WORKING GROUP 3 "POLICY DEVELOPMENT FOR NEW EHEA GOALS"
Paris, 13-14 June 2016

Minutes

Participants

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European Commission	Julie	ANDERSON
Finland	Birgitta	VÙORINEN
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France	Patricia	POL
Germany	Peter	GREISLER
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Welcome and introduction to the meeting

Simone Bonnafous, the Director General of Higher Education in the French Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research welcomes the participants on behalf of State Secretary Thierry Mandon and thanks Jean-Pierre Finance for hosting the group. She explains that modernisation of higher education is an ongoing process and mentions some current changes such as open access and high expectations for the individual passage through higher education. She appreciates new goals to be discussed but the main question for her is whether the Bologna Process can help to reassure Europe. There is a conjunction between the future of Europe and the future of the Bologna Process. New goals linked to the agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education are the diversity of students and a balance of research and learning.

The co-chair of WG3, Jean-Pierre Finance, welcomes the participants on behalf of CPU, the French rectors' conference.

1. Adoption of the agenda

Concern is expressed by some participants about the focus of the agenda. Questions are whether the listed topics would be all what should be discussed by the WG and whether important topics as citizenship might be missing. The chairs explain that the five topics include many other issues and propose to first listen to the presentation of the topics and then to come back to the agenda.
Due to technical problems, 5. Introduction and discussion on the topic "Relevance of competences" is skipped.

On the second day, the co-chairs of WG3 come back on the future agenda for this Working Group. The next meeting will take place on 2-3 November in Stockholm and deal with Digital Education and Competences. The following meeting will take place in April 2017 and be devoted to Teacher Support and ERA:EHEA.

The final meeting in September is needed for the review of all conclusions and the formulation of recommendations. The options for the additional topic "citizenship" are to include it in April 2017 or to have an additional meeting in June 2017. The participants and the chairs agree to include active citizenship as a third topic for April 2017. The chairs promise to provide some guidelines for all the topics and preparatory reading. The Secretariat agrees to do a little survey for the 5 remaining topics (in order to involve some participants for each topic and to collect suggestions for external speakers) together the needed update of the list of events WG2.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the first meeting held in Moscow

The minutes of the first meeting held in Moscow should be complemented with references to the agenda of "Education and Training 2020". On page 4, the sentence has to be "Working with clusters seemed for most of the participants not the right way …".

3. Feedbacks

- *from the BFUG meeting held in Amsterdam (7-8 March 2016)*

Patricia POL, Vice-chair of the BFUG highlighted some results from the BFUG meeting:

The plenary concentrated on the adoption of proceedings, the follow-up of the results from the advisory group on non-implementation and values of the BP/HE. The level of implementation (how the three commitments are achieved) in all the countries will be regarded in order to find out if special activities are needed, and what can be proposed in these cases.

The Terms of Reference for the Advisory and Working Groups have been adopted. "New goals" is a new WG for the BFUG, "Dealing with non-implementation" as well. The co-ordination of feedback from the seven groups to the BFUG and the board as well as information from one group to all others has to be improved.

The BFUG in Amsterdam was enriched by parallel sessions with contributions from external researchers.

- *from the meeting of the WG3 co-chairs in Brussels (18 April 2016)*

After referring to the parallel session in Amsterdam and the outcomes from Moscow, Fernando Galan Palomares, co-chair of WG3, presents the planned meetings devoted to five topics. The current meeting is foreseen to introduce the working method and to deal with one topic, two more meetings will be devoted to two topics each, and a final meeting will deal with all recommendations. The four topics of the next meetings shall be presented in the afternoon, not to discuss them in detail but to explain what is included and what not and to integrate the proposals of the WG members for these two meetings.

The list of events has to be updated by the countries; some may be devoted to topics not covered by WG. These events so far are not organised in a systematic approach, more planning is needed.

Participants agree that topics covered by other WGs have not to be dealt, but they do not see why a national seminar should be a reason for not dealing with its topic in this WG. (Sub)topics might be: engagement of universities, democracy, the connection between global education 2030 and the Bologna process. A strategic view is needed and has to be combined with proposals for concrete implementation.

- *from AG1 EHEA international co-operation*

Patricia Pol, co-chair of AG1 reports that the discussion did not concentrate on internationalisation, but on the mandate to further develop strategies of internationalisation and to define which added value the Bologna process could bring to these questions. Another question is what the Bologna Policy Forum means, and whether it should be kept the way it used to be or if it should be integrated into the conference. A matrix on regions and topics will be established, a Task Force has been charged with writing a concept note. The dialogue with regions should fit with the BFUG's priorities.

4. Introduction and discussion on the topic "Digital Education"

Jean-Paul Roumegas, Director of international affairs in the Centre National des Œuvres universitaires et scolaires presents the example of the "European student card" (ESC) project. Citizenship and social dimension are addressed by this project; the Bologna process and Erasmus+ could be supported by the ESC, as it is facilitating co-operation. The project is based on existing data being accessed by all parties, no new database or exchange of documents is necessary.

The participants raise the question how to deal with this and other comparable projects in the Bologna process.

Fernando Galan Palomares invites to participate in an online voting on digital education (cf. results "Vote"). The results showed an interest in teaching and the potential to improve access by under-represented groups

6. Introduction and discussion on the topic "Teacher Support"

Andreas Keller, co-chair of WG3 explains that higher education staff need supportive environment. Academic freedom, pedagogical innovation and digital technologies are aspects of special relevance. The ToR of WG3 refer to the crucial role of higher education teachers and the need of supporting them.

The recommended reading reveals that today's demands for teachers (e.g. student centred learning, curricular reforms, quality assurance, management) require adapting content, methods and management of teaching. Unfortunately, training of teachers often is not adequately, and teachers are not involved in decision-making, furthermore the working conditions (increase of casualisation) are not supportive. The nine conclusions should be discussed, especially the following issues: permanent employment as a pre-condition, involvement in decision making, continuous professional development (particularly concerning diverse student populations, digital education, student-centred learning), reduction of administrative burden. Goals and processes of the Bologna process need to be better communicated to the academic community.

The participants deem the presentation inspiring but stress that teacher support has been mentioned already in several communiques; so it must be clear what is new. One proposal is to stress the new challenges for the teacher profession concerning the diversity of students, new technologies and new learning and teaching methods. A new proposal is to look at the need of providing evidence of learning outcomes. Another aspect of the discussion is how WG3 can address teacher support as a separate topic as all the new aspects are linked to other topics (e.g. digitalisation).

Teachers should be mentioned as being at the core of the Bologna process – to support them by establishing optimal conditions and environments and to motivate them to be in favour of it and because they influence student mobility (role model)). Another possible recommendation could be that teacher development programmes should be connected systematically to doctoral programmes.

7. Introduction and discussion on the topic "ERA-EHEA"

Jean-Pierre Finance, co-chair of WG3 mentions different aspects of this topic: based research teaching methods, doctoral education, the relation between the European Research Area (ERA) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), and research on higher education. Open Science should be another aspect. The EHEA does not have own funds (only national), whereas the ERA is offering a lot of money for institutions. As these are different areas with the same actors, questions to European policy arise. The discussion has to take place together with the actors of the ERA to explore new possibilities for interaction and contextual changes.

The participants differ about whether these are questions which should be dealt by this WG and they ask again what is new. Two suggestions are to concentrate on what is effective in research on education and to develop a vision on what type of society do we want to have. Suggestions were to examine the EIT, EUI, social innovation, HEI governance and synergies between Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+.

Working on the topic "New learners"

Albin Gaunt, co-chair of WG3 introduces the topic in referring to some overall trends: growing student numbers, growing diversity, shifting to student centred learning and unique learning paths. Questions of major interest are:
- What will happen to the traditional form of higher education (large groups with same learning paths)?
- Who are the new learners and what are their goals?
- New learning modes – what works for all?

- How can the EHEA respond?
Resources and financing are important aspects, but as these have to be solved at national level they are not in the centre of the discussion of WG3.

Categories that might be used: lifelong learners, learners with disabilities or disadvantaged background, immigrants, learners with non-traditional entry qualifications, digital learners. Alternative formulation: New modes, new learning methods and framework conditions for all kinds of learners.

The theme "New learners" is linked to Digital Education, Teacher Support, Relevance of Competences and Active Citizenship which will all be discussed in later meetings.

Fernando Galan Palomares reminds the participants of what has been done on the social dimension in the Bologna process and what are the issues for the future (cf. Annex …) and Noel Vercruysse gives a presentation on the discussion within Working Group 2 "Implementation" on the social dimension (cf. Annex). WG 2 found many small initiatives, but too less information and exchange between them. Three events have to be mentioned: a peer learning activity on Roma in Hungary, in the UK a seminar looking at access, and a part of the Austrian Bologna day being devoted to the Austrian Social Dimension strategy.

WG3 divides into three parallel groups to look at three questions:

- *Which requirements for new learners do exist?*
- *What expectation at institutional level to welcome and teach new learners?*
- *What activity/expectation at European level in order to facilitate inclusion?*

The first group does not think "new learners" is the best title and concentrates on disadvantaged learners. There is a higher risk of retention of students for those from disadvantaged background. The group refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and listed examples of various regulations and offers in participating countries. Most attention in the discussion is paid to the difference between part- and full-time learning and the challenge of recognising digital learning. Students might be encouraged to take a certain number of credits in a digital programme/from another country (virtual Erasmus).

4 recommendations: Encourage micro-qualifications, integration of critical thinking and soft skills, virtual Erasmus, data analysis for tracking students and identify risks to assist them in completing their programme.

The second group underlines that students want more flexibility, that higher education institutions need to play a more proactive role, and learning institutions are needed. Teaching quality is of importance, the European teaching academy (wait for results of ongoing study), platforms for sharing good practice and peer-learning activities perhaps may contribute to this aspect.

Teaching and using new technologies in teaching should be included in the rankings (teaching accreditation). Student engagement is essential (maybe include students more systematically in teaching and support).

The third group looks at alternative formulations of the topic: new learners – all learners – diverse learners – learners from all backgrounds and states that obstacles for all learners may exist on national (legislation), institutional (access, resources) or teaching level. No obstacles on global/European level are discussed, even if there may be some minor shortcomings to be identified on this level.

The groups' proposals include flexibility in the degree system and in structures (ECTS disconnected from academic year/semester), a DS-like certificate for modules or courses smaller than a full programme, a differentiation of higher education not resulting in a hierarchy (one type of education superior to another), national access plans, ratification of a the UN Charta and agreed European targets, e.g. for the percentage of first generation students or public investment in HE (% of GDP).

The exchange of information (e.g. European Student Database, European database for Digital Education/Portal for Open Education) and specific ways of rewarding teachers for their teaching activities might support the other tools.

The discussion of preliminary recommendations on "New Learners" looks at the following list of conclusions

- Institutions must permanently adapt to development and become learning institutions
- Create a virtual Erasmus with the support functions
- Micro qualifications (is it already possible in ECTS?)
- Accommodate people to study in their own pace (ECTS?)
- Integration of critical thinking and soft skills in qualifications
  (issue for update of AC)

- European Higher Education teaching academy
- Rewarding good teaching (through rankings?)
- Platform for sharing experiences for Open Educational Resources
- Create more flexibility in our degree systems
- Module supplement certificate that can be shared
- European student database
- Targets for investments in HE (% of GDP)
- Targets for students from families where parents have not studied

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- **AOB**
- The next meeting will take place in Stockholm on 2-3 November 2016, the fourth in April 2017.
- The Secretariat will invite participants to update the list of events, and carry out a small survey amongst WG3 members for the other five topics.