



Ministry of Education, Culture and
Science of the Netherlands



Ministry of Education
of the Republic of Moldova

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**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP
Vaduz, 30 June 2015, 09:00 – 17:00**

Minutes

List of participants

Country/ Organisation	Representative
Armenia	<i>Apologies</i>
Armenian BFUG Secretariat	Gayane Harutyunyan
Armenian BFUG Secretariat	Ani Hovhannisyanyan
CoE/ Structural Reforms WG	Sjur Bergan
EC	Margaret Waters
EC	Mette Moerk Andersen
ESU/ Social Dimension and Lifelong Learning WG	Fernando Miguel Galan Palomares
EUA	Michael Gaebel
EURASHE	Johan Cloet
France	Patricia Pol
French BFUG Secretariat	Françoise Profit
Germany/Mobility and Internationalisation WG	Peter Greisler
Iceland	Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
Latvia/Reporting on the Bologna Process Implementation WG	Andrejs Rauhvargers
Liechtenstein	Daniel Miescher
Liechtenstein	Eva-Maria Schaedler
Luxembourg	Léon Diederich
Luxembourg	Corinne Kox
Moldova	Nadejda Velisco
The Netherlands	Jolien van der Vegt
The Netherlands	Renske van Veen

The Liechtenstein Co-Chair, Mr. Daniel Miescher, opened the BFUG Board meeting by welcoming the participants on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Education and Culture of Liechtenstein and highlighted that it was a pleasure for Liechtenstein to share the BFUG Co-Chairing responsibilities with Luxembourg.

1. Information by the outgoing BFUG Chairs: Latvia and Iceland

Mr. Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia) and Ms. Una Strand Viðarsdóttir (Iceland) wished every success to the incoming BFUG Co-Chairs, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg, at the same time expressing their readiness to assist the incoming BFUG Co-Chairs in carrying out their activities during their BFUG Co-Chairmanship. Moreover, it was highlighted that the BFUG Co-Chairmanship of Latvia and Iceland was very productive and successful.

2. Information by the incoming BFUG Chairs: Luxembourg and Liechtenstein

Mr. Léon Diederich (Luxembourg) highlighted that during the Luxembourg and Liechtenstein BFUG Co-Chairmanship the 2015-2018 EHEA work programme would be laid down and it would be the BFUG roadmap till the Ministerial Conference in France.

Furthermore, the Board was updated on the events planned during the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU Council as well as the BFUG Co-Chairmanship. The details are available in the power-point presentation.

Mr. Daniel Miescher (Liechtenstein) congratulated the outgoing BFUG Co-Chairs, Latvia and Iceland, for the productive six-month period of the BFUG Co-Chairmanship and also for the smooth handover of the BFUG Co-Chairing responsibilities to Luxembourg and Liechtenstein, which took place on 29 June 2015 in Vaduz. Mr. Miescher also expressed his gratitude to the Armenian Secretariat for the good preparation of all the documents for the Vaduz Board meeting as well as welcomed the French Secretariat.

Moreover, the Board was informed that the Vaduz Board meeting will be the only event in Liechtenstein under the Luxembourg and Liechtenstein BFUG Co-Chairmanship.

The Board was notified that there were 20 participants present at the meeting.

3. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda of the meeting was adopted without any amendments.

4. Adoption of draft minutes of the BFUG Board meeting, Reykjavik, 24 February 2015, taking note of the draft outcome of proceedings of the BFUG meeting, Riga, 24-25 March 2015 and draft minutes of the BFUG extraordinary meeting, Yerevan, 14 May 2015

The Reykjavik BFUG Board meeting minutes were adopted without any amendments. The Board also took note of the draft outcome of proceedings of the March Riga BFUG meeting and Yerevan draft minutes.

5. Evaluation report of the Yerevan Ministerial Conference and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum

Document: BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_5 [Yerevan MC and Fourth BPF_Evaluation Report]

Ms. Gayane Harutyunyan (Armenian BFUG Secretariat) presented the evaluation report of the Yerevan Ministerial Conference and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum.

The Conference and the Forum was marked with the attendance of 498 participants from 47 countries and 28 organisations. Moreover, the Ministerial Conference brought together 44 EHEA Ministerial delegations (Azerbaijan, Malta and Slovenia were not present), the representatives of the European Commission as well as the Bologna Process consultative members (UNESCO was not present) and data collectors.

Furthermore, the livestreaming of the event was available at the Yerevan Ministerial Conference website (yerevan2015.am), which can still be followed.

Following the event, the BFUG Secretariat carried out a survey meant to assess the Yerevan Ministerial Conference and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum. An evaluation form was circulated electronically to all the participants registered for the events in Yerevan who were given 14 days to complete the form. Moreover, the evaluation form was designed to assess *event sessions* and *administrative aspects* regarding the organisation of the Yerevan Ministerial Conference and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum.

Thus, the Board was informed that the Secretariat received a total of 68 evaluation forms and the overall response rate was 13.7 % (68 responses out of 498 participants). Moreover, the surveyed participants scored their overall satisfaction with the EHEA Ministerial Conference and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum as "Very good" on 52.9% of the cases, "excellent" on 35.3% of the cases, "good" on 10.3% of replies and only 1.5% rated the event with "fair".

For more details, please refer to the PowerPoint presentation.

The Board congratulated Armenia and Secretariat for the very well organised Ministerial Conference and made the following comments:

- Yerevan Ministerial Conference was a very good conference in terms of content and dynamics. Moreover, the delegations were more involved and discussions were very productive.
- A number of changes were made to the Yerevan Communiqué and they were incorporated in the document, showing that Ministers and Heads of Delegation took ownership of the document.
- The issue of the Bologna Policy Forum should be discussed early enough and mapping of the cooperation with the non-EHEA countries should start with the launch of the 2015-2018 EHEA work programme since the successful format of the Forum has not been found yet. Although during the Yerevan Ministerial Conference the BFUG tried a different format for the Forum, it did not work.
- Bilateral meetings were well organised and very useful.
- There is a need to be less consensus-oriented and some important questions should be left for the discussion of the Ministers.

The Board recommended that the evaluation report also included, besides the number of the Ministers, the number of the deputy ministers and heads of the delegations. Moreover, the number of leaders of higher education institutions, academic staff and students participating in the event should also be included in the report.

Finally the Chairs thanked the Armenian Secretariat for the interesting report and underlined that the document reflected very well the high quality of the discussions during the event as well as its organisation and atmosphere.

6. 2015-2018 EHEA draft work programme

Documents: BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6a [Draft outline of the 2015-2018 EHEA work programme]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6b [EQF proposal]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6c [Proposal from Georgia]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d [Draft organigramme]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d_Annex1 [ToR_Belarus roadmap]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d_Annex2 [ToR_Cooperation stakeholders]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d_Annex3 [ToR_Implementation_SR]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d_Annex4 [ToR_Monitoring WG]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d_Annex5 [ToR_QF]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6d_Annex6 [ToR_Recognition]
 BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_6e [Proposal_BP communication toolbox]

Mr. Léon Diederich (Luxembourg) reminded the Board that the first discussion of the 2015-2018 EHEA work programme was held during the March Riga BFUG meeting where it was decided that the draft outline of the 2015-2018 BFUG work programme should be revised in

line with the feedback received and, in particular, the WGs would be grouped according to the priorities in the Yerevan Communiqué.

Thus, it was stressed that, on the basis of the draft outline of the 2015-2018 BFUG work programme presented during the March Riga meeting, as well as taking into consideration the comments made by the BFUG and input from the Yerevan Ministerial Conference, the Co-Chairs with the outgoing Armenian and incoming French Secretariat and vice-chair prepared a proposal which outlines three main WGs on 1) Monitoring, 2) Implementation of Structural Reforms and 3) Cooperation with stakeholders on EHEA goals. The proposal also includes subgroups as well as outlines the tasks for the BFUG and BFUG Board.

For more details, please refer to the organigram.

The Board made the following comments:

- The Secretariat would probably have more things to do than just communication. Moreover, it should be a contact point for the non-EHEA countries, thus leading the process to the smooth organisation of the Bologna Policy Forum. Furthermore, the Secretariat should collaborate with the 3rd WG.
- The strengthening of the Board is welcomed. The Board prepares the meetings and makes recommendations however the real discussions and final decisions should be carried out by the BFUG. On the other hand, the Board together with the Secretariat can identify the issues that do not need to be heavily discussed in the BFUG.
- An important point for the 2015-2018 period is how the BFUG can function better. The BFUG should discuss substantial issues since it is a decision making body.
- It is suggested to add the national BFUGs under the 1st WG thus linking the European level with the national level.
- The suggestion for the 2nd working group to be based on themes was well received. However, the list of themes were seen as examples for the moment (e.g. there was no mention of QA which has to be there after the revision of the ESGs) and it will have to be absolutely clear that the themes mentioned do not lead to groups being set up for each topic, as the Board believed there is a strong wish in the BFUG to avoid a repeat of how groups functioned in the run-up to Bucharest.
- The Belarus roadmap coordination group should not be under the 2nd WG, but should report directly to the BFUG.
- Furthermore, the questions of non-implementation should be addressed and a proper strategy should be developed. Therefore, maybe this should be included under the 2nd WG.
- There is a need to think of a very good structure for the 3rd WG, this group focuses on the new elements in the Yerevan Communiqué, e.g. digital and pedagogical innovations, EHEA-ERA links, more inclusive societies. The Board suggested not bringing in issues that are not taken directly from the Communiqué (e.g. introducing

the concept of 'soft power', EHEA 2025). Moreover, the ToRs of the subgroups of the 3rd WG should be developed thus making their tasks clearer for the BFUG. Also professional recognition could be included in the 3rd WG.

- The Board noted that the terms 'peer learning' and policy development' highlighted in yellow under pillars 2 and 3 could be misleading, as both pillars will include elements of peer learning and policy recommendations (at different levels). The strict separation of the two might not be to the benefit of the understanding of the functioning of the groups or activities initiated under the two pillars.
- The role and task of the Networks should be defined. The NQF Network is important as the purpose of the Network is to assist countries to implement their national qualifications frameworks. Moreover, the cooperation of this Network with the EQF is also important. However, the participation in the Network did not function during the previous period; therefore this issue should be addressed as well. Concerning the RPL Network, this is another important Network which did not function during the previous period. As for NESSIE network, it should be enlarged including more EHEA countries.
- As for the Co-Chairs of the WGs, there is need to define what they expect from the WG members. Therefore, the Co-Chairs could probably make clear to the BFUG that they require commitment from the WG members, while in their turn as Co-Chairs, they should be prepared to write a report and not assume that this would be done by the Secretariat.
- There is no targeted solution for the implementation and peer learning. Therefore, while designing the 2015-2018 work programme, it is important to look at the outcomes of 2015.
- Developing proposals for the governance of the EHEA should be a task for the Board, which should present proposals to the BFUG at a relatively early stage in order to enable the BFUG to fulfill its role as the decision making body of the EHEA between Ministerial conferences.
- There are a number of other tasks that are not reflected in the proposal and one of them is that the CoE, EC and the UNESCO should review the Diploma Supplement and present for the discussion of the BFUG. The Board noted that this group should also inform the group on implementation of structural reforms on its progress. It would be helpful if the chart could make clear that membership of the group would also include representatives from e.g. ministries, ENIC-NARICs, ESU, EUA and BusinessEurope.
- It is important to make sure that the outcomes of the WGs as well as conferences and seminars are prepared in such a way that the BFUG has adequate time to deal with that. Also overlapping of the events and meetings of the WGs should be avoided.

Finally the Co-Chairs concluded that the proposal should be revised reflecting all the comments made by the Board. Furthermore, the revised proposal should be sent to the BFUG in mid-July for the discussion during the Luxembourg BFUG meeting.

7. Discussion on the procedure for the Belarus roadmap follow-up by the coordination group

Mr. Sjur Bergan (CoE) reminded the Board that the final negotiation meeting with Belarus was held a day before the Yerevan Ministerial Conference and the Belarus roadmap for higher education reform was adopted during the Conference, as part of the decision to admit Belarus as a new member of the EHEA. Moreover, it was noted that the roadmap underlined two central features, which are:

1. By the end of 2015 Belarus should specify how it intends to meet the requirements in the roadmap.
2. By the end of 2017 Belarus should demonstrate what it has done.

Therefore, in order to achieve the above mentioned points there should be regular contacts with the Belarus authorities also considering the fact that Belarus is a new member of the EHEA.

Moreover, the Board was informed that the CoE planned to organise a conference in Belarus in autumn with Magna Charta Observatory on the issues of academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

Last but not least, Mr. Michael Gaebel (EUA) informed the Board that the EUA was in charge of the SPHERE project (SPHERE = Support and Promotion of Higher Education Reform Experts) and they intended to organise 2-3 events in Belarus. Therefore, they would be very much interested to cooperate with the coordination group for the Belarus roadmap follow-up.

Thus, the Board suggested that a letter signed by the Co-Chairs be sent to Belarus authorities by welcoming them and reminding about the roadmap. Moreover, the Co-Chairs can consult the coordination group for the Belarus roadmap follow-up before sending the letter. Also there is a need to make sure that Belarus delegation participate in the BFUG meeting in Luxembourg.

As for the coordination group, it was noted that the group was already set up in March 2015 composed of BFUG Secretariat, CoE, Latvia, Iceland, EC, EI, ESU, Armenia, Germany, the Holy See, Italy, Poland and UK Scotland. Therefore, the Board recommended continuity and stressed that not only the countries and organisations but also persons were important while establishing the follow-up group. Moreover, if any new members would really like to join the follow-up group, this should be decided during the upcoming BFUG meeting in Luxembourg and it was recommended that those persons be well established BFUG members.

Last but not least it was highlighted that the meeting of the coordination group with the Belarus authorities would be organised after the September BFUG meeting.

8. Information on the preparation for handover of the BFUG Secretariat (Paris, 7 July 2015)

Ms. Gayane Harutyunyan (Armenian BFUG Secretariat) updated the Board that the Armenian Secretariat had already started the process of sharing the documents and the comprehensive handover materials were provided to the incoming French Secretariat. Moreover, Ms. Harutyunyan highlighted the Armenian Secretariat's readiness to provide its assistance and experience to the French colleagues should this be required.

Ms. Françoise Profit (French BFUG Secretariat) informed the Board that the official handover of the BFUG Secretariat responsibilities from Armenia to France would take place on 5 July 2015 in Paris and the BFUG Board members had already been invited.

Moreover, the Board was updated on the on-going preparations including the funding, location and composition of the French Secretariat which will include four full time members and one additional full time member from Germany. The Armenian Secretariat, Spain and Romania have offered to help if necessary.

Thus, for the September Luxembourg BFUG meeting, France would have a fully functioning Secretariat.

The Board took note of the information provided by the outgoing and incoming BFUG Secretariats and recommended France, as the host of the 2018 Ministerial Conference and the Bologna Policy Forum, to present the Terms of reference for the 2018 Bologna Policy Forum board committee during the Luxembourg BFUG meeting.

9. Agenda of BFUG meeting, Luxembourg, 8-9 September 2015

Document: BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_9 [Draft agenda of the Luxembourg BFUG meeting]

Mr. Léon Diederich (Luxembourg) presented the main topics on the draft agenda of the Luxembourg BFUG meeting, which will be held on 8-9 September 2015. Moreover, the Board was informed that the official invitation and practical information for the upcoming BFUG meeting would be circulated to the BFUG members in mid-July.

Thus, the Board suggested adding a point on the Belarus roadmap follow-up by the coordination group in the draft agenda of the Luxembourg BFUG meeting.

10. BFUG Board meeting, Moldova

Documents: BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_10 [Moldova_BFUG Co-Chairmanship]

Ms. Nadejda Velisco (Moldova) presented the outline of the priorities of Moldova during the BFUG Co-Chairmanship as well as the main events to be organised. Moreover, the Board was informed that the upcoming Board meeting will be organised in Chisinau either on 14-15 January 2016 or 18-19 January 2016.

For more details, please refer to the PowerPoint presentation.

11. Point of information related to the priorities of the Dutch EU Presidency and planning of the BFUG activities in the first semester of 2016 under the Dutch and Moldovan Co-Chairmanship

Ms. Jolien van der Vegt (the Netherlands) and Renske van Veen (the Netherlands) presented the overall priorities and main events of the Netherlands during its EU Presidency. Furthermore, the Board was updated that the BFUG meeting will be held on 7-8 March 2016 in Amsterdam.

For more details, please refer to the PowerPoint presentation.

12. Any other business

The Chair noted that there were no items to be included in 'AOB' and closed the meeting, while thanking the participants as well as the outgoing Armenian Secretariat for their work.