



Working Group on Learning and Teaching (WG on L&T)

Seventh Meeting, Online

5 April 2023

09.30-12.30 (CET)

Minutes

List of participants

Country	Name	Last Name
Armenia	Lilit	Sarsyan
Austria	Alexander	Kohler
Croatia	Vlatka	Blažević
ENQA	Anna	Gover
ESU	Andrej	Prijevec
EURASHE (Co-Chair)	Ana	Tecilazić
EI - ETUCE	Agnes	Roman
EUA	Therese	Zhang
France (Co-Chair)	Philippe	Lalle
Georgia	Lali	Giorgidze
Georgia	Lasha	Zivzivadze
Germany	Paul	Klar
Hungary	Laura	Sinóros- Szabó
Hungary	Megyeri	Flóra
Ireland	Richard	Brophy
Norway	Silje	Refsnes
Romania	Ciprian	Fartuşnic
San Marino	Monica	Cavalli
Switzerland	Antoine	Maret
Slovenia	Mateja	Berčan
Turkey	Mustafa	Sozbilir
BFUG Secretariat	Oltion	Rrumbullaku
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik	Bardhi

Albania, Armenia, Belgium Flemish Community, Italy, Kazakhstan, The Netherlands, Portugal, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Kingdom (Scotland) did not attend the meeting.

1. Welcome remarks and the approval of the agenda

The Co-Chairs welcomed everybody to the seventh 2021-2024 work period meeting. An outline of the agenda was provided, which was approved. The previous meeting's minutes were

approved.

For more information, please see: [WG LT 7 Agenda](#)

2. Updates by the co-chairs and the Secretariat

Ana Telazic (co-chair) presented to the last BFUG Board meeting the updated progress report and submitted the first proposal for the Communique on staff development. Feedback from the Board indicated that the proposals were well-aligned with their expectations, including the European Commission's ongoing work on sustainable academic careers. The Drafting Committee members inquired about the possibility of including an annex in the Communique or proposing commitments without one. The Council of Europe raised the question of covering ethical topics, particularly in relation to the use of artificial intelligence in learning and teaching. It's important to emphasize a system-level approach rather than focusing solely on institutional practices, as suggested in the received comment. It was suggested to explore the establishment of a thematic peer group on Learning and Teaching in the next phase, aligning with the envisioned structure of the Communique.

Oltion Rrumbullaku (BFUG Secretariat) presented the changes that have occurred during the previous period, including experts leaving and new experts joining. Edlira Subashi is now leading the BFUG Secretariat. The Secretariat has reached out to all working groups to schedule specific meetings, fostering cooperation between the Secretariat and the groups. The experts are well-prepared for the upcoming final phase of the journey leading to the next ministerial meeting. An upgrade to the website is underway, with the previous version being replaced by a more secure and updated version.

3. The results from the Landscape Scan

Richard Brophy discussed the successful Paris PLA that covered topics on staff development, including skills for teachers in higher education, teaching and digitalization, and teaching support and careers. The outcomes of the activity generated good discussions and insights, leading to working proposals and a lot of thinking points to work on. The presenter noted that the pandemic was a disrupter, and the level of digitalization varied across the membership. Finally, the landscape methodology used the valuable content from the Paris PLA.

He presented the main results from the Landscape Scan and suggested that the methodology's output should be treated as recommendations to be shared as widely as possible. Seven evolving themes and 51 attributes were identified through the methodology. The most common theme is enhancing quality and learning and teaching. Other important themes are the technology driven course delivery and student-centered learning. The other themes that are important on their own right, but not as popular in terms of submissions include capacity building, recognition of prior learning, alternative course delivery and the supportive environment.

The theme of enhancing quality was discussed, which included dominant attributes such as technology, knowledge transfer, student engagement, innovation, staff development, and internationalization. Other attributes contributing to this theme included quality control, industry engagement, professional competencies, and academic integrity. Next, the theme of technology-driven course delivery was discussed, with the dominant attributes being student experience and engagement. Other supporting attributes included knowledge transfer, inclusiveness, soft skills development, innovation, and community. One interesting submission featured artificial intelligence. Following that, the theme of student-centered learning was discussed, with the dominant attributes being technology, subskills development, innovation, engagement, and lifelong learning. Other attributes included systems level change, incentivizing bridging programs, tailored education provision, teaching and quality enhancement, hybrid learning, inclusiveness, and internationalization. It was stated that the four other themes are distinctive in our own right, but not as popular in terms of countries responses submissions.

In conclusion, the Landscape Scan information submitted aligned with the vision and objectives of the BFUG and EHEA, fulfilling an innovative, interconnected, and inclusive EHEA. There was a general consensus on fostering continuous enhancement of teaching through the use of frameworks, funding and governance processes. Capacity strengthening was also widely discussed, with innovation being significant during the pandemic and again amongst the strongest attributes.

Some questions and comments were raised regarding the report on current development in various countries. One question was about the possibility of reading individual country descriptions in detail, while another comment was about the need for additional country contributions to the report.

It was agreed that the country submissions would be shared with the group. The deadline for new submissions was extended to May 26, and an email will be sent to the Secretariat to remind the BFUG to contribute with examples. The progress report will also include this request. The co-chairs will coordinate the sharing of the submissions in due course.

4. Proposal for ministerial commitments on L&T in the EHEA

4.1 Discussion on the possible documents

Philippe Llalle (co-chair) opened the discussion about the work that remained to be done and what could be produced. A question was raised about whether to propose an Annex to the Communiqué. A suggestion was forwarded by the Drafting Committee as there were enough of possible recommendations on Staff Development and that the lengthy contribution submitted could be condensed into an Annex.

The group discussed the possibility of creating an Annex on attached to the Tirana Communiqué. It was suggested that proposing an Annex should provide added value and a sense of progression compared to the existing Annex 3 of the Rome Communiqué. However, some members expressed hesitations, as creating an Annex that is agreed and endorsed by all EHEA countries can take a lot of time. Some members suggested that a strong paragraph could be included in the Communiqué, instead of an Annex. Ultimately, the group agreed that there were probably not enough new ideas to justify creating an Annex for the Communiqué, but the report of the working group would reflect all these discussions.

4.2 Discussion on Innovative Learning and Teaching

The meeting focused on the topic of innovative learning and teaching, with participants discussing various aspects related to this theme. They deliberated on the possibility of forming a subgroup dedicated to working on this area. The broad and vague nature of innovative learning and teaching was acknowledged, prompting the need to narrow down the core message to be conveyed in the final Communiqué. Suggestions were made to create a concise and straightforward statement, such as "supporting innovative learning and teaching is essential."

The participants expressed concerns about the limited timeframe available for developing additional activities in this area. They recognized the importance of selecting their battles wisely and prioritizing certain aspects. It was proposed that a small subgroup be established to draft one or two sentences addressing ethics, assessment, and the use of tools. Blended learning was considered relevant, especially in relation to the social dimension of education.

The meeting also touched upon the impact of artificial intelligence, specifically ChatGPT, on the teaching profession. The participants highlighted the need for initial education and continuous

professional development for teachers and higher education staff regarding the use of artificial intelligence, its risks, and opportunities. They suggested leveraging the European Commission's work in this area and gathering insights from their initiatives and discussions.

The Council of Europe's involvement in raising the topic of ethical aspects, particularly concerning artificial intelligence, was mentioned. The participants agreed that ethics and technology intersected with various chapters of their work, such as staff development and innovative teaching and learning.

Members suggested the potential of technology in transforming assessment practices. Nevertheless, assessments were considered a difficult matter to address at the system level, and it was suggested to integrate assessments into the broader topic of student-centric learning. The possibility of addressing assessment challenges within the framework of the upcoming PLA on student-centered learning was proposed.

4.3 Ministerial commitments on Staff Development

Philippe Lalle presented the report on Staff Development. He summarized ideas from previous events, including the PLA in October and the EUA LOTUS project meeting, to group them into three to four axes to deliver simple and clear messages. Philippe also emphasized that when discussing staff, it included all teachers with permanent positions, temporary teachers, and staff from educational support centers as they are all part of the pedagogical staff.

During the meeting, there was a discussion about distinguishing between what should be included in the proposal for the draft communique and what could be retained for the report of the group. It was emphasized that just because something is not proposed for the ministers to endorse, it doesn't mean it can't be included in the report. The group agreed to keep this distinction in mind while discussing the different aspects of the proposal.

During the discussion on the draft, a participant expressed their concern about the inclusion of compulsory continuous professional development, as it could open up many discussions such as national legislation and sustainable budgets. The question of mandatory training was discussed, and while it may not be included in ministerial commitments, it was suggested to keep it in the document as it reflected the ideas and contributions of the group.

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The topic of national platforms for digital educational resources was discussed. The idea of sharing resources between teachers was considered beneficial in terms of saving time and avoiding duplication of efforts. However, there was also recognition of the critical point of reusing resources created by others. Shorter formats such as videos were suggested to facilitate sharing. It was noted that Norway has a national platform for digital educational resources under development, which institutions can join to share resources. Concerns were raised about GDPR compliance. The suggestion was made to focus on promoting open educational resources in the final communique rather than specifically mentioning national platforms.

During the meeting, there was a debate on teaching awards as an instrument to support innovative teaching and learning, and whether it leads to mainstream parity of esteem. There were two different approaches, one being more focused on certifications regarding teaching skills and quality. However, there was also a recognition that teaching awards lead to the

recognition of best practices and sharing of these practices in teaching and learning. The importance of student involvement in the process of choosing award recipients was highlighted, as it can boost student-centered learning. Additionally, providing a platform for awardees to disseminate their ideas and achievements can support innovative teaching and learning and motivate teachers. Overall, there was agreement on the need for mechanisms for recognizing excellence in teaching, whether through teaching awards or other means.

The edited version of the document will be uploaded to Google Drive for everyone in the Working Group to view, and the group will continue discussions at the next meeting.

5. PLA on student-centered learning in Bucharest

Discussions were made regarding the organization of a Peer Learning Activity in Bucharest focused on student-centered learning in June 2023. The activity will be hosted by the Polytechnics of Bucharest in Romania. The proposed agenda includes presentations on the student-centered learning topic from the perspective of students and ESGs. The PLA will also discuss the challenges institutions face in implementing student-centered learning. The Working Group on Monitoring will also share the new indicators developed to monitor student-centered learning, and learning and teaching in general, that are already in use. After lunch, the group will divide into smaller groups to discuss possible ministerial commitments on student-centered learning and propose recommendations for a communique. The group will also share examples of good practices in system-level approaches to student-centered learning, including assessments.

During the meeting, participants were asked to share system-level practices related to student-centered learning that could be used in the PLA. One participant suggested inviting Steve Rutherford, an expert in curriculum and assessment in digital learning, for guidance and materials on boosting assessment literacy for students and teachers. While not a system-level example in the traditional sense, his expertise could be valuable in adopting a learning outcome-oriented approach. Another participant recommended showcasing how student-centered approaches are used in the PROFFORMANCE project's assessment tool for teachers' performance evaluation.

6. AOB & Next Meeting

The group discussed whether to have a physical meeting on the day before or after the PLA online. They agreed that having both meetings together, physically, would be more efficient and beneficial since it may be one of the last opportunities to work together in person. They discussed the possibility of having a blended meeting on the day before and only a physical PLA. The decision was not concluded, and a survey would be sent later to gather more information about participation and availability. No other topics were discussed, and the meeting was concluded.