

## FOURTH MEETING OF THE BFUG WG1 ON MONITORING

Rue Joseph II 70, Brussels (Belgium), 24 October 2017

### Draft Minutes

Country/organisations	Name
Armenia	Lusine Fljyan
Austria	Helga Posset
BFUG Secretariat	Gayane Harutyunyan
Czech Republic	Tomáš Fliegl
EI/ETUCE	Rob Copeland
EQAR	Melinda Szabo
Eurydice (Co-chair)	David Crosier
EUA	Henriette Stoeber
ESU	Adam Gajek
Eurostudent	Kristina Hauschildt
France	Hélène Lagier
Germany	Frank Petrikowski
Latvia (Co-Chair)	Andrejs Rauhvargers
Lithuania	Laura Stračinskiene
Norway (Co-Chair)	Tone Flood Strøm
Sogeti	Martin Unger
Germany	Cornelia Racke
Germany	Galiya Yelubayeva
Sogeti (Eurostat subcontractor)	Florian Pallaro

Apologies were received from representatives of Albania, Cyprus, Italy, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland and Russian Federation.

### 1. Welcome, adoption of the agenda

Mr. David Crosier, the Eurydice Co-Chair and Ms. Tone Flood, the Norwegian Co-Chair welcomed the participants to the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the working group and stressed that the meeting was taking place in the middle of the work on the 2018 Implementation Report and its main purpose was to get guidance and comments from the members of the working group on how to develop the report further. The intention was to agree on what would be presented to the BFUG meeting in Tartu in November.

The agenda of the meeting and the minutes of the WG's 4<sup>th</sup> meeting were adopted without any amendments.

## **2. Brief feedback from the recent meetings.**

Ms. Tone Flood Strøm gave feedback from the recent Board meeting in St Petersburg, and the Co-chairs meeting in June as well the meetings of the drafting group of the communiqué. For the Board meeting it was reported that the data collection for the 2018 report had been completed with data received from all countries except Cyprus and Lithuania. The Board expressed satisfaction on the progress made by the group according to plan. It was mentioned that two meetings of the drafting group of communiqué took place and that the first draft would be presented to the BFUG for discussion in Tartu on November 9-10. Representatives from other working groups and advisory groups commented on the work of their groups respectively, and EUA, ESU, Eurostudent and the consortium responsible for the statistical data provided information on the data delivered from their organisations.

## **3. Discussion on scorecard indicators:**

Mr David Crosier, the Eurydice Co-Chair, reminded the WG that during the Riga meeting the working group discussed all the scorecard indicators in detail. Thus, the purpose of the present discussion was to further clarify the indicators before presenting them to the BFUG in Tartu in November. The following changes were discussed and agreed by the participants:

1. *Stage of implementation of ECTS system.* The indicator was modified in line with 2015 ECTS User's Guide to allow the indicator to reflect implementation by the countries. There were also some wording changes introduced.

2. *Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement.* The indicator was changed to make it more streamlined.

3. *Implementation of qualification frameworks.* An additional step has been added to the dark green category resulting in the fact that the conditions of both step 10 and 11 need to be fulfilled in order to be in the dark green category. This change means that some of the countries previously in the dark green category in this indicator will in accordance with the revised indicator no longer be dark green

4. *Level of student participation in external quality assurance.* The indicator was modified and consequently this might weaken a country performance.

5. *Level of international participation in quality assurance.* There were some additional clarifications made in the dark green category of the indicator. Discussion also focused on whether the indicator should include criteria related to ENQA membership or EQAR as well. This discussion was left for the BFUG to resolve.

6. *The stage of development of external quality assurance.* The wording of the indicator was aligned with key commitments.

7. *Level of openness of cross border quality assurance activity of EQAR registered agencies.* Some minor changes were made and agreed upon.

8. *Automatic recognition.* The aim of the discussion was to ensure that this new indicator helps to clarify the concept of automatic recognition. The goal of system level recognition for academic purposes was agreed, with some minor textual amendments strengthening this understanding...

9. *Recognition of prior learning.* There were no additional comments received.

10. *Measures to support the participation and completion of disadvantaged learners.* During the Riga meeting of the working group it was agreed to have an indicator to cover both participation and access. The work on the data showed that it would be difficult to make a meaningful indicator combining both access and completion. It was therefore proposed to divide the indicator: one on access and the other on completion. The working group supported the division of the indicator. It was decided to use the term “*underrepresented groups*” instead of the “*disadvantaged learners*”.

11. *Portability of public grants and publicly subsidised loans.* There were no additional comments.

12. *Supporting mobility of disadvantaged learners.* As in the case of the indicator n.10, it was agreed to use the term “*underrepresented*” instead of “*disadvantage*”.

**In conclusion, it was agreed that the modified indicators would be circulated to the BFUG for approval.**

#### **4. Discussion of first draft of the 2018 Implementation Report**

The working group had a first discussion on the draft report and there were comments related to the general structure of the report, the order of its chapters and the way all elements were compiled. It was highlighted that the intention was to keep the Report readable. The following comments were made and, and it was agreed to move forward along those lines:

- To reconsider the number of figures in the report itself, and consider whether some content could be put in an annex to make the report more readable.
- To provide explanations whenever necessary to make the report more understandable, especially in the case of technical language such as "ISCED";
- To pay attention to colours used in the report to avoid overlapping the colours of maps and the indicators;
- To mention fundamental values wherever it is possible and relevant, while the main introductory discussion on values will be put upfront in Chapter 1.
- To show interconnection and interplay of the EHEA tools in the introduction and later mentioning that in the text when relevant.

The draft was reviewed chapter by chapter. The conclusions of the discussion for each chapter are presented below:

Chapter 1. It was stressed by the data collectors that the intention of the report was not only to reflect on present situation, but rather to show how things have evolved compared with the last 2015 reporting, even though it was not always possible since some data were missing. In some cases countries did not collect that data at all. If possible it would be helpful to add data on academic staff to strengthen contextual information. Furthermore, it was agreed to provide clear concepts and definitions with the figures to enhance their comparability and readability.

With regard governance and values it was explained to the participants that this section was rather problematic since the answers of the countries to the questionnaire did not really give the picture of academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Therefore, a sketch approach was used to explain what the Yerevan Communiqué says and how the issues of values were put at the centre to underpin the EHEA. During the period 2015-2018, there had been well documented and mediatised cases which raised the question on whether all the countries were promoting and supporting the values they committed to in the Yerevan Communiqué. Therefore, several examples were included in the report. Despite the few hesitations expressed by the participants whether there should be examples included

in the report, the majority supported the keeping of examples and waited for the reaction of the BFUG. It was also agreed to have a paragraph emphasising that the values could be broadened in the future, but for the 2015-2018 only three aspects – academic freedom, institutional autonomy and student participation in governance would be reported.

Chapter 2. This is a newly developed chapter, which follows the Yerevan Communiqué and examines learning and teaching in higher education. It provides a general frame for the chapter, looking at the place of learning and teaching in higher education strategies and policies. Moreover, it is offering information on the implementation of credits and learning outcomes and flexible study options, in particular part-time studies and it is looking at learning in digital environments, while the final part, which is also a new element of the Bologna mapping, examines teaching in new learning environments. It was highlighted that since the chapter was new it was possible that there would be gaps, and that some of the information provided by countries might not always be trustworthy as the reality has to be drawn from institutional practice.

Chapter 3. This chapter focuses on the Bologna structures and selected tools. The first part is devoted to the implementation of a common degree structure including the short-cycle. The second part of the chapter focuses on the implementation of the Diploma Supplement and national qualifications frameworks. It was stressed that the report would provide explanations on how short cycle was related to the ISCED 5 level.

Chapter 4. The chapter focuses on whether the revised ESG adopted in 2015, were being implemented, and what are the areas and issues to improve. It also examines the stakeholders' involvement, and the cross border quality assurance. This chapter needs to be developed further. It was agreed that the following points have to be addressed:

- Slow implementation of the European approach to the quality assurance of joint programmes;
- Links to teaching and learning chapter.

Chapter 5. This chapter draws on data collected from various sources and focuses on the inclusiveness of access to higher education. After presenting statistics on the impact of students' background on their participation in higher education, this section discusses policy frameworks aiming to widen access to higher education. Data collectors stressed that very little data on refugees and their backgrounds was available. It was suggested to have some explanatory caveats where there are different outcomes between Eurostat and Eurostudent data.

Chapter 6. This chapter analyses employability in relation to different levels. It was stressed that the main difficulty was that the data existed for Eurostat countries but not for the others. Therefore the analysis would start with the Eurostat countries. It was agreed to provide a link to ISCED breakdowns where available.

Chapter 7. The chapter is not fully developed yet and data collectors that there will be no clear answer on progress towards the 20% mobility target stressed it. Also it was stressed that Eurostat will only publish credit mobility data next year.

As some chapters are still not fully developed, therefore there were only few comments related to student centred learning, and level of implementation of ESG. The importance to keep a good level of coherence in the report was stressed.

At the end of the discussion it was once again stressed that there would be a first checking phase for the countries starting at the end of November.

## **5. Update on the timeline**

The Co- Chairs informed the participants that at the BFUG Tartu meeting the working group will provide a progress report together with the list of the scorecard indicators while the countries will get the first draft report by the end of November. It was emphasised that data from the 2018 Implementation Report should feed into the communiqué, especially in the area of implementation/non-implementation and fundamental values.

Draft version