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BFUG Meeting LXXX

11-12 April 2022

Hosted by France

(venue : Council of Europe, Strasbourg)

Background note

Context

At the Board meeting on 9 February, several participants expressed the need to return to more dynamic sequences dedicated to substantive issues, with the return of face-to-face meetings. It was proposed to work on the theme of mobility and international interactions, a priority of the EHEA¹, which is in difficulty in the current context. The sequence will take place in three phases:

- keynotes in plenary recalling the issues, the history and the means of its follow-up,
- 3 parallel workshops on major issues to facilitate discussions in smaller groups,
- a return to plenary for exchange and synthesis.

Each group will appoint a rapporteur to present the results of the discussions the following day.

1. Thematic discussion on mobility: keynote speeches

The presentations will focus on two key aspects of student mobility: its forms, purposes and current recognition on the one hand and the means of statistical monitoring on the other. These presentations will be followed by a short exchange session

The aim of these introductions is to give participants a broad overview of mobility issues.

¹ [Rome Ministerial Communique.pdf \(ehea.info\)](https://www.ehea.info/~/media/Files/2017/01/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf)



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Speakers :

- Piet Van Hove (European Association for International Education and Director of the International Relations Office at the University of Antwerp)
- David Crosier (Eurydice – co-chair of the Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process)

2. Thematic discussion on mobility: breakout sessions

The participants will then be divided into 3 groups detailed below. **The choice of group will be made by a survey before the meeting to divide the participants** according to their preference. Each group will start with a round table discussion followed by exchanges between participants. The three groups are :

1) Building on the various forms of mobility as a way to enable every student benefit from an international experience

At the crossroads of physical and virtual mobility, international learning experiences can take increasingly hybrid forms. Universities are thus building on the concept of at-home internationalization, and have the opportunity to adapt mobility schemes to a wider range of their students' needs. Participants in this round table will be invited to reflect on these new learning opportunities, their implementation by universities and the diversification of student audiences that they allow.

Speakers in this session will be:

- Marina Casals - Universitat Rovira i Virgili
- Joanne Pagèze - Université de Bordeaux

2) Supporting inclusive mobility to remove barriers for disadvantaged groups

As set out in the principle 8 of the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA, "International mobility programs in higher education should be structured and implemented in a way that foster diversity, equity and inclusion and should particularly foster participation of students and staff from vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds". Participants in this



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roundtable will be invited to reflect on how to materialize this principle, and to present existing good practices in this direction. This will allow participants to reflect on the conditions for disadvantaged students to engage in some form of mobility and to ensure the inclusion of every exchange student.

Speakers in this session will be:

- Magalie Soenen - Ministry of Education and Training Flemish community
- Michael Gaebel – European University Association (EUA)

3) Brain circulation, brain mobility or brain drain : ensuring balanced mobility

The issue of brain circulation has been at the heart of the BFUG's work for almost twenty years, with the concept of "balanced mobility" mentioned as a goal of the London ministerial communiqué of the European Higher Education Area (2007). In 2020, the Zagreb call for actions on brain circulation identified solutions after considering that "by jointly addressing the topic of brain circulation and attractiveness of local ecosystems for talents, the Union and its Member States can move towards finding solutions that enable a more fair, inclusive and balanced brain circulation across the EU, as well as to attract and retain talents." Participants in this roundtable will be invited to reflect on the concepts related to brain circulation as well as the issues of the brain drain. This will trigger the opportunity to question the means to achieve a more balanced flow of talents, building on the existing tools of the EHEA.

Speakers in this session will be:

- Jakub Grodecki – European Students' Union (ESU)
- Ana Tecilazić - European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE)