

Doc. Code: BFUGBoard_LU_LI_47_3c
Last modified:10.06.2015

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP
Yerevan, 14 May
Draft Minutes

Participant list

Country / Organisation	Name
Albania	<i>Absent</i>
Andorra	Maria del Mar Martinez Ramirez
Armenia	Karine Harutyunyan
Armenia	Robert Sukiasyan
Austria	Gottfried Bacher
Azerbaijan	<i>Absent</i>
Belgium/Flemish Community	Noël Vercruyse
Belgium/French Community	Kevin Guillaume
BFUG Secretariat	Gayane Harutyunyan
BFUG Secretariat	Ani Hovhannisyan
BFUG Secretariat	Sahakanush Sargsyan
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Aida Durić
Bulgaria	Ivana Radonova
BUSINESSEUROPE	Irene Seling
Council of Europe	Sjur Bergan
Council of Europe	Katia Dolgova-Dreyer
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>
Cyprus	Despina Martidou-Forcier
Czech Republic	<i>Absent</i>
Denmark	Jonas Husum Johannesen
Denmark	Jette Søgren Nielsen
EC	Adam Tyson
EC	Mette Moerke Andersen
EI	Jens Vraa-Jensen
EI	Agnes Roman
ENQA	Padraig walsh
ENQA	Maria Kelo
EQAR	Colin Tück
EQAR	Eric Froment

Estonia	Janne Pukk
ESU	Fernando Miguel Galán Palomares
ESU	Elisabeth Gehrke
ESU	Erin Nordal
EUA	Lesley Wilson
EUA	Michael Gaebel
EURASHE	Johan Cloet
EUROSTAT	<i>Absent</i>
EUROSTUDENT	Martin Unger
EUROSTUDENT	Kristina Hauschildt
Eurydice	David Crosier
Finland	Maja Innola
France	Patricia Pol
France	Hélène Lagier
Georgia	Irine Darchia
Germany	Peter Greisler
Germany	Heide Ahrens
Germany	Frank Petrikowski
Greece	Kyveli-Aikaterin Kouvela
Holy See	Friedrich Bechina
Hungary	Ernö Keszei
Hungary	Ágnes Keresztessy
Iceland	Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
Ireland	Tim Cullinane
Italy	Federico Cinquepalmi
Kazakhstan	Yuliya Idiyatova
Kazakhstan	Banu Narbekova
Latvia	Andrejs Rauhvargers
Latvia	Jolanta Silka
Liechtenstein	Daniel Miescher
Lithuania	Elena Armalyte
Luxembourg	Corinne Kox
Luxembourg	Leon Andre Diederich
Malta	<i>Apologies</i>
Moldova	Nadejda Velisco
Montenegro	<i>Absent</i>
Netherlands	Jolien van der Vegt
Norway	Tone Flood Strøm
Norway	Toril Johannson
Poland	Bartłomiej Banaszak

Portugal	Ana Mateus
Romania	Radu-Mircea Damian
Russian Federation	Nadezhda Kamynina
Serbia	Mihajlo Babin
Slovak Republic	Peter Plavcan
Slovenia	<i>Apologies</i>
Spain	Luis Delgado
Sweden	Albin Gaunt
Switzerland	François Grandjean
"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	Borco Aleksov
Turkey	Canan Ünvan
Ukraine	Olena Rusnak
UNESCO	<i>Absent</i>
United Kingdom	Pamela Wilkinson
United Kingdom/Scotland	Rebecca Robinson

1. Welcome by the BFUG Co-Chairs (Latvia and Iceland)

Mr. Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia), the BFUG Co-Chair, welcomed the BFUG members to the Yerevan extraordinary BFUG meeting.

Ms. Una Strand Viðarsdóttir (Iceland), the BFUG Co-Chair, presented the agenda of the meeting.

The BFUG was informed that there were 84 participants present at the meeting and that apologies were received from Malta and Slovenia. The following countries/organisations were not present at the meeting: Albania, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Czech Republic, EUROSTAT, Montenegro and UNESCO.

2. Update on Belarus accession including the roadmap

Mr. Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia) updated the BFUG that the roadmap for the accession of Belarus to the EHEA had been slightly revised as a result of the meeting and official agreement between the Co-Chairs, Vice Chair and Belarus authorities, which took place on 13 May. The changes are consistent with the decision of the BFUG concerning the accession of Belarus.

It was also highlighted that the slightly revised roadmap had been sent to the BFUG members on the same day. Moreover, it was underlined that Belarus had legally fulfilled the decision taken by the BFUG in Riga in March. Therefore, the BFUG's suggestion to the Ministers should be positive.

A number of countries and organizations expressed their views/positions on this agenda point.

Norway stressed that the decision on Belarus accession was up to the Ministers and inquired whether the Ministers would have a chance to discuss this issue.

Council of Europe clarified that the amendments to the roadmap are clarifications rather than changes of substance. Moreover, since Belarus is the first country to access the EHEA after its establishment, it will be in a different situation from countries that acceded earlier. The fulfillment of the roadmap by Belarus should be linked to the implementation of the Bologna Process.

ESU argued that the changes to the roadmap were rather significant and careful consideration should be given to its proper implementation by Belarus with the involvement of academic staff and students. Furthermore, the BFUG should ensure a proper follow-up.

European Commission highlighted that as envisaged by the 2015-2018 BFUG work programme, measures will be taken in case of non-implementation of the fundamental values and principles of the EHEA. Moreover, a coordination group was established for the follow-up of the Belarus roadmap. As foreseen in the Yerevan Ministerial Conference programme, the Ministers will have an opportunity to express their views on the Belarus accession.

Belgium/Flemish Community informed the BFUG that their Head of delegation would intervene during this agenda point at the Conference.

France highlighted the uneven implementation of the Bologna Process across the EHEA. In this light the progress that is expected from Belarus should be made clear.

3. Procedure for adoption of the Yerevan Ministerial Communiqué and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum Statement

Mr. Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia), the BFUG Co-Chair introduced the process through which the drafts of the Yerevan Communiqué and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum Statement were prepared for Ministerial adoption. Moreover, it was highlighted that the Ministers could intervene by asking for the floor during the respective points of the Conference programme.

Thus, the floor was open for any comments and last minutes requests for amendments.

Greece informed the BFUG that their Head of delegation would take the floor. It was also mentioned that a letter signed by the Minister accompanying the suggested amendments had been circulated to the BFUG during the current meeting.

Council of Europe once again highlighted that the purpose of this agenda point was to have an idea of the amendments that the delegations would suggest during the Conference and not to pre-empt the discussion by Ministers.

The United Kingdom noted that their Head of delegation would intervene during the Communiqué discussion concerning the particular part of the Communiqué that reads "We will support and protect students and staff in exercising their right to academic freedom and

ensure their representation as full partners in the governance of autonomous higher education institutions”.

It was explained that while the UK does indeed support and promote the representation of students and staff in the governance of their higher education institutions, and this is among the indicators set out in the UK Quality Assurance Agency’s quality code, the Government cannot ‘ensure’ legally that this happens, as UK’s higher education institutions are autonomous in their governance. For avoidance of doubt UK reiterate their interpretation of the text, which is that they are not committed to any legislative changes to meet this declaration of intentions.

European Commission advised that in term of chairing the sessions on both Yerevan Communiqué and Fourth Bologna Policy Forum Statement it would be helpful to have a general reaction of the Ministers to both documents rather than discussing the documents paragraph by paragraph. On this basis the Chairs would identify which paragraphs of the documents would be discussed.

Poland informed the BFUG that their Head of delegation would suggest an amendment to the third paragraph of the Communiqué aiming at strengthening message on inaccurate ways the Bologna Process is sometimes implemented, including bureaucratic and superficial ways of implementation.

Germany informed the BFUG that their Head of delegation would suggest an amendment to the statement of the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum.

Ms. Una Strand Viðarsdóttir (Iceland), the BFUG Co-Chair asked the BFUG to send their written comments on both documents to the BFUG Secretariat. Moreover, the BFUG was informed that the drafting group would meet after the first day of the Conference for the integration of the comments. The final drafts of the documents will be made available during the second day of the Conference. Finally, it was highlighted that the comments made during the second day of the Conference should be merely the result of the discussions at the Conference.

4. AOB

The Chairs noted that there were no issues under AOB and thanked the BFUG members for contributions.