priority. This will give immediate overview what and how the priorities are covered.*

3) As a working method we suggest **to work also with relatively small “ad hoc” groups if there is a need to solve a problem** (The groups could consist of experts if relevant, of BFUG members, or BFUG members + experts, as appropriate). Such groups could work only for limited time period, be quite flexible, depending on the theme and they could serve the “bigger” WG, CG or the BFUG directly. These groups could contribute to solving important problems where expert opinion is needed, where we deal with transversal issues – just as some possible examples

- on recognition,
- and on recognition of prior learning
- on LOs methodology,
- on modes of delivery – flexible learning paths, use of IT – everything leading to more student centred attitude
- etc.

Results of such work could be useful for further work on our Bologna guidelines, methodology, reference points... for the chosen topics

Finland: In order to better structure the work as well as make better use of the outcomes of the working groups it might be useful to have a discussion at the BFUG meeting (or include the same issue in the work plan) about the procedures and roles of the working groups. We feel that BFUG should clarify how to deal with the results of different working groups. In recent years working groups have finished their work quite close to the ministerial meetings. The situation leads to question whether the WGs’ results belong to only that specific WG or to the whole BFUG? The BFUG has not had time to look closely to the input of different working groups but it has still endorsed the reports .

It is important to have a limited number of working groups. It helps focusing on the work of BFUG to the areas of priorities. We support the idea of combining the work on indicators and stocktaking to a one working group on implementation of the Bologna Process. We feel that the preparation of Bologna Policy Forums should be a task of the whole BFUG. We feel that there is need for network of experts for better information of the Bologna Process, but not necessarily a working group.

Germany: We would also like to propose two official Bologna Seminars with the titles

a) The European Dimension of Quality Assurance (see separate PDF file, annex 5)

b) Balanced Mobility (see annex 2)

More detailed descriptions of the proposals are attached.

We would also like to inform you that we intend to hold a number of international seminars which will be open to participants from all Bologna countries. The following list is preliminary and will be extended and updated as the organisation of the events goes ahead. For your information, descriptions of these events are attached as well.

a) Squaring the Circle: Diversity and Common Standards in European Master Education" (see separate PDF file, annex 6)

b) Development of the Social Dimension – Stocktaking and Future Perspectives of Student Services/Student Affairs in the European Higher Education Area (see annex 7)

c) discipline related events e.g. on law, engineering

Slovenia proposed the following approach:

1. The BFUG Chair, together with the Secretariat, should take 10 priority areas and all the specific tasks of BFUG and propose concrete follow-up action(s) for each of them.
2. Countries should then be asked to comment this proposal in writing till September. They would either agree with proposed follow-up or suggest another form of follow-up.
3. After this democratic procedure Chair and Secretariat could prepare draft programme on the basis of prevailing opinions expressed.
4. At the BFUG meeting in September we would then discuss this draft and reach an agreement on final WP.
5. After that countries would be asked to express their interest in joining or coordinating specific follow-up activities.

To be very concrete, the first proposal would look something like this:

Priorities /tasks

social dimension
lifelong learning
employability
student-centred learning

Follow-up

WG, composed of BFUG members
WG, composed of BFUG members, 2 Bologna seminars on ...
Bologna seminar, national events
expert WG

education, research and innovation
international openness
mobility, mobility indicators
data collection
multidimensional transparency tools
funding
integrated report
balanced mobility
etc.

EUA activities in the area of doctoral studies
WG, composed of BFUG members, Bologna Policy Forum, Secretariat's web site, information / promotion network
BFUG discussion, expert group, composed of ...
expert WG, composed of Eurostat, Eurostudent and Eurydice representatives
monitoring report of BFUG Secretariat
activities at national level
WG on implementation of BP, composed of BFUG members, Eurostat, Eurostudent and Eurydice representatives
Bologna seminar

Education International: EI considers this draft work plan to be a good starting point for the BFUG in creating the work plan 2009-2012. EI would therefore like to make use of this opportunity that the BFUG Secretariat has provided in order to raise a few further comments and questions regarding possible further elements of the workplan.

In the introduction of this document there is a list of the headings of the sections in the Communiqué as identified by the ministers as priority areas for the work in the coming decade. However, in the actual work plan the actions proposed do not correspond to all the areas listed. EI would like to ask why this is the case? Is the Secretariat foreseeing other types of actions in these areas not yet included in the work plan? EI want to suggest that actions are needed also in the areas currently missing from the workplan, as is expected by the Ministers, judging from the Communiqué. The areas concerned are: social dimension; lifelong learning; employability; student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education; education, research and innovation and funding.

The Bologna Process and the BFUG are confronted with a somewhat new situation in relation to their usual mode of work, as there will be an interim ministerial meeting and a change of Secretariat during the course of time for which this work plan is foreseen. EI therefore wants to raise the question regarding possibilities to amend or add elements to the work plan after the ministerial meeting in 2010. In this respect:

- Is it foreseen that this will be the final work plan for the whole period or that amendments will be possible?
- In particular, does the Secretariat consider, in any way, to change its method of working (and that of the BFUG) following the results of the independent assessment of the Bologna Process, should the need arise?

In addition, having come so far in developing work on the Bologna Process, EI thinks that the Bologna Process currently faces the need for the European level of this Process to work more closely with the actors "on the ground" who deal with the Bologna reforms on a daily basis (these being institutional leaders, academic staff, administrative and support staff, student support services, etc). While EI considers the "Bologna Promoter/Experts" initiative to be very good and useful in this respect, EI would like to suggest to the BFUG to reinforce and intensify information and experience-sharing exercises at the national level, mainly through the use of the Bologna Experts by:

- Intensifying their action on the ground;
- Increasing cross-border cooperation between the Bologna experts;
- Increasing cross-border cooperation between the different actors (as defined above) as well, via the intermediary use of the bologna experts.

As a first step EI argues that it would be useful to ask the Bologna Experts around Europe to share with the BFUG, in a much better way, information about their different activities and efforts. Therefore the seminars and workshops held by these experts should also be included in the BFUG/Bologna calendar.

ESU: Generally, we feel that regardless of the working structures that would be finally set up, it is essential that an overall coherence is to be maintained, so that the work of the BFUG sub-structures is complementary and aimed at giving achieving all the Bologna Process action lines, as they are equally important for the reinforcement of the European Higher Education Area. ESU will develop further its work on the Bologna Process with producing a publication titled "Bologna at the Finish Line" and the short documentary "Faces of Bologna" aimed at giving a human face to the Bologna implementation over the past decade. Right before the Vienna/Budapest Ministerial Conference from 7th to 12th of March 2010 the European Students' Union will host the European student summit which is gathering representatives from various national student organizations across Europe. The event is aimed at developing and discussing a set of concrete students' objectives for the different action lines set by the ministers within the next decade of Bologna. We believe that since students are the ones being mostly affected by the Bologna Process this particular event would fit well into the official Bologna calendar of events and we are hereby requesting the "Bologna label" for the European Student Summit.

EURASHE shares the view of EI (and other stakeholders) that further actions are also needed in the areas that are not mentioned in the above list of activities, namely in the social dimension; lifelong learning; employability; student-centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education; education, research and innovation and funding.

Annex 1: Proposal for terms of reference

Name of the working group Implementation of the Bologna Process: Reporting, data collection and stocktaking
Contact person (Chair) Germain Dondelinger (germain.dondelinger@mcesr.etat.lu)
Composition The group should bring together representatives from Eurostat, Eurostudent, Eurydice on the one hand and countries and organisations on the other. Composition should be of workable size.
Purpose and/or outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ to provide reliable, comparable data and to take stock of progress on central aspects of the European higher education area;➤ to make progress in the construction of a structured and standardised monitoring system for central aspects of the Bologna process;➤ to prepare an overall report on the implementation of the Bologna Process for 2012;➤ to specify the criteria and indicators to measure progress in the areas of the degree structure, quality assurance, recognition, (balanced) student and staff mobility, employability and social dimension (widening access, study framework, effective outcomes);➤ to allow for comparisons to be made between countries and to allow for monitoring changes over time within countries as well as between countries;➤ to coordinate and integrate the different sources (Eurostat/Eurostudent, Eurydice, national "stocktaking" reports...)
Reference to the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué Paragraph 27.
Specific tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying the data required;• Analysing the data from various sources;• Research on the feasibility of some indicators;• Inclusion of new indicators;• Contextualising data;• Refining the methodology for the analysis of the information provided by the national "stocktaking" reports• Tender for the drafting of the overall report
Reporting <p><u>Minutes</u> of working group meetings will be made available to BFUG on the protected part of the website (by the Bologna Secretariat).</p> <p><u>BFUG should also receive regular reports and updates.</u></p> <p>To allow for good communication with BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, progress reports should be submitted at least two weeks before each BFUG meeting. In between BFUG meetings, updates can be circulated by the Bologna Secretariat via e-mail.</p>
Meeting schedule First meeting: Luxembourg, 23 October 2009 The road map and timetable will be set up at that meeting.

Additional remarksOrganisation of work:

In the context of each meeting of the WG on implementation of the BP, there will be a time slot foreseen for parallel break-out sessions on the following 3 items:

- stocktaking (information provided by national reporting)
- (balanced) mobility
- social dimension (including issues of employability)

The chairs of the parallel sessions could act as co-chairs or vice-chairs during the plenary session of the meeting.

Annex 2

Title of the seminar "From imbalanced to balanced mobility in the EHEA – current challenges and perspectives for the future"
Contact person (Organiser) Dr. Siegbert Wuttig, DAAD (wuttig@daad.de); Marina Steinmann, DAAD (steinmann@daad.de), BFUG contact: Andrea Herdegen, Federal Ministry of Education and Research (andrea.herdegen@bmbf.bund.de)
Partners German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, National LLP Agencies and National TEMPUS Contact Points from Bologna signatory countries (to be confirmed)
Purpose and/or outcome Main objectives of the proposal: a) To provide a quantitative analysis on balanced and imbalanced student and staff mobility flows within the EHEA (incl. regions, mobility types and subject areas with significant imbalances) on the basis of already existing data b) the explore the reasons for imbalanced mobility (obstacles to balanced mobility) c) To present national and institutional initiatives (examples of good practice) to achieve a more balanced mobility d) To make recommendations on how a more balanced mobility could be achieved in the EHEA
Reference to the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué 9, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27
Preliminary programme (indicating the central elements and working methods of the seminar) <u>Pre-Seminar activities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantitative analysis of student and staff mobility flows in the EHEA by an expert group (incl. ACA, Eurostat, Eurostudent, European Commission)Sending a questionnaire on reasons for imbalanced mobility and on initiatives (examples of good practice) to achieve a more balanced mobility to all Bologna signatory countries (National Agencies, BFUG)Preparing a seminar discussion document based on these national reports <u>Central elements and working methods of the seminar (2 days):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1st seminar day: Presentation of the main findings of the national reports in the plenary session (by 2 representatives of the expert group)1st seminar day: Panel discussion on mobility and brain circulation1st and 2nd seminar day: In-depth-discussion of the main obstacles to balanced mobility and of examples of good practice to achieve a more balanced mobility in three working groups (1 on inner-EU student mobility imbalances, 1 on EU vs. Non-EU student mobility imbalances, 1 on staff mobility imbalances in the EHEA).2nd seminar day: Conclusions and recommendations from the working groups will be presented by the general seminar rapporteur and approved by the seminar participants in the final plenary session <u>Post-Seminar activities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The seminar report (incl. conclusions and recommendations) will be finalised and sent to the Bologna Secretariat within 2 weeks after the seminar.
Participants About 200 experts on mobility in higher education shall be invited to attend the Bologna seminar in Berlin. The majority of the participants (on average 3 per signatory country: 1 from BFUG, 2 from Higher Education institutions) shall be nominated by the national

BFUGs. Additional experts from relevant institutions (ACA, European Commission, ESU, EUA, Eurostat, Eurostudent etc.) as well as representatives of National LLP Agencies and Tempus National Contact Points in Bologna signatory countries will be invited by the organisers of the seminar.
Possible dates February or March 2011 (2 days: 1st day 14.00 -18.00 h, 2nd day: 9.00 – 13.00 h)
Place Berlin
Liaison with other action lines Recognition of study achievements Employability in a global market Equal opportunities in education Social dimension
Additional remarks The DAAD as one of the biggest agencies world-wide in the field of student and staff mobility has been dealing with the challenges of imbalanced mobility in higher education for many years and, together with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, has initiated special programmes to achieve a more balanced mobility (e.g. the “Go East!” programme to motivate more German students to study in Central and Eastern European countries). In its capacity as National Agency for EU higher education programmes, the DAAD also cooperates very closely with its European partners to meet the challenges of imbalanced mobility.

Annex 3: Proposal for terms of reference

Name of the Working Group
Transparency mechanisms
Contact: Noël Vercruysse noel.vercruysse@ond.vlaanderen.be
Composition: The Group should bring together representatives from public authorities, student organisations, employers, trade unions, quality assurance agencies, higher education institutions, funding bodies, ... The Flemish Community of Belgium is ready to chair the working group.
Purpose and outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">- to monitor the development of the transparency tools and mechanisms both the purposes and the objectives (information, accountability, quality) and the indicators and criteria used (input/processes, output/outcome);- to analyse some existing accountability and quality mechanisms using performance indicators and contextual indicators;- to make a report to the 2012 ministerial conference.
Reference to the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué: Paragraphs 26, point 3
Specific tasks
Reporting: Minutes of the meetings of working group will be made available to the BFUG. BFUG will receive regular reports and updates as well as a working plan and draft intermediate reports for written consultation and comments.
Meeting Schedule First meeting: Brussels, December 2009 To the 2012 ministerial conference: 5 meetings: 2 in 2010, 2 in 2011 and 1 in 2012.
Liaison with other action lines There is a clear interaction with the working groups dealing with defining indicators used for the monitoring and measuring mobility and the social dimension and with the working group on data collection.
Additional remark The communiqué of the 2009 world conference on higher education mentions also the need for greater information, openness and transparency regarding different missions and performances of individual institutions.

Annex 4: Proposal for terms of reference

Name of the working group The European Higher Education Area in a Global Context
Contact person (Chair) Barbara WEITGRUBER barbara.weitgruber@bmwf.gv.at
Composition <p>The group should bring together countries and organisations, in particular those contributing most actively to implementing the Strategy "The European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting". The group should include members of the 2007-2009 working group as well as new members and should be balanced with regard to geography and size. In view of the mandate of the group, international stakeholders (e.g. IAU) should also be involved.</p> <p>Hungary as co-host of the 2010 Bologna Policy Forum is willing to join the group. Romania (host of the 2012 Ministerial Conference) is ready to chair the working group from 1 July 2010 onwards.</p>
Purpose and/or outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ To take forward the recommendations of "The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in a global context: Report on overall developments at the European, national and institutional levels".➤ To support the preparations of the 2010 Bologna Policy Forum.➤ To set up a network, making optimal use of existing structures, for better information on and promotion of the Bologna Process outside the EHEA. <p><i>If needed, the mandate of the group for the period until 2012 will be adjusted in line with the decisions taken by the Ministers in Budapest and Vienna in March 2010.</i></p>
Reference to the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué Paragraphs 16 and 26.
Specific tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To cooperate with the Bologna Secretariat regarding the further development of the Bologna Website for a global audience;• To set up a pool of experts across the EHEA countries in order to support the Bologna Secretariat in facilitating coordinated information visits to and from non-EHEA countries;• To facilitate a first meeting of the network for better information on and promotion of the Bologna Process outside the EHEA;• To support the Bologna Secretariat in convening a round table (with the participation of the European Commission and other main actors in higher education promotion in Europe) to devise a "road map" and to identify opportunities and actions for enhancing European-level promotion.• To provide information on policy dialogue events relevant to the Bologna Process, taking place in various frameworks and at various levels, through the Bologna Website.• To support the host countries Hungary and Austria in preparing the Second Bologna Policy Forum with regard to both, the organisational aspects and the content – involving the non-EHEA countries that participated in the First Bologna Policy Forum by way of electronic consultation.

<p>Reporting</p> <p><u>Minutes</u> of working group meetings will be made available to BFUG on the protected part of the website (by the Bologna Secretariat).</p> <p><u>BFUG should also receive regular reports and updates.</u></p> <p>To allow for good communication with BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, progress reports should be submitted at least two weeks before each BFUG meeting. In between BFUG meetings, updates can be circulated by the Bologna Secretariat via e-mail.</p>
<p>Meeting schedule</p> <p>First meeting: Vienna, 28 October 2009</p> <p>Second meeting: January 2010</p> <p>Third meeting: May 2010 (to set up a detailed work plan for the period 2010-2012 to be presented to the BFUG meeting in August 2010, taking into account the results of the Budapest/Vienna Ministerial Meeting)</p>
<p>Liaison with other action lines</p> <p>Cooperation with the working group on implementation of the Bologna Process will be organized with the chair of the group so that it meets the needs of both groups.</p> <p>Cooperation with other elements of the work programme will be sought where appropriate once the work programme has been approved.</p>
<p>Additional remarks</p> <p><u>Organisation of work:</u></p> <p>At the first meeting of the working group, a detailed work programme and timetable will be agreed upon for the period up to mid-2010 and work will be divided among the participating countries and institutions so that for each portion of the work programme a country or organization will take the lead and the work load is equally shared.</p>

Annex 5

ACTION LINE (cf. Leuven Communiqué)	8, 10, 14, 17, 18, 28
COUNTRY or ORGANISATION	Germany
Contact person (name and e-mail)	Mrs Barbara Michalk (Michalk@hrk.de)
Partners in the proposal	German Rectors' Conference (HRK); Accreditation Council

1. Would like to propose the following action as coordinator :

☐ Working group

☒ Seminar/conference: **"The European Dimension of Quality Assurance"**

☐ Survey

☐ Other (please specify)

2. Main objectives of the proposal:

- a) to take stock of recent developments in mutual recognition of quality assurance procedures and to share experience of key players in the field,
- b) to present different paths to a joint quality assurance approach for joint programmes,
- c) to identify possible solutions to conflicts between European approaches and national legislations,
- d) to formulate recommendations for further developing quality assurance procedures at the European level.

3. Proposed place and date : Berlin, February 2011

4. Target audience: HEIs; national ministries and agencies; students; experts and stakeholders in the fields of quality assurance and recognition

5. Summary of the proposal in max. 20 lines :

At the ministerial conference in Leuven/Louvain-La Neuve ministers reasserted the crucial importance of "further developing the European dimension of quality assurance".

Significant progress has been made with regard to implementation of the ESG, since they were adopted in Bergen 2005. The procedures of external quality assurance in Europe are converging to a certain extent. Though, in two fields further efforts have to be made in order to strengthen the European dimension of quality assurance:

- Mutual recognition of quality assurance decisions in order to foster mutual recognition of programmes and qualifications
- Quality assurance in joint degree programmes

The conference seeks to focus on possible ways how to strengthen the link between quality assurance and recognition of degrees. Moreover, it will raise the issue of quality assurance in joint programmes, which is still bound to differing national regulations, irrespective of the ESG. Growing numbers of joint programmes underline the necessity of a real European dimension in quality assurance, allowing for joint, cross-border QA mechanisms and procedures and, thus, lowering the burden on the HEIs involved.

As a visible outcome, the conference shall provide recommendations on how this European dimension can be achieved, while striking a balance between European standards and national legislations.

6. Draft Programme:

- a) Opening plenary session: Introduction into the subject and presentation of case studies.
- b) Panel discussion of different stakeholders (HEIs, national governments, experts on quality assurance and recognition issues)
- c) Working Groups to elaborate on the issues brought up in the plenary session and to share experience on different approaches to joint quality assurance procedures
- d) Resumé and formulation of recommendations on how to achieve a European dimension in quality assurance

Annex 6

ACTION LINE (cf. Leuven Communiqué)	10, 11, 12, 19
COUNTRY or ORGANISATION	Germany
Contact person (name and e-mail)	
Partners in the proposal	German Rectors' Conference (HRK) (other partners to be confirmed)

1. Would like to propose the following action as coordinator :

- ☐ Working group
- ☒ Seminar/conference
- ☐ Survey
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. Main objectives of the proposal : "Squaring the Cycle: Diversity and common standards in European Master Education"

- a) to explore the diversity of Master programmes in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in terms of mission, financing, extent, relation to the Bachelor degree, access requirements...
- b) to assess the relation between diversity, transparency and common standards, especially with a view to international mobility
- c) to develop a common understanding of the essence of the European Master that leaves sufficient room for diverse programmes fulfilling diverse needs
- d) to depict practical problems arising from diverse master programmes and to find typical solutions
- e) to extend the inner-EHEA discussion to a global perspective
- f) to formulate an agenda for an effective system of master programs in the EHEA addressed to HEIs and other stakeholders as well as policy implications

3. Proposed place and date : Berlin, November 2011

4. Target audience: HEIs and programme co-ordinators; representatives of national ministries; student representatives; stakeholders

5. Summary of the proposal in max. 20 lines :

A recent EUA-study has shown that second cycle programmes are just being implemented in many parts of the EHEA and begin to show a remarkable diversity. At the same time, practical problems for international mobility and joint programmes start to arise from diverse programme structures. Finally it can be observed that the master level has different missions within national systems as well as between them.

The seminar is sought to create transparency in differences between master programmes and their characteristics. It is to discuss the presumed trade-off between diversity on the one hand and common standards and structures on the other. It aims at finding a common understanding of the indispensable essence of EHEA-master programmes, typical solutions to practical problems and policy implications as well as an agenda for HEIs.

6. Draft Programme:

Block 1: Presentation of EUA findings and diverse interpretation and implementation of the master level; discussion of basic question: diversity and common standards.

Block 2: Parallel workshop sessions on individual aspects of master provision: diversity of missions, access, integration of LLL, marketing of master programmes...

Block 3: Parallel workshop sessions on practical challenges to HEIs and students in a diversified landscape of master programmes: Joint degrees, recognition, quality assurance, application in regulated professions...

Block 3: Brief inputs and panel discussion on the European second cycle in a global perspective

Block 4: Résumé, agenda for HEIs and policy implications

Annex 7

PROPOSAL for a Bologna-Seminar

Draft Title

Development of the Social Dimension – Stocktaking and Future Perspectives of Student Services/Student Affairs in the European Higher Education Area

Time and Venue

2-day conference in the fall of 2010

Location: Berlin or another capital of Central and Eastern Europe

Participants/Target Groups

All relevant stakeholders in the social dimension of higher education in the Bologna area, in particular representatives of student services/student affairs organisations, universities and their international offices, international exchange organisations, Ministries on national and regional level, members of the European Council for Student Affairs

Languages

English, German, French (possibly more depending on funding)

Background

The success of higher education in general and the competitiveness of the EHEA relies upon the three pillars of well-performing tertiary education systems: research, teaching, and student services/student affairs.

Excellence in education therefore requires an excellent social infrastructure and support mechanisms for students. This is particularly true when talking about key aspects of the Bologna process:

- a) Professional counselling, adequate financial aid and timely information to different student groups are important to guarantee broad access to and equity within higher education.
- b) Efficient student services/affairs are essential in all study phases, generally increasing retention, student success, and graduation rates and play an important role in the transition to the labour market.
- c) The provision of a positive learning environment that includes not only housing and food but also counselling, cultural activities and social support is the foundation for students' academic achievements in any situation or country.
- d) In order to be competitive on the regional, national and international level, many HEI recognize the importance of well-performing student services/affairs that sharpen their profile to attract students, staff, researchers, funding and international cooperation projects.
- e) Last not least, student services/affairs join in the effort to educate younger generations in civic values by means of extra-curricular activities, intercultural learning, volunteer work, and outreach activities.

Since the London conference and reaffirmed in Leuven, the student services/student affairs are now high on the agenda as a key factor in the social dimension of the Bologna process. The EHEA has a long tradition in this field and strong services have been established, however, the different models and systems vary across Europe. At least several different models of providing these services can be identified: centrally provided services by one single institution (e.g. France, Germany, Italy), services provided by several national institutions (e.g. Austria, Sweden), regionally provided services (e.g.

Belgium), services provided by the HEI (e.g. UK, Poland, Spain, various eastern European Countries), and countries where services are provided privately or where no such services exist.

The diversity of this situation holds the potential for benchmarking and exchange of Best Practices, and for mutual learning outcomes in the context of exchanges between student services/affairs professionals.

The proposed conference therefore aims to take stock of the current situation, analyse the existing systems, approaches and models, and to distil the common tasks and challenges that need to be addressed in order to increase the mobility of European students and the attractiveness of the EHEA for non-European students.

Draft Program

Day 1

Welcome and Introductions

Implementing the Social Dimension – Requirements to improve the learning environment
(Conclusions from the London and Leuven communiqués)

Analysis of the social and economic situation of students in Europe

Day 2

Analysis of different student services/affairs models

Discussion of common tasks and challenges

Exchange of experience, benchmarking and best practices

Conclusion

Organisation

Deutsches Studentenwerk (German National Association for Student Affairs) in cooperation with the members of the European Council for Student Affairs and partners in central and Eastern Europe

Annex 8

Recognition of Prior Learning – sharing European principles and practice February 2010, at Scotland House, Brussels

Purpose:

Informed by a history of developments in three countries (Scotlandⁱ, Irelandⁱⁱ and the Netherlandsⁱⁱⁱ), to support the Bologna process and signatory countries by:

- Providing an opportunity to share and explore the different principles and procedures of recognition of prior learning across Bologna countries, in order to explore the use of RPL in flexible learning paths, lifelong learning, access and widening participation in higher education
- Supporting development of policy and practice in RPL across the Bologna countries through dissemination and accessibility of information at the event
- Working collaboratively with Bologna countries in promoting and raising awareness of RPL, and coordinating and disseminating information from the event
- Considering the potential for creating a subsequent European network to further develop international links and share information on RPL across the Bologna countries and to develop Bologna aims and objectives in addressing RPL

Format:

- Offer a series of workshops within which Bologna countries present and share practice in RPL and create dialogue in the following areas:
 - Lifelong learning
 - Flexible learning paths
 - Access
 - Widening participation
- Offer a series of workshops to share information on principles and procedures of RPL across the Bologna countries, including:
 - Sharing guidelines
 - Working through problems
 - Success stories
- Offer a forum to display posters of RPL practice from each Bologna country, submitted prior to the event and showcased at the event, to stimulate dialogue and discussion
- Offer a forum to consider the future of RPL in relation to national and Bologna agendas – this may take the format of workshops, discussion groups or world café method

Audience:

The event is aimed at practitioners and policy makers, and anticipates a large audience with participants from each of the 46 Bologna countries. In addition to contacts already established in Ireland and the Netherlands, each country will be invited to send representatives from:

- Government Department(s) for Higher Education
- National Quality Assurance Agencies
- Higher education institutions
- National student body
- Bologna experts groups

Outcome(s):

- Collation of case study material for sharing through a mix of plenary and poster sessions at the event (this information could also be provided to all participants in accessible and portable format (for example memory sticks or CDROM) to share with colleagues)
- A conference report to all participants and to disseminate to other interested parties and networks in all Bologna countries
- Documents and other materials, including the outcomes of this activity, to be added to relevant websites
- Potential European RPL network to be established.

ⁱ In Scotland, and although not widely practised, early work on the development of national guidelines for RPL in higher education commenced in the late 1990s. Currently QAA Scotland coordinates a Scottish HEIs RPL network in partnership with Universities Scotland. This network is chaired by Ruth Whittaker, of the Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning, (CRLL) Glasgow Caledonian University, and meets regularly throughout the academic year, to share information and practice on RPL developments in Scotland. The CRLL at Glasgow Caledonian University is leading in research in RPL, and most recently has undertaken development and evaluation of an RPL Profiling Tool and SCQF Benchmarking guide for Skills Development Scotland, Careers Services. CRLL is also representing Universities Scotland in the Scottish Government funded study to review the existing mechanisms which support the recognition of learning and skills for refugee and migrant workers wishing to enter education, employment or training at a level commensurate with existing skills and/or qualifications. Ruth Whittaker has also joined the Board of Directors for the newly established International Research Centre on Prior Learning, which is being hosted by Thompson Rivers University, BC, Canada. It is hoped this will provide exciting opportunities for collaborative research in RPL for the Scottish sector. In other sectors of education and training in Scotland, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) also organise an RPL network. QAA Scotland is active members in this network to share practice and experience across the education and training sectors.

ⁱⁱ In Ireland, RPL is offered by many higher education institutions and whilst increasing in scale, student numbers engaging in RPL are relatively small. In recent years, many institutions have developed policies and practice has spread outwards from sectors such as nursing and engineering and to specific target groups such as adult learners. At national level, principles and guidelines (2005) inform and encourage the development of RPL. Further steps are necessary to

increase awareness and to clarify the processes and availability of RPL. Work is on-going to identify follow-up actions to the OECD work on RPL in Ireland (2008), which addressed all levels of education and training. Also, within the context of the Strategic Innovation Fund, sponsored by the Higher Education Authority, and led by Cork Institute of Technology, an RPL project involving 9 higher education institutions is working jointly to develop policy and practice. This pays particular attention to the practical implementation of RPL and the costs / resources required.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Dutch government is strongly promoting the use of RPL, for adults, employers and people retraining, with all kinds of financial arrangements. There is a Project Directorate for 'Learning and Working', a 'joint venture of the Ministries for Education and for Social Affairs and Employability, which is financing projects of institutions for VET and for HE. The Netherlands has a national knowledge centre for RPL, with different networks for experts in RPL, working in institutions and from independent organisations. This Centre has developed a national quality code, with common guidelines, which will also be used in the accreditation of institutions and programmes in VET and HE. The government is working on new legal rules for RPL and the quality of the procedures. In 2008, the organization 'Leido' organised the official Bologna seminar about RPL, Quality assurance and Implementing procedures, and has good contact with the stakeholders in what is current in RPL at the moment.