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EMPOWERING  
EHEA Paris 2018  
EUROPE'S YOUTH

Conférence ministérielle européenne  
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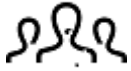
## Activity report of the French BFUG Secretariat July 2015-June 2018

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Head of the BFUG Secretariat 2015-2018  
August 2018

From July 2015 to June 2018, the BFUG secretariat was hosted by France. After their three years' activities, the Secretarial team thought it could be of interest to report to BFUG members about their experience and give some feedback for future Secretariats which may wish for information on how to proceed. This activity report gives an overview of the way we worked and how we perceived it.

# BFUG Secretariat 2015-2018

## Facts and figures



7 persons working for the BFUG Secretariat



115 missions abroad



44 meetings of Advisory groups and Working groups  
14 BFUG and Board meetings  
23 Other meetings



31 countries holding at least one meeting ■



463 followers



<https://mapchart.net>

## **Composition of the Secretariat**

According to the French proposal sent to BFUG members in 2015, the French Secretariat was internationally composed with 7 persons coming from 3 countries: Armenian (1), German (1) and French (5) people.

The activity was distributed among four main areas:

- Policy officers (4) in charge of the follow-up of the BFUG activities (one of them not working full time)
- Webmaster/community manager (1) in charge of the EHEA website and social networks (part-time)
- Event officer (1) in charge of logistic aspects of the ministerial conference
- Assistant (1) in charge of administrative tasks

The German colleague was based in Paris and totally integrated in the team. Unfortunately, this kind of integration was not possible with the Armenian colleague since she was based in Armenia. The exchanges between her and the other members of the BFUG Secretariat were almost exclusively done by e-mail.

These two kinds of co-operation worked very well and were highly appreciated by the French government.

## **Policy activities reporting**

The BFUG Secretariat participated in all meetings organized under the authority of the BFUG.

The work plan established in 2015 included 7 advisory and working groups which met regularly and for which the BFUG Secretariat wrote the minutes in close co-operation with the chairs of the groups.

In addition, and depending on the chairs of the groups, the members of the BFUG Secretariat were in charge of drafting syntheses, swim lanes, roadmaps, overviews. Some chairs relied on the members of the Secretariat more than others, and asked them to help prepare updates and documents for their groups.

The BFUG Secretariat wrote all the BFUG and board minutes. This was not an easy task since BFUG participants understood the debates and conclusions differently. The Secretariat tried to find the best wording to get a consensus in the final written version of the minutes. It was very useful to have the possibility to listen to the records of the meetings and to have different nationalities among the representatives of the BFUG Secretariat to be sure that the most neutral information was provided in the reports. We strongly recommend such a system in the future, as we all appreciated the extra help provided by this international collaboration.

## **Digital activities**

The European Higher Education Area and Bologna Process website <http://www.ehea.info> provided background information and resources for Higher Education experts. The BFUG Secretariat designed and managed this website.

The BFUG Secretariat launched a new EHEA website in September 2016. This website focused on the main topics and achievements of the Bologna Process, and offered a historical overview of the Bologna Follow-Up Group activities. It also provided an agenda of upcoming events and a database with an advanced search engine.

The ergonomic and graphic design of the website was reviewed, the editorial content was reorganised and technical improvements were made.

The use of social networks (Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook) was developed as well, but still needs to be improved since many BFUG members do not use these digital tools. The Facebook page is not much used. The Twitter account could get more followers than it has at the end of the 2015-2018 period (467 followers).

The proposal of the BFUG Secretariat to set up a Communication team wider than the Secretariat team itself was rejected in 2016. However we insist, the BFUG members should reconsider the proposal if they want the EHEA to become more visible and widely known.

To send e-mails, the French Secretariat used a webmail provided by the Romanian colleagues. We want to thank the Romanian team for their help on this issue.

### Ministerial Conference







The Terms of reference of the Secretariat adopted in 2015 included the organization of the Ministerial conference in May 2018 in Paris.

The Secretariat started to organize the Ministerial Conference in September 2016, in close connection with the officers of the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and the General Direction in charge of Higher Education.

This organization included all the logistic aspects such as the conference room rental, according to the French legislation of public contracts, the catering service, the social program, the registration platform and the badges, the dedicated website. We also worked in close connection with the Prefecture and the security forces.

It also included the political coordination of the different French interlocutors and acted as link between the French proposals and the BFUG members. In particular, it was in charge of establishing the program of the Conference, making contact with all the heads of delegations in order to coordinate the interventions of the different Ministers and speakers.

### Main figures of the Ministerial Conference

	646 participants	
	74 countries represented	47 EHEA countries 27 non-EHEA countries
	42 ministers	32 EHEA ministers 10 non-EHEA ministers
	8 delegations of EHEA consultative members 6 partners and technical experts of the EHEA	
	23 international organisations	
	71 bilateral ministerial meetings	

## **Main feedback**

To run the BFUG Secretariat was a rich experience for all its members. It is an opportunity to have an overview of the activities of each country and its involvement in the EHEA and to observe the political alliances and issues. The BFUG Secretariat needs to recruit officers familiar with higher education policies in European countries. Those people do not only need to be familiar with global policies but also, with very technical issues.

The role of the BFUG Secretariat was defined in the Terms of reference<sup>1</sup> adopted by the BFUG members in 2015. Its activities focused on editing and reporting mainly – more than on practicalities and logistics. However, this central mission of the Secretariat was sometimes waved aside, which might have caused prejudice to the good functioning of the whole system.

This experience is also a good one for the country welcoming the BFUG Secretariat. It gives its political leaders an opportunity to reform or to re-orientate the higher education system integrating European/international issues.

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<sup>1</sup> See Terms of reference in annex

I particularly wish to thank all the persons who participated in the three years' work

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Irina GEANTA  
Cezar HAJ

**The BFUG co-chairs:**

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Liechtenstein: Daniel MIESCHER  
Netherlands: Floor BOSELIE-ABBENHUIS, Jolien VAN DER VEGT  
Moldova: Nadejda VELISCO  
Slovak Republic: Josef JURKOVIČ, Andrej PIOVARČI  
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Estonia: Margus HAIDAK, Janne PUKK  
Russian Federation: Nadezda KAMININAN  
Bulgaria: Ivana RADONOVA  
Serbia: Bojan TUBIĆ, Katarina JOCIC, Vesna MANDIC

**The French vice-chairs:**

Marie-Odile OTT  
Patricia POL

And all the chairs of the groups, BFUG members, consultative members, partners, technical experts, and meeting participants.



GRAND-DUCHÉ DE



LE GOUVERNEMENT  
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG  
Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur  
et de la Recherche



OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

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## **Annex**

### **ROLE OF THE BOLOGNA SECRETARIAT:**

#### **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE 2015-2018**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

When the Bologna Secretariat was first established following the Berlin meeting of Ministers responsible for higher education, the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) agreed, after discussion, upon its role and functions. These proposals for a Secretariat were accepted by the BFUG Meeting in Rome in November 2003 (for further information see document BFUG1\_3 of the meeting).

#### **2. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS**

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2015 until 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 the role and functions of the Bologna Secretariat will continue along the same lines as agreed previously at the BFUG meetings: the Secretariat will provide neutral support to further the consolidation of the European Higher Education Area under the exclusive authority of the BFUG and its Chairs and Vice-Chair.

More specifically, the functions include:

- providing administrative and operational support for the BFUG and its Board - including planning meetings and minutes;
- assisting the BFUG and its Board in the follow-up work for the period July 2015 to June 2018 – including planning of activities and following up on the BFUG decisions;
- supporting all Bologna working groups and advisory groups and preparing the draft reports;
- carrying out any special tasks concerning the implementation of the work programme of the European Higher Education Area;
- reviewing and updating the European Higher Education Area website and archives;
- acting as an external and internal contact point for the European Higher Education Area;
- sharing important messages with the stakeholders;
- providing representation at external events upon request of the organisers;
- preparing the Ministerial Conference in Paris (2018) and the Fifth Bologna Policy

Forum under the supervision of the BFUG.

### **3. METHOD OF OPERATION**

In conjunction with the co-chairs and vice-chair, the Secretariat drafts:

- agendas for the BFUG meetings.
- background discussion documents (liaising with relevant authors as appropriate)
- relevant papers for the BFUG and its Board, working groups and board committees meetings information on practical arrangements for meetings (during meetings the Secretariat can take responsibility for practical arrangements in cooperation with the hosts, if necessary);
- minutes of the BFUG/Board meetings for clearance by the Chairs
- copies of these minutes for comments and subsequent adoption by the BFUG/Board at the next meeting;
- assistance and support for each Bologna working group and board committees, and carries out other specific tasks, as agreed by the mentioned BFUG sub-structures.

The Secretariat supports the implementation of the work programme adopted by the BFUG.

To this end, the Secretariat should attend Bologna Seminars and other events, where and as appropriate.

The Secretariat reviews and updates the European Higher Education Area website ensuring that up-to-date information is made available at all times for the BFUG and the public at large. It will develop an ad-hoc communication system, using up-to-date digital tools. It shall propose a new website in order to provide a more efficient service.

The Secretariat organises the Ministerial Conference and Bologna Policy Forum in Paris in 2018.

### **4. Contact details:**

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Further information will be provided subsequently.