

Endorsed: 15.03.2013

**Terms of Reference  
on  
the Third Cycle**

<p><b>Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Third Cycle</b></p>
<p><b>Contact persons</b> (proposed Co-Chairs)          Nicola VITTORIO-Italy (<a href="mailto:nicola.vittorio@uniroma2.it">nicola.vittorio@uniroma2.it</a>)          Marzia FORONI-Italy (<a href="mailto:marzia.foroni@miur.it">marzia.foroni@miur.it</a>)          Cezar Haj-Romania (<a href="mailto:cezar.haj@uefiscdi.ro">cezar.haj@uefiscdi.ro</a>)          Gloria Molero Martín-Portuguès-Spain (<a href="mailto:gloria.molero@mecd.es">gloria.molero@mecd.es</a>)</p>
<p><b>Composition</b></p> <p>The following countries/organisations are members of the Ad-hoc WG:          Armenia, Austria, Belgium/Flemish Community, Belgium/French Community, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Moldova, Poland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, EUA, EI, European Commission, EURODOC.</p>
<p><b>Purpose and/or outcome</b></p> <p>Map the current implementation of the third cycle in the EHEA, in the light of the "Salzburg II recommendations" and the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training ;</p> <p>Formulate policy proposals to promote quality, transparency, employability and mobility in the third cycle, on the basis of the outcomes of the previous point and taking into account the developments foreseen within the ERA by Horizon 2020 and other EU initiatives.</p> <p>Formulate policy proposals to improve the transition between the second and the third cycle, with the aim to strengthen the link between education and research.</p>
<p><b>Reference to the Bucharest Communiqué</b></p> <p><b>"Enhancing employability to serve Europe's needs"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this respect, we will sustain a diversity of doctoral programs. Taking into account the "Salzburg II recommendations" and the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training, we will explore how to promote quality, transparency, employability and mobility in the third cycle, as the education and training of doctoral candidates has a particular role in bridging the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA);</li> <li>• Next to doctoral training, high quality second cycle programs are a necessary precondition for the success of linking teaching, learning and research. Keeping wide diversity and simultaneously increasing readability, we might also explore further possible common principles for master programs in the EHEA, taking account of previous work.</li> </ul> <p><b>"Strengthening mobility for better learning"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are determined to remove outstanding obstacles hindering effective and</li> </ul>

proper recognition and are willing to work together towards the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees, building on the tools of the Bologna framework, as a long-term goal of the EHEA.

#### **"Setting out priorities for 2012–2015"**

- Promote quality, transparency, employability and mobility in the third cycle, while also building additional bridges between the EHEA and the ERA.

#### **Specific tasks**

1. In cooperation with EUA and the European Commission, analyse the current state of doctoral studies in EHEA countries, taking account of the two reference documents – the Salzburg II Recommendations and the Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training.
2. Starting from the information provided by the existing National Qualifications Frameworks, map: i) the diverse kind of third cycle degrees offered by HEIs and possible pathways connecting them; ii) different types of doctoral programs in order to formulate policy proposals to improve existing models and instruments.
3. Explore and make proposals for strengthening the link between the second cycle and third cycle in order to facilitate progression, the development of research competencies and timely recruitment to doctoral programs.
4. Explore and make proposals concerning quality and quality assurance procedures in Doctoral training, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders.
5. Formulate policy proposals to increase the use of existing transparency tools for third cycle degrees, based on existing good practices in the field, and explore new instruments to increase transparency of third cycle degrees.
6. Examine third cycle degrees with the view to identify, with a specific focus on Doctoral studies<sup>1</sup>, the barriers and incentives to international mobility and define policy proposals for improvement.
7. Analyse the results achieved by the different profiles of third cycle degrees offered, with a specific focus on Doctoral Degrees<sup>2</sup>, and define policy proposals to improve their employability.
8. Make other policy proposals related to the third cycle, as appropriate, such as sustainable funding for third cycle education or candidate recruitment practices.

#### **Reporting**

Minutes of working group meetings will be made available to the WG "Structural Reforms" and to the BFUG on the protected part of the website (by the Bologna Secretariat).

#### Reporting to the WG "Structural Reforms"

Besides minutes, the Co –Chairs of the WG "Structural Reforms" will receive all the working documents of the sub – structure. One of the Co – Chairs will ensure his/her participation to the "Structural Reforms" WG Co-chairs meeting as appropriate.

#### BFUG reports and updates.

To allow for good communication with BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, the sub – structure will contribute to the progress reports of the WG "Structural Reforms" and will submit at least two weeks before BFUG meeting any document for approval.

<sup>1</sup> The term refers to standard PhD programs as well as Doctor of Science Degree, where applicable.

<sup>2</sup> The term refers to standard PhD programs as well as Doctor of Science Degree, where applicable.

**The draft final report/conclusions will be presented and discussed no later than the BFUG meeting in the first half of 2014.**

**Meeting schedule:**

The sub – structure of the WG should meet at least 4 times:

- 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012, Rome;
- 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2013, Bucharest;
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013, Madrid;
- February 2014, Italy.

**Liaison with other WGs' and networks' activities**

Liaisons will mainly be ensured by the WG on "Structural Reforms". Certainly be in touch with Implementation WG and seek connections with other working groups when appropriate.

**Additional remarks**