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**BFUG BOARD MEETING LXVI  
Istanbul (Turkey), 24 September 2019**

Minutes

**List of participants**

Delegation	Surname	First name
BFUG Co-chair (Finland)	Innola	Maija
BFUG Co-chair (Finland)	Vuorinen	Birgitta
BFUG Co-chair (Turkey)	Döğeroğlu	Tuncay
BFUG Co-chair (Turkey)	Huntürk	Elif
BFUG outgoing Co-chair (Romania)	Ghițulică	Cristina
BFUG outgoing Co-chair (North Macedonia)	Aleksov	Borcho
BFUG incoming Co-chair (Croatia) and BICG Co-chair	Tecilazić Goršić	Ana
BFUG incoming Co-chair (Croatia)	Marusić	Leonardo
BFUG incoming Co-chair (Ukraine)	Smyrnov	Olexandr
BFUG Vice-chair (Italy)	Isaacs	Ann Katherine
Council of Europe	Bergan	Sjur
ESU and Co-chair AG1 on Social Dimension	Napier	Robert
EUA	Gaebel	Michael
EURASHE	Karpíšek	Michal

European Commission	Engels-Perenyi	Klara
Co-chair AG2 on Learning and Teaching (France)	Lalle	Philippe
Co-chair CG1 on Global Policy Dialogue (Belgium Flemish Community)	Soenen	Magalie
Co-chair WG1 on Monitoring	Strøm	Tone Flood
BFUG Secretariat	Benedetti	Filippo
BFUG Secretariat	Finocchietti	Giovanni
BFUG Secretariat	Kahani Subashi	Edlira Adi
BFUG Secretariat	Iglesias de Ussel Rubio	Rocío
BFUG Secretariat	Lantero	Luca

## 1. Welcome and Adoption of the Agenda

The Turkish Co-chair Tuncay Döğeroğlu welcomed participants. She recalled the Drafting Committee Meeting that took place the day before, followed by the Handover Ceremony, and gave the floor to the outgoing Co-chairs.

### 1.1 Information by the outgoing BFUG Co-chairs: Romania / North Macedonia

On behalf of the outgoing Co-chairs, Christina Ghițulică welcomed participants and presented updated information on the event “The Future of Education - [Bologna Process Researchers’ Conference](#)”. The updated dates for the event will be 29-31 January 2020; the venue will be the University Politehnica of Bucharest. As the conference is addressing topical themes on the BFUG agenda, a large participation from BFUG members is expected. More than 100 abstracts were received under the call for papers and a Committee is working to select 40 academic papers, that will focus on the following themes: 1. Furthering internationalisation of higher education; 2. Access and success for every learner in higher education; 3. Innovation in learning and teaching, strengthening EHEA-ERA cooperation; 4. The future of EHEA – principles, challenges and ways forward; 5. Looking forward: digital transformation in higher education and the expansion of the Bologna Process model across the world. The participation is free of charge, the expenses will be covered for the speakers and for the first author of the papers that are to be presented. Further information will be available in early November. A link to the event should be added in the [EHEA](#) website.

### 1.2 Welcome by the current BFUG Co-chairs: Finland / Turkey

The Finnish Co-chair Maija Innola welcomed the participants and thanked the Turkish Co-

chairs for the hospitality and the organisation of this meeting. She underlined that the participants' advice will be very relevant as a preparation of the next BFUG Meeting and the discussion on the future of EHEA, as well as an input for the next Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference and Communiqué. The Turkish Co-chair Elif Huntürk welcomed again all participants, expressing pleasure to host this meeting.

### 1.3 Information by the BFUG Vice-chair

The Italian Vice-chair Ann Katherine Isaacs welcomed the participants and again thanked the hosts for organising the welcome dinner and the meeting. She underlined how the BFUG working groups have started working and interact closely and this is fundamental for preparing the BFUG Meeting in Helsinki and going forward. From the Italian side, she informed that all the arrangements made with the previous Minister have been more than confirmed by the new government, and there is much synergy in the organisation of the Ministerial Conference 2020 and the Global Policy Forum.

### 1.4 Adoption of the Agenda

Some changes were made to the draft Agenda, due to need by some participants to depart early, and its final version was approved.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_1.4a Draft agenda*

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_1.4b Draft annotated agenda*

## **2. Information from the BFUG Secretariat**

The Head of the Italian BFUG Secretariat 2018-2020 Luca Lantero gave an update on the work of the BFUG Secretariat. General information was given on the ongoing issues related to the BFUG and on the consultation on the Future of the EHEA (see 4.1 for further details). Organisation of the next Ministerial Conference is in progress, and a request has been sent to the BFUG members to provide information on the minister of Higher Education of their respective countries (names, addresses, further contacts) to the Secretariat, in order to organise the sending of the invitation by the Italian Minister for Education, Universities and Research to the EHEA Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum. Replying to a question on the progress of the national consultations on the Future of EHEA, it was underlined that the initiative must be taken by the national BFUG representatives, and it is their task to involve their national stakeholders.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_2\_BFUG\_Secretariat*

## **3. Updates from the BICG, AGs, CG and WG**

### 3.1 Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)

BICG Co-chair Ana Tecilazić Goršić informed the Board on the last BICG meeting in Brussels, sharing the information on the work of the TPGs and their activities. Possible BICG future developments were discussed as well. Activities and outcomes of the 3 TPGs on the 3 key commitments already allow forming first impressions on the efficacy of the peer

approach in the implementation of the key commitments. All TPGs have had their meetings and PLAs, with the work carried out according to the workplan. The overall perception is quite positive, and the objective of having all countries participating in at least one TPG has been achieved. However, there is still room for improvement.

TPG A on QF peer support has focused on self-certification of compliance with the QF-EHEA and implementation of ECTS. Challenges met along the way concern the implementation of the NQFs, resources and political priority. The TPG A on QF has put emphasis on further work in the area of ECTS implementation in line with the ECTS Users Guide, as well as a stronger involvement of HEIs in the implementation of the NQFs. The work of the TPG B on LRC has focused on: a) digitalisation in recognition practices - use of digital credentials, digitalisation of the recognition process, application of new technologies in recognition, such as blockchain; b) links with the QA in the way to simplify verification of accreditation status - the use of DEQAR database; c) establishment of a "European Assessment Report" to ensure the portability of recognition statements. The TPG has proposed to define a set of indicators about what should be understood to be "substantial difference". The TPG has several Erasmus+ Projects ongoing in regard to the recognition key commitment. The work of the TPG C on QA focused more on: a) legislative frameworks in line with the ESG; b) ensuring effectiveness of internal quality assurance arrangements, including the use of QA results in the decision-making process and quality culture as well as links to learning and teaching; c) external quality assurance and the role and engagement of stakeholders in QA (students, teachers, employers); d) cross-border QA and the European Approach to accreditation of joint programmes. The Peer learning is carried out through several Erasmus+ projects related to QA.

The question of the deadline of the Final Report of the BICG (including reports of all TPGs) to the BFUG was raised since the TPGs still have their meetings in the first trimester of 2020, with the last one in March 2020. Therefore, the proposal is that the Final Reports could be submitted to the BFUG before its meeting in May 2020 with a thematic session on the implementation of the key commitments to be envisaged at the BFUG meeting in May.

As discussed in the last BICG meeting, there will be a short survey, asking the member countries their feedback on how they perceive the peer support and their recommendations for the future of the peer approach and the BICG. The BICG will receive the input of all TPGs and insert them into the BICG report. It is to be expected that the BICG will recommend to the BFUG to keep the three key commitments unchanged, underpinned by a few concrete examples of (initial) impact.

The discussion following the presentation, recognised that there is a clear added value in the peer approach. There is a need to shift the role of the BICG away from practical arrangements towards coordination of the policies related to the implementation of three key commitments. The BFUG should give direction to the BICG on how to stimulate more links between the peer groups on content. Currently, the Erasmus+ Programme provides financing for the umbrella projects for the peer groups. Concerns were raised regarding the sustainability of the work of these peer groups after the current funding period, in case the Ministerial Conference confirms the need for continuation. The funding for the umbrella projects currently covers the participation of peer group members in the peer group meetings. This support allowed for effective functioning of the peer groups.

In order to ensure continuity of their work, the question was raised whether support for participation in peer group meetings could be embedded in the European Commission grant

to the BFUG Secretariat in place between July 2020 and the next ministerial conference. Management and financing of participation of peer group members in the peer support group meetings by the Secretariat would allow for peer group chairs to focus on policies related to implementation of the key commitments. Modalities of the financial support (for example eligibility criteria and amount of financing) need to be further clarified between the European Commission and the next BFUG Secretariat.

Board members suggested that in case the deadline for the BICG final report is extended, the incoming BFUG co-chairs should consider organising the last BFUG meeting as full two days meeting, allowing enough time to talk about the results.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_3.1\_BICG\_Report*

### 3.2 Working Group on Monitoring (WG1) and Task Force for future monitoring of values

The Co-chair of the WG1 Tone Flood Strøm reported on the development of the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR), that will combine qualitative data, quantitative data and narrative texts. Qualitative data were collected using a questionnaire sent to the BFUG member countries. Data collection ended in early September (questions for clarification were sent to countries during the summer) and at the moment Eurydice is engaged in “data cleaning”. Answers from the countries and data validation are expected to be completed in October. Qualitative indicators and draft analysis will be sent to the BFUG for checking in November (possibly after the BFUG meeting). Quantitative data collection, production and analysis are being undertaken via a contract managed by EACEA. Eurostat is the main source of data, while data from countries outside the European Statistical System are collected via questionnaires (three countries have not yet returned their questionnaires). Statistical indicators, analyses and graphic visualisation will be developed during the autumn, to be integrated in the draft BPIR by the end of the year. As for the narrative section of the Report, WG1 approved guidelines for the drafting of the narrative texts, that are currently being drafted by EQAR and ENQA (Development of the QA system), EUROSTUDENT (Development of the social dimension) and ACA (Development of internationalisation in HE). A further narrative section is being written on the degree structure reforms. Drafts should be ready for integration in the BPIR by the end of the year. A further meeting of the WG1 is foreseen between the next two BFUG meetings, to give guidance on how to finalise the BPIR.

The Task Force (TF) work is in progress and also made a good use of inputs by experts, researchers and organisations. The TF has considered how to approach the issue of fundamental values. The remit of the Task Force focuses on the values outlined in the Paris Communiqué - academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education. As a first step the TF has chosen to focus particularly on academic freedom. Monitoring of fundamental values should take into account both the legal protection of the values and the actual level of respect of the same values. The objective is to strengthen existing mechanisms to monitor the respect of the values and possibly to develop new monitoring systems. TF is committing to present a short and clear definition of academic freedom that can help to achieve a common understanding across the EHEA and can be embedded in the Rome Communiqué (maybe with more details outlined in an annex). Looking at the post- 2020, TF is discussing proposals for a possible mapping of the situation in EHEA countries (e.g. laws, regulations, etc); developing a monitoring framework focused on

fundamental values; strengthening the reference to fundamental values in a future revision of the ESG. The next TF meeting will take place in two weeks.

During the discussion it was clarified that the TF is aware of the fact that there is no ongoing plan for changing the ESG, but when this happens academic values should be taken into consideration. It was also proposed that financing, relations between public authorities and institutions, and relations between academic freedom and quality in research and teaching should be looked at.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_3.2\_WG1\_Report*

### 3.3 Advisory Group 1 on Social Dimension (AG1)

The Co-chair of the AG1 Robert Napier reported on the development of the Document "European Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education" that the Group should deliver to the next Ministerial Conference. Following the discussions after the Group meetings, hosted in Zagreb (19 February 2019), Brussels (29 March 2019) and Vienna (5 June 2019), the initial idea of developing two sets of Principles and Guidelines (PAGs) is possibly moving towards one combined version, based on 10 PAGs, representing a vision for the next decade and affirming SD as a core value of the Bologna Process. During the summer the Drafting Team worked on inputs and comments, and the Co-chairs are finalising a proposal for a combined version. Then, an online consultation will be open in October on the new draft version, and a final decision will be reached on the issue of one or two sets of PAGs. The next meeting of the AG1 will focus on the fine tuning of principles, also discussing the topic of SD as a core commitment for the EHEA, as well as the topics of monitoring and of peer learning activities (planned in November 2019 and February 2020). The main topics included in the 10 PAGs draft were presented, including a reference to the proposed related guidelines.

The discussion focused, among other things, on the concepts of SD as a "key" vs. a "core" commitment for the EHEA and for the HE strategies. SD should be seen not as an additional commitment but as stimulus for the other principles to be implemented. The difficulty in reaching a univocal notion of SD, as it can be interpreted in different ways by different countries, was noted. PAGs should engage national authorities and develop a discussion in their respective countries.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_3.3\_AG1\_SD\_Report*

### 3.4 Advisory Group 2 on Learning and Teaching (AG2)

The Co-chair of AG2 Philippe Lalle gave an update of the work done so far and of the current situation and next steps. Following discussions and decisions from the Group's meetings (Brussels, 28 February 2019; Paris, 9-10 April 2019; Bologna, 27 June 2019; Drafting Group, 6 September 2019 - on line) a first draft is in progress. The document is based on principles and guidelines (what the group find important regarding the theme) and government recommendation (what national governments can/should do) and should consist of recommendations that are structured in three chapters: making student-centred learning a reality; fostering learning through improved teaching practices; strengthening HEIs organizational development to support learning and teaching. The chapters have the same

structure: policy recommendations; principles and European good practices. The main focus will be on open education, open education resources, digital transformation, with an emphasis on innovation. Envisaged future steps of the Group will be continuing the work on the recommendations – including (re-)structuring and prioritising them, also on the basis of the feedback received in the Meeting – and collecting best practices related to the draft recommendations. Next meetings of the Group are planned for 9 October (Drafting group - on line), and January 2020.

The discussion focused, among other things, on the following: how to better integrate the Group's proposals into the current Bologna cooperation practices and instruments; emphasizing the need for good teachers as a strategic target for the future of EHEA; the possibility to include socio-emotional skills to complement the envisaged future graduates' professional skills.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_3.4\_AG2\_L&T\_Report*

### 3.5 Coordination Group 1 on Global Policy Dialogue (CG1)

The Co-chair of the CG1 Magalie Soenen reported on the development of the work of the Group. Two meetings were held (Brussels, 8 February 2019; Bologna, 24 June 2019) as a follow up of the Bologna Policy Forum held in Paris. Follow-up letters were sent (including a reminder) to the countries that joined the Forum, as well as to a number of countries that didn't join it. Few reactions were gathered, and the idea is that working with regional and global organisations might be more effective. Two sub-groups have been created, a former working on the lists of countries and organisations to be invited to Rome, a latter working on the drafting of the Global Policy Statement 2020. Possible topics for the Statement include, among others: a.) the vital role of HE in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; b.) the need of reinforcing constant dialogue at global level; c.) the emphasis on Social Dimension; d.) the different aspects of inclusion: not only access to HE, but also retention, success and employability; e.) mobility as a key to global understanding and to excellence in HE; f.) the referencing of the several Qualifications Frameworks; g.) the importance of student centred learning and its implications; h.) the need to ensure trust in the increasingly globalised context of HE; i.) the importance of digitalisation to enable innovation, greater transparency, better communication and more flexibility in L&T. Looking at the format of the Global Policy Forum 2020, particular regions should not be targeted, and focus will be mainly on macro-regions; the organisation of parallel sessions will be discussed.

The discussion underlined the need to reach a consensus among BFUG members on the list of countries to invite, looking at the particular situation of some countries; information on the list should be available in advance in order to make checks before sending the invitations. Cooperation on this topic was agreed among the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the BFUG Secretariat.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_3.5\_CG1\_GPD\_Report*

### 3.6 EHEA Network of NQF Correspondent

The CoE informed about the Network of National Correspondents for QFs. The written report had been sent out. The increase in attendance at the annual network meeting seen for the

2018 meeting was noticeable also in 2019. The conclusion shows the importance of the network, with clear distinction from the TPG A on QF. The list of the National Correspondents was updated by BFUG Secretariat. The meeting focused on the coherence between QFs, recognition and QA. The criteria for self-certification are very similar to EQF referencing. When countries prepare their referencing report, they should be specific about the self-certification criteria against the QF-EHEA within the referencing report. The other main issues discussed concerned the inclusion of short cycle qualifications within the QF-EHEA. Even if countries do not include short cycle qualifications in their systems, they need to recognise short cycle qualifications issued by other countries.

The Board was invited to take note of the discussions and issues raised in the annual meeting, and consider submitting it to the BFUG, with a recommendation that further developments of the QF-EHEA be included in the Rome 2020 Ministerial Communiqué. These issues are a review of the criteria on self-certification, the need to develop criteria for undertaking new self-certification of NQFs, inclusion of further development of QFs as well as continuation of the network of National Correspondents for QFs in the work program for the post 2020 BFUG.

The discussion raised the issue of a lack of clear distinction between the network of National Correspondents for QFs and the TPG A on QF. As some members felt the division of responsibilities had not been clear so far, they saw a need for finding better synergies for the future between the two. The Council of Europe suggested the main focus of the peer group should be on implementation, whereas the Network is (also) concerned with policy development. EURASHE informed also that recent discussions about short cycle qualifications showed that there is still confusion on how and at which level this type of qualifications are integrated in the national qualifications frameworks. There are examples of strong private companies entering the market in cooperation with HEIs, which raises the need to discuss the definition of “higher education” in the EHEA. The discussion was concluded with the statement that the topics of self-certification and short cycle courses need further policy development. The good cooperation with EQF, including the Council of Europe’s membership of the EQF Advisory Group, ensures that the two processes are well linked.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_3.6\_NQF\_Correspondents*

#### **4. Future of EHEA - BFUG work on the vision and thematic priorities for the EHEA after 2020**

##### **4.1 Conclusions from the Bucharest BFUG Meeting and information from the national consultations**

The Romanian outgoing BFUG Co-chair retraced the main steps of the work on vision and thematic priorities for the EHEA after 2020. In the period 2012-2015 the working group on “Policy development for new EHEA goals” operated. In the current working period, an online survey was carried out in October 2018 by the BFUG Co-chairs Austria and Switzerland, and a discussion spanning over two days was held during the BFUG Meeting in Bucharest on 4-5 April 2019. It started with a keynote speaker that introduced the subject; the results of the survey implemented in 2018 were presented; parallel discussion groups took place, starting from a Preparatory Note setting the context and introducing three questions, to allow members to express their opinions in a focused fashion. Afterwards, the moderators reported



from the discussions within the groups and at the end of the discussion another keynote speaker drew the conclusions and added new perspectives. In that meeting it was also agreed to conduct a follow-up consultation at national level and among member organisations, that was based on the document “BFUG work on vision and thematic priorities after 2020 - Summary of the current state of affairs (final draft of the document approved in June 2019)”. Based on the reports provided by the moderators, the discussions in Bucharest have been summarised under the following themes: a.) The societal role of higher education; b.) Inclusiveness of higher education; c.) Innovative, flexible and relevant learning and teaching; d.) Lifelong learning; e.) Digitalisation; f.) Internationalisation and mobility; g.) Governance and autonomy. An invitation to conduct the consultation was sent via e-mail to all BFUG members, while on the home page of the EHEA site a link was placed to the [consultation page](#), visible to any person/institution interested in the Bologna Process. The consultation would be open until 15 October 2019. The involvement of all members of the academic community, national and local authorities, of all stakeholders interested in higher education, as well as society at large, is crucial for planning the future of the European Higher Education Area. BFUG members and Consultative members are reporting back to the BFUG Secretariat using an [e-form](#).

#### 4.2 Report from the Conference Bologna Process Beyond 2020: Fundamental values of EHEA

The Head of the Italian BFUG Secretariat 2018-2020 Luca Lantero thanked BFUG Members, Consultative Members and Partners for the dissemination of the event, for having sent their representatives, as well as for giving their relevant input to the discussions. The Conference was organised with five parallel sessions. The Conference proved to be a huge event, with almost 200 rectors and more than 1,000 people attending. Almost all documents and materials are already available online in the Conference [website](#). Following a request made by the Drafting Committee, the BFUG Secretariat has produced a document summarising the speakers’ inputs and the reports from the parallel sessions. The document will be used as an input for the Committee in the drafting of the Communiqué.

Participants commented that the Conference allowed academics and institutional representatives to meet and work together. A lot of discussions took place, and the diversity of HEIs, students and governmental representatives proved to be an important element for the success of the event. Thanks were expressed to the BFUG Secretariat and the Italian colleagues for the event, which gave all participants the assurance of the relevance of the EHEA

#### 4.3 Next steps and organisation of the discussion on future priorities at the Helsinki BFUG Meeting

The BFUG Vice-chair Ann Katherine Isaacs underlined that the formula of group discussions implemented during the BFUG meeting in Bucharest seems to have been successful and productive, and therefore suggested repeating it for the Helsinki BFUG meeting. A concept note should be distributed in advance, and groups should discuss the same topics (rather than different ones), allowing different perspectives and inputs for the same topic. The BFUG Vice-chair proposed that a goal for the next decade could be building the European higher education “community”, as the idea of a “community” has the potential to gain the support of

students and teachers as well as of stakeholders and society at large, a necessary condition in order to have impact and achieve success. Three questions were proposed to open the discussion on this topic: do you think that the image of a European Higher Education “community” is useful for the EHEA? How can stakeholders collaborate in the “community”? Which elements should we focus on for shaping a European Higher Education “community”? An additional question should connect those topics to the EHEA vision for 2030.

The discussion highlighted pros and cons of using the terms "area", "system" and "community". It has been observed that the Bologna Process aims to make national systems more comparable and transparent, without creating a single system. For this reason, the concept of "area" appears to be adequate. It has also been observed that the use of the term "system" might have implications on the legislation of the countries and also implies there is a (single) competent public authority for the system, while, on the other hand, a "community" could not exist without a "system". The expression "community" makes visible the idea of having "something in common", which is very clear in the image of the EHEA and is positively associated with the idea of inclusion. The “community” vision could also accommodate the third role of universities – the role in the society, which becomes more and more important. This came out also from the discussion in Bucharest, that underlined ideas like: protectors of freedom of speech and thought and promoters / guardians of valuable ideas and core values; motors for community or regional development; promoting values such as civic engagement and democracy; regional hubs, centres of excellence; ethical dimension of knowledge; to shape character and transmit values; public good model; environmental awareness and responsibility; research activities should be creating a positive impact on society etc. that should be part of the mission of universities.

As for the draft concept note, it was agreed to circulate the draft to the Board members. The concept note will be developed further for the Helsinki BFUG meeting.

## **5. Draft agenda for the BFUG Meeting in Helsinki**

The Finnish Co-chair Maija Innola presented the Draft Agenda of the BFUG Meeting (Helsinki, 12-13 November 2019).; the NQF correspondents Network report would be added to the agenda. It was agreed that focus will be on discussions based on draft recommendation and proposals of the various BFUG sub-groups. Discussion on the topic “Future of the EHEA and new priorities” will be based on the outcomes on the national consultations that are still in progress, and on the concept note, the draft of which has been presented in this meeting.

*Attachment: BFUG\_FI\_TK\_LXVII\_Draft Agenda*

## **6. Information by the incoming Co-chairs**

### **6.1 BFUG Board meeting in Zagreb, Croatia (7 February 2020)**

The Croatian incoming Co-chair Ana Tecilazić Goršić gave information on the EU Presidency Croatia 2020, underlining that it will be the first Croatian EU Presidency. The context, the possible priorities in Education and a provisional calendar of events for this sector were presented. The dates and venues of the BFUG Board meeting (Zagreb, 6-7 February 2020) and of the BFUG meeting (Split, 4-5 May 2020) were announced.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_6 Croatia\_Incoming\_Co-chair*

## 6.2 BFUG Meeting in Kyiv, Ukraine (4 - 5 March 2020)

The Ukrainian incoming Co-Chair Olexandr Smyrnov gave information on the incoming co-chairing semester. Basic information on the country, the HE system and the international performance of Ukrainian HE was presented. The dates and venues of the BFUG meeting LXIX (Kyiv, 4-5 March 2020) and of the BFUG Board meeting LXX (Lviv, 3 April 2020) were announced.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_6 Ukraine\_Incoming\_Co\_chair*

## 6.3 BFUG Board Meeting in Lviv, Ukraine (3 April 2020)

See 6.2.

## 6.4 BFUG Meeting in Split, Croatia (4 - 5 May 2020)

See 6.1.

## **7. EHEA - ERA collaboration and coordination process**

### 7.1 Information about the Joint Conference of the EU Directors-General for Higher Education and the ERA Committee and informal meeting of ERAC and BFUG Co-chairs

There is a mandate from the Paris Communiqué to establish connections with ERA to develop synergies between the two areas. Two steps have been taken so far in order to develop a more systematic interaction: an informal meeting involving the Co-chairs of European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) and EHEA was held last week in Brussels; a Joint Conference of EU Directors-General for HE (DGHE) and ERAC will be held in Helsinki on 1 October. The aim of the Helsinki Conference is to foster dialogue between the two areas. Discussions are organised around three major themes: co-creation of knowledge through openness; digitalisation and artificial intelligence as accelerators for better learning and research; education, research and innovation in the next decade. A draft programme of the Helsinki Conference is available in the Board meeting documentation.

The informal meeting held in Brussels between the ERAC co-chairs and the Finnish BFUG Co-chairs found common ground for cooperation. There was agreement that there is now momentum for cooperation, since both areas are working on a vision for the next decade and are discussing their future working methods. Practical solutions to ensure better flow of information and allow discussion on common themes should be developed rather than create new structures for collaboration.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_7.1\_EHEA ERAC Conference*

### 7.2 Discussion about the next steps

A short discussion paper about the next steps will be prepared for the next BFUG meeting in Helsinki. Information was given about possible intentions for further collaboration

between the EHEA and ERA during the coming German Presidency.

## **8. Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum**

### 8.1 Report from the Drafting Committee

The BFUG Vice-chair gave a brief description of the work carried out by the drafting committee and the last meeting the day before the Board meeting on 23 September 2019. The Drafting Committee looked at the information received from different working groups and where it could fit in the Ministerial Communiqué. The drafting committee considered also the roadmap draft, very detailed, which tries to give cadence to the work, identifying the hard deadlines. Fundamental moments for the drafting communiqué are the meetings before the Board and after the BFUG meeting (in all there will be five more meetings).

The first draft (Draft 0) of the Rome 2020 Communiqué will be discussed during the BFUG meeting in Helsinki. The idea of the discussion is to get general comments about the structure and content to guide the future work of the Drafting Committee.

### 8.2 Road map for Rome 2020 Communiqué and Global Policy Forum Statement

See item 8.4

### 8.3 Information from the host

See item 8.4

### 8.4 Tentative Programme for the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference

Item 8.2 to 8.4 were discussed jointly. The Head of BFUG Secretariat shared information on the event Rome 2020 for the Ministerial Conference. As some of BFUG Members / Consultative Members have expressed their interest in organising side events, the BFUG Secretariat will send out a message to gather expressions of interest. BFUG Secretariat launched also the idea of three side events to be organised, with thematic discussions on the three Key Commitments. Participants raised the question in regard to the involvement of BFUG in the side events, what would be the focus and how this should be organised, as well as the need to make these side events attractive to the academic community. EC mentioned that a new Europass will be ready sometime around the first half of 2020, and this would be a good opportunity to present this tool. CoE would like to present European Qualification Passport for Refugees tool. The other event of interest might be the presentation of a book, which will be published in spring 2020, on academic freedom, institutional autonomy and the future of democracy, following the Global Conference organised by the CoE in June 2019.

CG1 on GPD is expected to be involved, considering that the side events would be organised on global scale, with participants from outside the EHEA region; the CG1 on GPD has the mandate to deal with it.

Other groups could think of some activities and present their initiatives during the Call which will be published shortly.

## **9. Application from the Republic of San Marino to join the EHEA**

The BFUG Secretariat received a letter with an expression of interest from The Republic of San Marino to join the EHEA. The Secretariat suggested to proceed as in previous cases, asking the applicant to submit a National Report to the BFUG Secretariat by 1 November 2019 at latest, in order to send it to BFUG Members and prepare for a discussion in the next Board Meeting. Suggestions were made to use the WG1 questionnaire on implementation as a reference for drafting the structure of the applicant report, which should include also information on topics such as academic freedom and the short-cycle of HE.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_9\_San Marino Application letter*

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_9\_Application to join the EHEA*

## **10. Application procedure and schedule for the next Ministerial Conference after 2020**

There have been informal expressions of interest but at the moment no formal applications from any country has been submitted to organise the next Ministerial Conference and manage the next BFUG Secretariat. The present BFUG Secretariat drafted a document explaining the procedures for submitting applications. The document has been circulated among the Board members.

The floor was opened for discussions. The proposal to accept a country's candidature to host the next Conference will be made by the BFUG to the Ministers, who will take a decision. The issue of the structure of a next BFUG Secretariat (also with regard to a possible future permanent Secretariat) was also discussed. The discussion on the BFUG Secretariat in the future should be left open, considering that a decision on the topic might be postponed to a next Ministerial Conference, hypothetically in 2023 or 2024 but the responsibility to host a secretariat should be added to the task of the host of the next Ministerial Conference after 2020. As the BFUG Meeting in Helsinki will be mainly focused on the issues of the post-2020 vision, it was agreed that the topic of how the EHEA will be managed in the future will be postponed to the meetings in the first semester of 2020. It was also agreed that the draft document on the procedures will be revised, to be discussed in the BFUG meeting in Helsinki.

*Attachment: BOARD\_FI\_TK\_66\_10 post 2020 BFUG ministerial*

## **11. AOB**

The Co-chair of the TPG C on QA informed the Board on a request – received through the BFUG Secretariat – from the *Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen* (AEC), to join the TPG A on QF and TPG C on QA. According to the Rules of Procedures and in accordance with the BFUG decision, the BFUG Secretariat advised the AEC to send a request to the relevant Co-chairs. The issue was discussed also in the BICG meeting. The procedures could be interpreted in different ways. In the Rules of Procedures it is mentioned that “*Partners are organisations that wish to be associated with the Bologna Process/the BFUG but are not included in the Consultative member category.*”

*At present, the following four organisations are partners: the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the Council of European professional and managerial staff (Eurocadres), Eurodoc, the European Association for Promotion of Science and Technology (Euroscience). They can, upon request, attend BFUG events and may be invited by a WG/AG to send an expert who will participate in some part of the work".* If the decision is up to a WG/AG co-chair, there might be various outcomes to such requests. AEC asked to be a member at their own expense (for travel arrangements). However, if several BFUG partners take part in meetings in the future, this would also result in higher meeting costs for the organisers. The issue is as to whether the topic should be discussed by the Board and/or the BFUG for the future. The answer sent to the AEC was formulated as a positive response, also considering the fact that the group will have its third and last meeting in January 2019 in Ghent, Belgium, as their mandate finishes with the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference.

Discussion underlined that AEC represents a part of the HE sector not represented by the EUA or EURASHE, and therefore considered this an opportunity to address issues which cannot be addressed otherwise. It was also emphasized that including the Music sector would be a benefit and an added value for the EHEA as a whole, since they do comply with the BP key commitments.

## **12. Conclusion of the Meeting**

Turkish Co-chair finished the meeting by thanking all participants for their attendance and active discussions. The Finnish and Turkish Co-chairs thanked the BFUG Secretariat for the support and congratulated participants for the fruitful meeting and constructive discussions.