



**WORKING GROUP ON MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS**

Third Meeting, Hosted by Norway, Online*
Monday, 21 March 2022
10.00 - 13.00 (Brussels time)

Minutes

List of Participants

Country	Name	Last Name
Austria	Helga	Posset
Cyprus	Cleo	Savvidou
EI - ETUCE	Andreas	Keller
EQAR	Melinda	Szabo
European University Association (EUA)	Henriette	Stoeber
European Commission/ Eurydice (Co-Chair)	David	Crosier
Germany	Marit	Metternich
Malta	Valerie	Attard
The Netherlands	Robert	Wagenaar
Norway (Co-Chair)	Tone Flood	Strøm
Romania	Camelia	Mircea-Sturza
BFUG Secretariat (Head)	Oltion	Rrumbullaku
BFUG Secretariat	Aida	Myrto
BFUG Secretariat	Jora	Vaso
BFUG Secretariat	Enis	Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Migena	Stafa

Albania, Belarus, Czech Republic, ESU, Eurostudent, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia and United Kingdom did not participate.

1. Welcome by the WG Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs welcomed everybody to the third meeting of the 2021-2024 work period. The agenda of the meeting was adopted without changes and the minutes of the second WG on Monitoring meeting were approved without additional remarks.

For more detailed information, please see: [WG Monitoring FR AZ 3 Agenda](#)
[WG Monitoring SI AM 2 Minutes of the meeting](#)

2. Feedback from the Extraordinary BFUG Board meeting (18.03.2022)

Tone Flood Strøm (Co-Chair) delivered a summary on the discussions and conclusions of the Extraordinary Board meeting, which focused essentially on the present situation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Additional discussions centered on the Rules of Procedure 2021-2024 (RoP), highlighting that the current document does not include rules that specifically and explicitly address the suspension of a BFUG member.

Following this meeting, a revised version of the “EHEA Statement by members and consultative members of the BFUG on consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine” was decided to be distributed to the BFUG members and consultative members.

For more information, please see: [Extraordinary BFUG Board meeting 79/1](#)

3. Updates on other BFUG Working Structures’ meetings

3.1. Update on the BFUG meeting 78

With regards to the previous BFUG meeting¹, specific decisions to the WG on Monitoring included the positive reception of the proposed structures of the WG on Monitoring, which was given the green light for future development. More general decisions included the modification of the order of the BFUG Co-Chairmanship, with Kazakhstan being the new Co-Chair for the period 1 July – 31 December 2022 following the suspension of Belarus’ co-chairmanship, as well as updates of other BFUG working structures.

For more information, please see: [BFUG SI AM 78 Minutes of meeting](#)

3.2. Update on the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG) meeting

In the previous BICG meeting², the approval of the Erasmus Umbrella Project was confirmed, and work has officially commenced. A discussion on the implementation of the three Key Commitments (KCs) was held, with the key challenge being to ensure that some appealing themes do not become an impediment to reaching the BICG and TPGs' principal objective, that of working towards the full implementation of the three KCs and fundamental values. Thus, it was concluded that a good balance between attractive new initiatives and thorough implementation of the KCs should be achieved. Another pending concern regarded the existing situation in the TPGs, which included members from Belarus and Russia. It was clarified that should the statement³ in its current state be approved by the BFUG, Belarus and Russia will be suspended from the TPGs as well as all BFUG working structures.

For more information, please see: [BICG FR AZ 3 Minutes of meeting](#)

3.3. Working Group on Fundamental Values (FV)

A consultation meeting with experts on fundamental values was held at the last meeting of the WG on Fundamental Values. The necessity to agree upon common conceptual frameworks for the remaining fundamental values in line with what the ministers have already adopted for academic freedom was underlined. It was also agreed that, public responsibility “for” and “of” higher education” are two different concepts and should be dealt with as such, and so “academic freedom” and “academic integrity” which should also be dealt with separately. In conclusion it was proposed to split the four values into six, though it was underlined that they remain interconnected and are, as such, not easily separated.

It was generally agreed upon that stakeholder should be included in the development of indicators. All participants agreed that in order to obtain effective results by the end of the year, more streamlined and pragmatic decisions must be made at this point in time. It is of

¹ Seventy-eighth Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting, online, hosted by Slovenia, 1-2 December 2021.

² Third Meeting of the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group, hosted by Austria, 21 January 2022.

³ Statement by members and consultative members of the BFUG on consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

crucial importance to effectively manage the collection of all necessary data while managing time constraints and not overburdening any data contributors.

3.4. Working Group on Social Dimension (SD)

A significant update involved the WG on SD forming four subgroups, each dedicated to develop and discuss potential indicators, based on those created by Eurydice. The proposals, scorecard indicators and background indicators published in the report on Social Dimension Principles and Guidelines on March 29th, 2022 will be built upon by the WG on SD. This will lead to the more concrete development of indicators by the WG. An interest by the Co-Chairs on the development of qualitative indicators was also noted.

For more information, please see: [WG SD FR AZ 4 Minutes of meeting](#)

4. Indicators for the 2024 Report

4.1. Discussion on the basis of WG document 1

The document is currently under review in terms of what is feasible or necessary, as well as what may be investigated further. It was noted that the collection of some statistical data will be outsourced, data from Belarus and Russia will not be obtained at this time, and data from Ukraine may be troublesome to collect. These are, however, concerns that have been anticipated and are already accounted for. As the contract for statistical data collection and analysis is expected to be signed by the contractor in the second half of the year, the discussion on indicators need not be final at the moment but can serve to pinpoint areas where indicators and data are required. Regarding the further streamlining and focused work on the indicators, it was advised that participants submit proposals in writing following the present meeting.

4.2. Statistical Indicators

During the discussion on statistical indicators, a few concerns were highlighted. Firstly, it was suggested that the staff structure of the HE institution (i.e., fixed-term or other type of contract), be mentioned. It was advised that this be listed as a future priority beyond the 2024 report due to technical and temporal data collection restrictions. It was agreed that after the meeting, ETER would be contacted about this matter, and any updates would be shared with the members in the near future.

Questions about the timeline of the data and clarification on the term "harmonized approach" were addressed. It was clarified that the data collection was planned for the first half of 2023, whereas the most recent data collected (by EUROSTAT) which can be used presently, is that of 2021. A "harmonized approach" to data analysis referred to strategic selection of specific years whose data best showcases a trend over a period of time, a strategy employed to avoid obfuscating results with excessive data volume.

There was a proposal to add graduation rates, in addition to enrolment rates, and number of foreign students in the report. It was decided that these were suitable topics for later chapters which offer more detailed, thematic explorations than the first chapter, which is a grand overview of the current state of higher education (HE).

A matter to be clarified was that the current scorecard indicators have their own titles, but also relate to the KCs, which are not explicitly mentioned. This should be resolved through the new chapter regrouping the KC indicators on degree structures, quality assurance and recognition.

Degree Structures were discussed, and it was concluded that it would be desirable to combine several indicators into one composite score card indicator. Similarly the report should present a headline scorecard indicator on Quality assurance and Recognition.

On a related note, it was suggested that the short cycle within and outside the Bologna Process system needed further clarification.

For more information, please see: [Working Document 1 Proposed indicators of 2024 BPIR](#)

4.3. Policy and Scorecard indicators on the basis of working document 2

David Crosier (Co-Chair) introduced indicators along with related policies for Chapter IV, V and VI. Concerning Chapter V, it was stressed that anything pertaining to this chapter will only be finalized after conversations with the SD WG Co-Chairs. In Chapter VI, it was highlighted that a report had finally been completed.

Ms. Strøm (Co-Chair) suggested the inclusion of an indicator in relation to foreign programs that take place in a foreign language and not in a national language, as this is crucial for English speakers. In terms of QA, an already existing indicator that may potentially yield more information, was proposed. An indicator on Learning and Teaching was proposed, that addressed the employment rate among students, specifically in the Social Dimension chapter as there are many students who are employed during their first year of study. Regarding Chapter VI, Internationalization, an indicator aiming at more joint degrees was proposed for further discussion, although it was unclear how data could be gathered.

The EUA representative confirmed their support in distinguishing between physical and virtual mobility indicators, as the two employ different resources. It was agreed to explore virtual mobility independently of physical mobility. The need for further reflection on virtual mobility was emphasized, adding a point on the pandemic situation as well. The threat of the pandemic was underlined, with the necessity of digital skills and competence being stressed in the Rome Communique as challenges that must be adequately addressed.

It was stated that the document does not yet contain the indicators proposed by the different WGs and that they should be included shortly. It was clarified that the questionnaire will be sent out in February 2023, which gives sufficient time for data collection and analysis, in order for a first draft of parts of the report to be prepared in time for the autumn BFUG Meeting.

Subsequent comments addressed the scorecard indicator on the European Approach to quality assurance of joint programmes, and reflected on the current problematics related to the collection of information for this particular indicator. A benchmark was deemed necessary, in order to make the collaboration between vastly different countries and their HE structures more feasible. It was agreed to redraft the proposal and send it to the group for further discussions and adaptations.

One suggestion would have the indicator “key commitment for quality assurance in EHEA” monitor and rank the extent to which the HE system is reviewed against the ESG. In this case, an entirely green system would signify HEIs that are regularly evaluated through external quality assurance by an ESG compliant, EQAR-registered agency. Following the discussion, a written proposal for this indicator was requested to be forwarded to the BFUG.

An issue was raised regarding the Key Commitment 2⁴, which had only taken into account the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) up to this time. It was argued that in the current situation,

⁴ Key Commitment 2 (national legislation and procedures compliant with the Lisbon Recognition Convention [LRC]).

there should be an increased focus on Article 7⁵, which would address the recognition of qualifications of student refugees. Two proposals were discussed in order to address the effective integration of both the LRC and Article 7 into one indicator or have two distinct indicators.

The benefits and drawbacks of having an integrated indicator were thoroughly examined. It was decided that easier approaches of forming an integrated indicator would be investigated, and that, in general, it would be useful to create a format that clarifies the commitment of each country. Upon conclusion of the discussion, it was underlined that additional work on the present report card is necessary, in order to have scorecard indicators for all commitments, as well as a review of all scorecard indicators to determine how they might be enhanced utilizing existing data by EQAR.

For more information, please see: [Working Document 2 new scorecard indicators BPIR 2024](#)

5. Planning of next meeting & AoB

It was decided that the group would be contacted post-meeting regarding the planning of the next WG on Monitoring meeting, that may be in-presence.

No other business was brought forward, therefore, the Co-Chairs thanked everyone for their contribution and the third meeting of the WG on Monitoring was concluded.

⁵ Recognition of qualifications held by refugees (Art VII – LRC).