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## Working Group 3: Policy Development for New EHEA Goals 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, 6-7 April 2017 Brussels (Belgium)

### Draft Minutes

#### 0. List of Participants

Delegation		First name	Surname
EI/ETUCE	chair	Andreas	Keller
ESU	chair	Liva	Vikmane
EUA		Thérèse	Zhang
EURASHE		Ulf-Daniel	Ehlers
European Commission		Klara	Engels-Perenyi
European Commission		Sumathi	Subramaniam
Armenia		Ani	Hovhannisyan
Austria		Sabine	Koch
Belgium/Wallonia-Brussels Federation		Marc	Vanholsbeeck
Bulgaria		Ivana	Radonova
Croatia		Vladimir	Mrša
Finland		Maija	Innola
France	chair	Luc	Hittinger
France		Marie-Odile	Ott
Germany		Peter	Greisler
Greece		Christos	Skouras
Hungary/Erasmus+ National Agency TPF		Szilvia	Besze
Ireland		Gerry	O'Sullivan
Latvia		Daiga	Ivsina
Malta		Audrey	Abela
Romania		Alexandra	Coltan
Russia	chair	Nadezda	Kamyninan
Russia		Irina	Maevskaya
Russia		Svetlana	Shvedova
Russia		Olga	Valueva
Sweden		Eva	Åkesson
Sweden	chair	Anders	Jörnsten
United Kingdom		Christopher	Reilly

BFUG Secretariat	Marina	Steinmann
External Speaker (European Commission, DG Research & Innovation – ERA Policy and Reform,)	Fabienne	Gauthier
External Speaker (Paris Descartes University, Centre for Research and Interdisciplinary)	François	Taddei
External Speaker (EI/ETUCE)	Jens	Vraa-Jensen
External Speaker (German Association for Educational Development – DGHD)	Marianne	Merkt
External Speaker (German Association for Educational Development – DGHD)	Antonia	Scholkmann

Apologies: Azerbaijan, Belgium/fl., Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland

### 1. Welcome address

Andreas Keller welcomed all WG3 members and guests and introduced Anders Jörnsten as new chair from Sweden. Susan Flocken, European Director of EI/ETUCE, who was hosting the meeting, welcomes the participants on behalf of her organization. ETUCE ("the voice of teachers") represents 132 teachers' unions in 49 countries, in total numbers 11 million teachers all over. The ETUCE Standing Committee for Higher Education and Research (HERSC) underlines the specific value of this topic. Furthermore there is a working group on higher education within the European Sectoral Social Dialogue on Education (ESSDE) with the education employers.

### 2. Adoption of the draft agenda

The chair explained that one of the two speakers for point 5.1. will be participating by video, that point 6 will be merged with point 8 from the agenda. For AOB, the German member announced to provide information on activities regarding "Professional recognition".

The agenda was adopted with these changes.

### 3. Active Citizenship

The Austrian member Sabine Koch gave a [presentation](#) on Active Citizenship (AC) and explained that the attitude of AC may be supported with students by

- making learning comprehensible: incorporate real life projects with multi-disciplinary approaches in curricula
- supporting the ability of empathy
- supporting creativity by building mixed teams
- letting them experience their work having an impact
- empowering self-respect, self-determination, abilities, and accountability.

Three recommendations have been suggested for discussion in the parallel group:

1. Establish criteria/guidelines for creating a study programme which is facilitating AC
2. Create a self-evaluation tool to test the degree to which a programme is fostering AC
3. Offer incentives for projects fostering active citizenship (European or national level)

The first discussion on how to promote AC provided various answers:

Higher education institutions (HEIs) have been given a role and a function in society which includes promoting AC. As critical reflection is essential for AC, to train it is the main task for institutions. They should be looking at curricula and at methods of integrating AC in teaching instead of adding courses on democracy etc. Practicing AC should be on the agenda of all HEIs. Teachers need to include this topic not only intuitively but by purpose and activate students instead of teaching them how to do it.

It is important to balance the demands of society and labour market. For a systemic change, all actors have to be involved, not only non-profit organisations and HEIs. It has also been mentioned that some countries in the EHEA are suppressing AC, and that it would be helpful to find adequate reactions for cases of misbehaviour of colleagues, institutions and countries.

Promoting values and providing competences have been identified as the two main roads for HEIs to support AC.

Additional remarks/information:

The Council of Europe is currently working on a framework of democratic culture.

Being a priority for the European Commission, a public consultation included a question on AC (40% disagreed it being a task for HEIs).

The report from the parallel group highlighted that AC is not new with the Bologna Process and not exclusively linked to higher education. The group decided not to tackle radicalisation and extremism. Ministers might decide to say something on this topic because in Europe there is a bigger need to enable students to cope with societal changes and transition. There are no simple solutions for this. Curricula should foster on critical thinking and multidisciplinary. In particular, this is especially important for teacher education. Students should be given a role in the institution, opportunities and time for student engagement, furthermore the right to participate in higher education governance.

The final discussion underlined that HEIs are important actors which need to continue to take an active role or even to play a more active role.

#### 4. Teacher Support

A first [presentation](#) given by Jens Vraa-Jensen (EI/ETUCE) informed about the T4SCL (Time for Student-Centred Learning) project and the study "Creating a Supportive Working Environment in European Higher Education" which involved nine countries. His conclusions focused on permanent employment as a precondition for creating supportive work environment, the need of academics' involvement in meaningful decision making through collegial governance structures, the need for improving continuous professional development for academic staff and the need of reduction of unnecessary administrative for academic staff.

The second presentation given by the Hungarian member Szilvia Besze introduced the Hungarian [example](#) of teacher training particularly in digital competences. Every new programme has to integrate a mobility window, and there is an award for innovative teaching methodology.

The third [presentation](#) given by Marianne Merkt and Antonia Scholkmann from DGHD discussed the necessity of (European) standards for teacher education, based on the example of the UK Professional Development Framework, and professional developments in Germany. Agreeing on standards might support professionalising higher education teaching. The presentation concentrated on teachers' competences without denying the importance of incentives both for teachers and institutions.

The report from the parallel group once more pled for professional standards for academic teaching or a framework for standards. Another suggestion could be to operationalise the sharing of experiences (European Teaching Academy?); funding and sustainability would need specification. A third proposal concerned the supportive environment (conducive conditions for employment and work). Last but not least incentives (teaching awards, promoting high quality performers, acknowledge teaching as research) would be very welcome. All these proposals have to be based on the challenges (e.g. teaching diverse classrooms, providing student-centred learning) and to take national differences into account (e.g. regulations for teaching assessment, systems of benefits).

In the discussion, most WG3 members expressed that they would not be in favour of introducing new standards. It would be better to concentrate on the relation to existing standards (e.g. ESG, QF ...). If mentioned at all, another wording instead of "standard" needs to be used. It might be beneficial if the recommendations aim at different levels (e.g. European, national, institutional) and would clearly relate to academic freedom.

Additional remarks/information:

EUA referred to a feasibility study on the Teaching Academy ("Effect"); results are to be expected by the end of 2018 and to the European Learning & Teaching Forum on 28/29 September 2017 in Paris.

## 5. European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and European Research Area (ERA)

The Yerevan conference asked for closer links between ERA and EHEA. Last year, ERA member states (the 28 member states of the European Union and the associate countries) for the first time issued national action plans aiming at highly skilled research workforce. Fabienne Gauthier from the European Commission reported that in 2020, one million researchers will be needed in addition to those which work today. Doctorate candidates are and have to be trained to work in private environments. Many researchers do not end up in academia but in the private sector. 12% of university based researchers have an experience in industry. The speaker underlined that the timing of this meeting is very good for the decision about the next phase of ERA.

François Taddei (Paris Descartes University) referred to Humboldt's devise of free learning, teaching and research. He explained that today's possibilities are very high, but not used at all. Children should be trained to think as researchers. Teachers should be educated to do so and been given the respective scientific methods. A change of culture is needed. He expressed the view that education of the 21<sup>st</sup> century can only be designed by people born in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He also suggested developing google knowledge tools before someone imposes tools with values which are not respecting our basic principles. The role of academics is important to develop trustful contents. Better policy measures need to be developed, e.g. a triple A (for learners, teachers, ministers for example) to qualify content. A knowledge and acknowledge society is needed.<sup>1</sup>

WG3 members underlined that it should be made clear why ERA and EHEA should be linked more than it is currently the case; and what type of research is meant when this term is used. Reference should be made to the knowledge triangle (higher education – business – government).

The funding programmes Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ offer some interesting possibilities, but the user cannot combine these, as there are no transversal tools. The management of the programmes (service and advice at national contact points) should be linked. The impact of research is an important topic in the 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar of Horizon. Teaching and learning could be addressed systematically to analyse impact. Using quantitative and qualitative indicators (like Multirank) seems feasible but some new indicators e.g. for open science need to be added.

Proposed draft conclusions:

1. Explain why increased interaction is important
2. At the governance level, learning and teaching should be considered as the stock of scientific research,
3. At the study programme level
  - encourage further integration (transversal tools) of ERA and EHEA in the upcoming European and national funding programmes, especially for mobility, rewarding of teachers and links between open science and open education;
  - allow crossed views of the programmes for users.
4. Develop additional strategies to engage external stakeholders in education

## 6. Work plan

The next meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> September in Brussels (the last WG3 meeting) will be used to finalise all recommendations. On 25<sup>th</sup> April, the chairs' will meet to draft all conclusions, aiming at 2-3 per topic as a maximum. These suggestions will be sent to the group in May. As a proposal for input for the Communiqué is due for the Malta BFUG (end of May), a revised version or additional information might be provided in June.

The chairs announced to work on conclusions for all topics and, after their meeting on 25 April, to send them as a proposal to WG3 members. WG3 members will be asked to comment these proposals before the next BFUG meeting so that the WG3 representative(s) at that meeting could take them in account for the discussion with the BFUG delegates. Recommendations for the Ministerial Conference could be based on some or all of the topics. The final version of the WG3 proposal will result from the meeting in September 2017 and a potential revision by the BFUG in November 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> An impression on his views is given in <http://en.unesco.org/news/francois-taddei-we-have-more-computing-power-our-pockets-nasa-had-moon-landing>  
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## 7.1. Final discussion on conclusions for Competences

In Stockholm, it had been decided to confirm learning outcomes as the main point of reference for the further development of the EHEA and the enhancement of learning and teaching in participating systems and institutions. It could be recommended that

they would be used and recognised in all learning contexts, to benefit all learners, actual students and lifelong learners, in formal and informal learning

higher education institutions should be encouraged and supported in their further enhancement of learning outcome approaches, e.g. by supporting and facilitating exchange and collaboration at national and European level.

Before the meeting in Brussels, it had been proposed to reformulate the above-mentioned conclusions:

The fostering of competencies capable in enhancing the quality of social relations rests on the natural alliance of education and training with equality and social justice. The aim of these transversal competences is therefore to uncover and distil the different ways in which the educational and training activities supported through EHEA action programmes contribute to strengthening the basis for the practice of active citizenship.

A curriculum is a systematic and intended packaging of competencies (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes that are underpinned by values) that learners should acquire through organised learning experiences both in formal and non-formal settings. The curriculum is implemented by teachers, and depends moreover on the quality of teaching and learning strategies, learning materials and assessment.

The WG3 chair from Russia added, that it might be proposed not having specific conclusions on competences but to integrate them in other topics. WG3 members underlined once more that the notion "competences" is widely used in common language, but trying to define competences probably would have negative consequences. A possible solution might be to recommend "competence-based curricula on the basis of learning outcomes". The term "learning outcomes" should be used in all learning contexts and HEIs should be encouraged and supported in using learning outcomes. Most WG3 members were in favour of sticking to the term "learning outcomes", also because they see resistance against "competences" with many HEIs.

## 7.2. Final discussion on conclusions for Digital Education

The discussion of the conclusions from Stockholm resulted in the following revision:

1. Digitalisation should be considered for all higher education processes. Digital education study experiences should be a part of learning processes of all students. All tools and instruments of the Bologna Process should be considered in the light of the new technology. Co-operation between higher education institutions should be used to promote digitalisation.
2. European universities should share materials in an open way and working towards open science.
3. Universities should develop digitalisation strategies, including learning (staff training and students), research, administration, and links to society.
4. Digitalisation should always facilitate the need of students, different needs of learning and support accessibility. Digital technology should be used to create more flexible learning paths, implement student-centred learning and increase lifelong learning opportunities.
5. The process of digitalisation should hold a good quality of the content and methodologies. Academics should receive support for creation of the digitalised education as well as institutions should provide relevant criteria in internal quality assurance. Furthermore, quality assurance agencies need capacities and methods to assess digital education and suitable criteria, especially regarding their usage by students and relevance to the programmes.
6. Higher Education Institutions should be using digitalisation as a mean to facilitate internationalisation at home. That can include joint online courses as a part of the curriculum or learning agreements signed by all involved institutions for virtual learning opportunities for students.
7. European universities should aim at being able to process data of mobile students.

## **8. AOB**

The German member reported from a meeting on Professional Recognition in Berlin at the end of March with participation from different DGs, experts and ENIC/NARICs. The focus was on regulated professions in the EU. The meeting agreed that more regulations mean also more barriers to mobility. One recommendation was to aim at offering better information for prospective students because they often do not know in advance if they are studying the right things for certain jobs. On the other hand, more transparency regarding competences of graduates is needed for employers. A draft of the report from the meeting will be distributed to WG3. The group should decide if some results should be included in recommendations.