

PROPOSAL of France for the 'BOLOGNA SECRETARIAT'

Plan for the 2015-2018 period

The Bologna Secretariat vouches for the follow-up of the intergovernmental Process that involves forty-seven countries participating in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). As such, and according to its terms of reference, its role is to “provide a **neutral support** to further the consolidation of the EHEA under the exclusive authority of the BFUG and its Chairs and Vice-Chair.”

As set by the selection procedure of the host country of the 2018 ministerial conference (reference document BFUG_IT_VA_41_11), “the country organizing the upcoming Ministerial conference also hosts the Bologna Process Secretariat between two consecutive ministerial meetings” (abstract from the 2003 Berlin Communiqué).

As France intends to create the best conditions possible to take the European Higher Education Area further and to work for the best implementation possible of the Bologna Process throughout the whole of Europe, a robust and dynamic, independent and neutral “Bologna Secretariat” will be set up.

The underlying principles of the organization :

- **Independence and neutrality.**
- **Continuity** of the work to be carried out for the follow-up of the Bologna Process.
- **Taking on board lessons drawn** from the evolution of the Bologna Process.

Our vision :

- The Secretariat will be committed to being resolutely European so as to become the **Bologna Process reference point—in Europe and more widely**—and to paving the way for the future of the European Higher Education Area.

The Secretariat's missions

- ✓ It will facilitate the implementation of the decisions to be taken by the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area during the upcoming Yerevan conference (May 14th-15th 2015).
- ✓ It will involve all stakeholders in the Bologna Process.
- ✓ It will prepare the next Bologna ministerial conference of 2018, with a « Bologna Policy Forum » connected to it.
- ✓ It will contribute to the development of research on higher education.

Its main activities

- ✓ The Secretariat will provide administrative and operational support for the Bologna follow-up Group (BFUG) such as drafting background documents and discussion papers for BFUG work; planning BFUG meetings as well as Board meetings together with BFUG Chairs and Vice-Chair; drafting minutes and ensuring the follow-up of BFUGs and Boards.

- ✓ It will organize the activities of the Bologna working groups or any other European activities to be set up after BFUG decisions, in connection with the working group Chairs or countries and organizations responsible for it.
- ✓ It will set up a dialogue, on a regular basis, with countries from outside the European Higher Education Area.
- ✓ It will act as BFUG spokesperson to provide updated information about « Bologna » work in progress and to put forward the European vision of the European Higher Education Area in international and European conferences.
- ✓ It will plan and oversee the peer learning activities to be set up with willing countries and organizations.
- ✓ It will ensure communication about the Bologna Process: maintenance and update of the web site, information through social media, regular newsletters, contact point both internally (BFUG delegations) and externally with stakeholders and the public (students, academics, media, international organizations and associations, etc.)..
- ✓ It will supervise and ensure the organization of the 2018 ministerial Conference, and its corollary, the « Bologna Policy Forum ».

Organisational structure of the 2015-2018 Bologna Secretariat

- ✓ **France will ensure the coordination.**
(French Ministry for Education, Higher Education and Research)
- ✓ The Secretariat will be based on a **team** which will work as a « **task force** », under the authority of the BFUG, its Chairs and Vice-Chair :
 - > This team will be **open to European experts proposed by willing* countries** from the European Higher Education Area that are committed to financial support in the shape of full-time positions.
(*To be noted: Spain is a voluntary country).
 - > The team will display genuine high competences about higher education policy and the Bologna Process (its values, principles and issues) in particular,
 - > It will be working in project mode with linguistic and intercultural competences (including English as a working language).
- ✓ The **Secretary-General** will ensure supervision. He or She will have an academic profile and will preferably work on a full time basis.
- ✓ The Secretariat will rely on a **permanent team** of at least four additional full time persons (according to the mandate given at Erevan) : a deputy Secretary-General, two or more 'project leaders' and one assistant manager. Particular attention will be paid to the issue of the « *Bologna Policy Forum* » and to the website and social media dimension besides other priority and work to be carried out. The team will be gender-balanced.
- ✓ **Ad hoc advisers**, on the basis of the work programme and priorities to be set in Yerevan will support the team. The adviser group will also be gender-balanced.