

Standard Policy Brief Template

Under the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC2022)

[Section for Higher Education](#) | Division for Education 2030

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Promoting Policy Dialogue among the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the other world higher education regions: plans and aspirations

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Abstract

In 1999, 29 European Ministers of Education signed the 'Bologna Declaration' agreeing to make their higher education systems more comparable and compatible. This eventually led to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which today comprises 49 countries and numerous stakeholder organizations. Ministers of Education come together every two or three years to evaluate achievement and agree on new reforms that are published in a Communiqué. The result is a large, complex and dynamic higher education area, which has long sought to connect and communicate with other countries and regions outside Europe.

Since 2009 the 'Bologna Area' has held, back to back with the EHEA Ministerial Conferences, a 'Bologna Policy Forum' to which non-European countries and organisations of higher education institutions are invited. In the meantime, other macro-regions and organizations have also created structures to foster stronger collaboration and greater comparability.

In 2018 the EHEA Ministers asked the Bologna Follow Up Group (the body that follows the process between conferences) to explore ways to strengthen and deepen dialogue about higher education at world level. A 'Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue' was formed: it is responsible for planning a 'Global Policy Forum' in conjunction with the EHEA Ministerial Conferences. In the present work period (2021 to 2024) the Coordination Group reaches out to other countries and world regions, hoping to strengthen dialogue and cooperation about themes of common interest, not least on how higher education can best contribute to reaching the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue
Bologna Follow Up Group
European Higher Education Area

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Acronyms

BFUG = Bologna Follow Up Group

BICG = Bologna Implementation Coordination Group

EHEA = European Higher Education Area

CG GPD = Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

ECTS = European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

QF-EHEA = Qualifications Framework of the EHEA

Introduction

Universities in the Middle Ages and Renaissance were not necessarily connected to single states, but rather were places where students and scholars met to acquire and share knowledge without particular reference to governments. In some cases cities hosted and promoted their university, and tried to attract students from various 'nations', but these were understood as broad geographical or linguistic areas, having little to do with nations as we know them today. With the rise of the 'nation state', universities often acquired national functions, taking a leading role in promoting studies of the national institutions, history, culture and literature. In the competition between states, Universities -- forming generations of teachers, researchers, doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals -- have had an important role in promoting the societies they serve [1], shaping to a large extent the national culture.

The result has been, and to an extent still is, a set of tensions between the global and universal role of knowledge and the higher education systems that exist to increase it and transfer it, and the national and institutional goals which single higher education systems and single universities may have, to distinguish themselves and to compete with similar systems and institutions elsewhere.

This is the general picture in which higher education reform in the last three decades has brought change to European university systems, and also to universities in other higher education areas. In Europe, the radical changes necessary to permit very different systems to come closer is known as the "Bologna Process".

The **Ministers of Education of the 49 members** including the European Commission that today form the European Higher Education Area, and representatives of **8 'consultative members'** (important European HE organizations and UNESCO) are supported by the 'Bologna Follow-Up Group' (**BFUG**) where each country and each consultative member is represented; and the '**working groups**' delegated to develop the various strands addressed by the 'Bologna Process'.

The Bologna Process and its International Dimension

The real background of the Bologna Process, which started officially in 1999, is the realization during the preceding decades of the great differences that existed between the national higher education systems. Today, after more than two decades, most of the 49 countries that have signed the Bologna agreements have implemented many if not all the changes in their systems that they guaranteed to make, to make them comparable and compatible.

Twenty-three years ago, however, the differences were great, much greater than those that distinguish today the various national higher education systems in Central Asia or in Latin America, for example.

Each national higher education system had operated and evolved for decades or even centuries in relative isolation, and following different models. Although students and scholars, as has always been the case, were able to travel and with certain difficulties study or teach in universities in countries other than their own, such experiences were complicated and difficult, and with respect to today, rare.

In the 1980s the need for the European Higher Education systems to be able to collaborate more closely was felt by many. The Confederation of European Union Rectors' Conferences, founded in 1973, and the older CRE (the Conférence des Recteurs Européens or Standing Conference of Rectors, Presidents and Vice-Chancellors of European Universities), were important actors (they would eventually merge in 2001, giving rise to the European University

Association) [2]; the European Commission – with the ideas of Erasmus and of a European credit system -- was another protagonist. The European Commission set up a project to develop the European Credit Transfer System, in 1989; this eventually led to the formation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, which created the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) which is a fundamental tool for all European Universities today [3].

Although the European Commission and the European Union have only ‘soft powers’ of support, encouragement and persuasion in the field of education [4], these have proved to be very significant. With its multifaceted Erasmus and other programs, it has had a very strong impact, stimulating universities and other higher education institutions to learn to cooperate and to organize their cooperation in a meaningful and coordinated although voluntary way.

As a result of the ECTS project and other pan-European initiatives of the 1990s, rectors and ministers became increasingly aware of the structural differences between the different European systems. Although each country was obviously attached to its own way of doing things, it began to be clear that in order to permit student mobility and closer collaboration in general, some agreement on structures was needed. This realization led to the ‘Sorbonne Agreement’, signed nearly 24 years ago (on 25 May 1998), by the Education Ministers of France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy. This Declaration called for ‘harmonization’ of the European HE systems, a ‘common frame of reference’, in order to promote mobility, quality and occupation [5].

The following year the Bologna Declaration was signed, on 19 June 1999, by 29 Ministers, who were entering a voluntary agreement to build a European Higher Education Area, with certain characteristics: an easily readable system of degrees, a credit system, quality assurance, and mechanisms for the process of future development and agreement [6].

The **European Higher Education Area** is a loose intergovernmental cooperation, on voluntary basis, that has proved to be resilient and innovative, and reaches out to the other higher education areas of the world.

Beginnings 1.1

Since 1999 the Bologna Process has moved forward. Every few years (generally 2 or 3) the Ministers meet, discuss and decide on further steps which are set out in a ‘Communiqué’.

Between Ministerial Conferences, the body known as the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) follows events, carries out the necessary steps to support the Ministers’ decisions and prepares for the following Conference. There are a number of BFUG working groups, task forces, and coordinating groups which work on different aspects; there is a Secretariat (now in Albania) which supports them.

At present, the signatories of the agreements and hence the members of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) are 49 members including the European Commission; 8 ‘consultative members’, and numerous partners. A particular goal is to facilitate all the member countries in implementing what are considered the ‘Key Commitments’: that is 1) the ‘overarching’ Qualifications Framework of the EHEA which foresees three levels of higher education (1st cycle – Bachelor, 2nd cycle – Master, 3rd cycle – PhD, and an optional short cycle within the framework) and the correct use of ECTS; 2) recognition based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the correct use of the Diploma Supplement; and 3) Quality Assurance according to the ‘ESG’, the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. In order to do this, three Thematic Peer Groups each comprising 30 or more countries have been formed and are carrying out their peer support

activities, under the guidance of a specific Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG).

Since the Bologna Process began, countries outside Europe have observed it with interest, sometimes motivated by a desire to connect with European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and sometimes as a stimulus to liaising with other nearby countries. Projects financed under Tempus or Alfa by the European Commission, and later Erasmus Capacity Building Projects, brought universities and ministries of countries outside Europe into contact with European HEIs and the Bologna reforms.

The Search for a better way to interact 1.2

The first country, at the time not member to the Bologna Process, to ask to attend a Ministerial Conference was the Kyrgyz Republic, which had implemented several reforms to align its system to those of the 'Bologna' countries. In 2007 this proved not possible, but in 2009 the first Bologna Policy Forum was held back-to-back with the Louvain Ministerial Conference and a number of countries were invited to meet with the European Ministers to discuss topics of common interest.

Further Bologna Policy Fora were held in Budapest (2010), Bucharest (2012), Yerevan (2015), and finally in Paris, in 2018. During these years, the need was felt both by the Bologna countries and by those invited to attend the Conferences, to establish a more constant relationship, founded on dialogue and greater reciprocal knowledge and exchange of views. At the Paris Ministerial Conference, on the basis of the findings of the Advisory Group responsible for the Forum, the decision was made to change format.

In the future the Ministers asked the BFUG to organise not a "Bologna Policy Forum" but rather a "Global Policy Forum" to underline their desire to pursue a "Global Policy Dialogue" among equals. As a result, the BFUG's Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue was formed [7].

A Shift in Emphasis: the Paris Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Dialogue 2

The new BFUG's Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue was made responsible for finding ways to develop dialogue with **other macro-regions** and **organizations**, creating contacts and organising events, and also preparing for the up-coming Global Policy Forum.

The CG GPD begins its work 2.1

The new Coordination Group addressed its work with enthusiasm. Plans were made for delegations to be invited from all over the world to come to Rome and participate in the Forum, in conjunction with the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference. The CG was also mandated to devise ways to create stronger relationships with other world higher education areas, to find what questions it would be most useful to address or discuss jointly. A preparatory meeting was held in Rome with the cultural/scientific attachés of the numerous embassies present in Rome, and some themes of interest were suggested.

Themes proposed for Global Policy Dialogue:

- Innovation, new skills and their link to employability
- New (digital) ways of learning and teaching in a lifelong learning context
- Mobility of persons, minds and knowledge
- Untapped talent: opening up higher education and career opportunities to refugees
- Inclusion as a driver for excellence
- **Building trust in a global context**

COVID 19: disappointment, new challenges, new prospects 2.2

As is unfortunately well-known, the pandemic interrupted many plans, including those for the Rome Ministerial Conference and the first Global Policy Forum. The Conference had to be held on-line; the Forum was replaced by an on-line panel.

The Coordination Group was able to prepare a Report [8] which was presented to the Ministerial Conference, and its role in the future work period confirmed in the Rome 2020 Communiqué.

The Coordination Group suggested a number of topics which it considered relevant, to be included in the Communiqué and in what would have been the Statement by the participants in the Global Policy Forum-

These were:

- Confirmation of the **vital role of HE in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**, and the necessity of **global collaboration** to do so effectively;
- Confirmation of the necessity of reinforcing ongoing dialogue at global level, and of the **EHEA's responsibility to endow itself with the necessary means** of coordination to foster and participate in this dialogue;
- Confirmation of the emphasis placed in the Paris BPF Statement on the 'Social Dimension', but understood in a broad sense, as the Universities taking up their **societal role with new vigor**. Greater attention should be paid to creating links with **schools and communities**, including those of non-typical learners, in order to prepare them and include them in learning experiences at higher education level;
- Confirmation that focus on **inclusion** should not only be placed at the time of access to HE, but also in the phases of **retention, success and employability**;
- Confirmation that **mobility** is one of the most important keys to global understanding and to excellence in higher education;
- Shared awareness of the importance of putting into contact and reciprocally referencing the **several Qualifications Frameworks and Qualifications Reference frameworks** now functioning or being prepared;
- Shared awareness of the importance of **student-centered learning (SCL) and its implications** regarding the usefulness of credit systems or reference systems based on Learning Outcomes and student time.

In addition to working to achieve existing commitments and aims, the CG1 underlined the need to ensure **trust** in the increasingly globalized context of higher education. The CG1 also emphasized the importance of **digitalization** to enable innovation in teaching and learning as well as greater transparency, better communication and more flexibility, as would be required in the future. Because of the pandemic, all these themes became even more urgent. As higher education went on-line during the emergency, all systems had to deal with unprecedented stress tests, and global dialogue became ever more necessary.

From the Rome Communiqué, November 2020:

"While the COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible to hold the Global Policy Forum as intended, we are pleased that our Conference includes a global session. We recommit to international dialogue on higher education values, policies, and reforms, drawing on the experiences of the EHEA as well as those of other areas of the world, and ask the BFUG to further develop and strengthen Global Dialogue in the coming work period."

The CG GDP reaches out

Macro-regions and Higher Education Cooperation 3.1

The present Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue has a complex mission. This includes elaborating and proposing to the BFUG and to the hosts of the 2024 EHEA Ministerial Conference the modalities of the organization of the 2024 Global Policy Forum; the draft Statement to be agreed by the participants in the Forum; and – most challenging of all – the formulation and execution of successful plans to build and consolidate sustained dialogue between the EHEA and other world countries and macro-regions on themes and issues of common interest.

Of course the other world regions are not passive onlookers.

The UNESCO **Global** Recognition Convention signals the widely felt need to bring the various higher education contexts into closer communication. There are several general frameworks for inter-regional cooperation, such as ASEM, which now has more than 50 partners in Europe and Asia [9]. There are also numerous organizations having specifically to do with Higher Education, or parts of larger regional organizations which are specifically dedicated to such matters.

In **Latin America** the UNESCO Regional Higher Education Conference in Cordoba (Argentina) [10] indicated that the main interest at present is to build or rebuild links between Latin American countries themselves, which perhaps in the future can provide a platform for inter-regional cooperation. There are some smaller cooperation areas such as that involved in ENLACE [11], whereas another very significant cooperation effort, Tuning Latin America, engaged the entire area (South and Central America; 18 countries) and produced and published Guidelines and Reference points for a number of key subject areas, and elaborated a Credit Reference System (CLAR) [12] In 2019, a revised UNESCO Latin American Recognition Convention was adopted by 24 countries in Buenos Aires.

In **Africa** the most important player is the African Union itself, and its Commission on Education/Department of Higher Education, which pursues a strategy of harmonization to facilitate contact between differing national systems [13]. The Association of African Universities/Association des Universités Africaines (AUA/AAU) represents 42 countries [14]. There are a number of sub-regional organizations, especially in the South and East: in the southern part of the continent, for example SARUA (South African Regional Universities Association) in which South Africa has a strong role [15]. In Africa too there has been a large-scale Tuning Africa project, in which 8 key subject areas produced Guidelines and Reference Points, and shared reciprocal knowledge about HE systems and structures [16]. Last but not least, the UNESCO Addis Ababa Convention on Recognition has entered into force and its Parties have started to found an African Network of National Information Centres.

In **Asia**, in addition to ASEM and ASEAN [17] processes and structures, importance presences are the SHARE project; the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) [18], devoted to ensuring excellence in research and equity in access; and, in South East Asia, SEAMEO (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education) [19]. In South East Asia too there has also been a Tuning project (focusing on Medicine, Engineering and Teaching) [20]. The UNESCO Tokyo Convention on Recognition has led to the founding of the APNNIC, a network of National Information Centres of the Parties.

A fairly recent development is the official founding of the CAHEA, the **Central Asian** Higher Education Area: preliminary agreements were already made in Rome in 2015 and in 2016, to pursue closer connection among the five republics of ex-Soviet Central Asia. It was foreseen to

implement reforms analogous to those of Bologna. This was achieved in the context of the Central Asian Tuning Project, TuCAHEA [21]. On 17-18 June 2021, in Turkestan City, Kazakhstan, a formal agreement in this sense was signed by the five countries, and a permanent support organization set up [22].

Another important recent development is the adoption, 2 February 2022 in Paris, of the Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States [23].

More generally, the International Association of Universities (IUA) brings together numerous universities from all parts of the world as does the *Magna Charta Universitatum* with its Observatory[24], but these organizations do not necessarily pursue the kind of structural and systemic cooperation goals which are, or can be, the goals of geographic regional associations and groupings such as the EHEA.

The new Coordination Group for Global Policy Dialogue 3.2

At present, the Coordination Group for Global Policy Dialogue of the Bologna Process has four Co-chairs for the work period 2021-2024: Albania, Belgium Flemish Community, European Commission, and Italy. Its members are: Albania; Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; European Commission; France; Germany; Holy See; Ireland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; The Netherlands; Romania; Spain; United Kingdom; EI - ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA – European University Association; UNESCO. In the work and remit of the CG GPD, the various members of the ENIC NARIC network and their extensive resources and background provide important tools in establishing a foundation and structure for further dialogue and cooperation with all world regions [25].

According to its Terms of Reference, the Coordination Group should “foster dialogue and build trust between the EHEA and other countries and macro-regions through exchange of knowledge and cooperation, with the aim of addressing overarching issues more effectively, such as achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.” It is “also tasked with the organization of the 2024 Global Policy Forum and Statement, and where possible other appropriate events during the work period.”

Among the tasks of the CG GPD are to:

- Intensify focus on the societal role of higher education to foster effective inclusion of learners not only at the time of access to HE but also with respect to retention, success and employability;
- Promote inclusive mobility as one of the most important keys to global understanding and excellence in higher education;
- Promote further development and use in the practice of the transparency and quality tools necessary for advancing mobility and facilitating recognition;
- Create contacts and support reciprocal referencing of the several overarching Qualifications Frameworks and Qualifications Reference frameworks now functioning or being prepared in the EHEA and other macro-regions;
- Promote student-centred learning and understanding of credit systems or credit reference systems based on Learning Outcomes and student time;
- Develop dialogue about the challenges and opportunities offered by the shift towards digital learning environments, in part triggered by the pandemic.

Conclusions: An invitation

Today most universities in all parts of the world have developed links with partner institutions in other continents. Large universities with a consolidated history of internationalization have numerous agreements with foreign institutions that even number in the thousands. These agreements may be 'on paper' only, or they may have allowed the development of concrete collaborative actions: student, academic or administrative staff mobility, joint courses, collaborative research projects, and other joint initiatives. At the other end of the spectrum some small and remote universities have very few such agreements, or even none at all, and are able to establish such links with HEIs in other countries only with difficulty.

Fortunately, the reality of students' and researchers' varied interests and desire to interact with their colleagues elsewhere lead them to visit other institutions, to study or to make their careers there. Thus a multi-stranded network of personal and institutional relationships connects HEIs worldwide. And certainly at present the networks created by single universities, professors and students are vastly more developed than they were just a few decades – or even a few years -- ago.

Nonetheless, in order to pursue and facilitate broader and more meaningful cooperation, it seems particularly useful to create premises for smoother interaction by bringing macro-regions into closer contact and dialogue.

This is the aspiration of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue of the Bologna Follow Up Group and the EHEA. It in no way suggests that there should be uniformity among university systems around the world. Rather it looks to being able to share ideas, knowledge about each other and to look for solutions to issues that regard us all. The very fact that we can discuss such issues as degree program structure, credits, transparency, learning outcomes, approaches to learning teaching and assessment, access, quality culture and quality assurance, indicates that the premises for debate, comparison and possible agreement exist.

We invite all interested parties, countries, organizations, regional or sub-regional, to contact us and to enter, with us, into an era of Global Policy Dialogue, about the future of higher education [25].

References

1. A History of the University in Europe, Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, Walter Rüegg eds., 4 voll., Cambridge University Press, 1992-2011.
2. For the history of the Confederation: <https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100018206>; for the AEU/CRE: <https://eua.eu/partners-news/347-archives-of-the-conference-of-rectors-of-european-universities-cre-now-open-for-consultation.html>; for the EUA: <https://eua.eu/>
3. See the 2015 version of the ECTS Users' Guide, the full implementation of which is a key commitment of the EHEA, at:
http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/ECTS_Guide/00/0/ects-users-guide-2015_614000.pdf
4. Title XII, Education, Vocational Training, Youth and Sport, Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (2007).
5. For the Sorbonne Declaration: <http://ehea.info/page-sorbonne-declaration-1998>
6. For the text of the Bologna Declaration: <http://www.ehea.info/cid100210/ministerial-conference-bologna-1999.html>
7. For all information regarding the Bologna Process, the European Higher Education Area, and the Bologna Follow Up Group, see <http://www.ehea.info>.
8. See Annex 1 for the link to the CGGPD's 2020 Report.

9. For the UNESCO Global Convention, <https://www.unesco.org/en/education/higher-education/global-con>; for ASEM, <https://www.aseminfoboard.org>
10. <https://en.unesco.org/events/regional-higher-education-conference-lac-cres-2018>
11. ENLACE stands for Espacio de Encuentro Latinoamericano y Caribeño de Educación superior: <http://espacioenlaces.org/>
12. For the two phases of Tuning Latin America: <http://www.tuningal.org/en> (2011-2013); <http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningal/> (2004-2007)
13. For the African Union: <https://au.int/en>; and for the policies of its Education Division: <https://au.int/en/esti>
14. AAU: <https://www.aau.org/>; many African Universities are members of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie: <https://www.auf.org/>
15. The Southern African Regional Universities Association has members in DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe: <http://www.sarua.org/>
16. Tuning Africa: <http://tuningafrica.org/en/#>
17. For the Secretariat of the ASEAN University Network (AUN): <http://www.aunsec.org/>
18. APRU has members in Australia, Canada, Chile, China and Hong Kong, Taipei, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Thailand and USA (California, Hawaii, Washington): <https://apru.org/>
19. SEAMEO, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, comprises the Ministers of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam: <http://www.seameo.org>
20. Tuning Asia South East (TA-SE), comprises, in addition to the European partners, institutions in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam: <https://tuningasia-southeast.org/>
21. For TuCAHEA: <http://www.tucahea.org/>. On TuCAHEA and on these themes in general: A.K. Isaacs, Building a Higher Education Area in Central Asia: challenges and prospects, in "The Tuning Journal for Higher Education", volume 2, number 1, November 2014, pp. 31-58.
22. For the CAHEA: <https://enic-kazakhstan.edu.kz/en/post/100>
23. <https://en.unesco.org/news/arab-states-adopt-revised-convention-recognition-studies-diplomas-and-degrees-higher-education>
24. For the IAU and the Magna Charta: <https://www.iau-aiu.net/>; www.magna-charta.org
25. <https://www.enic-naric.net/>
26. To contact the CG GPD: please write to the BFUG Secretariat at secretariat@eha.info

Annexes

Annex 1: Final Report of the CG GDP to the EHEA Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference
[http://www.ehea.info/Upload/CG_Global_Policy_Dialogue_Final_Report.pdf]

Annex 2: Terms of Reference of the CG GPD for 2021 to 2024
[[http://www.ehea.info/Upload/CG_GPD_PT_AD_TORs%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/CG_GPD_PT_AD_TORs%20(2).pdf)]

Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Name of the Coordination Group

Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Contact persons/Co-chairs

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Composition

Albania; Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; European Commission; France; Germany; Holy See; Ireland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; The Netherlands; Romania; Spain; United Kingdom; EI - ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; UNESCO.

The Coordination Group can invite, when useful, relevant experts to collaborate in its work, from the EHEA or other parts of the world, and/or from international or global organisations (e.g. UNESCO regional experts, members of IAU, etc.)

Purpose and/or outcome

- To foster dialogue and build trust between the EHEA and other countries and macro-regions through exchange of knowledge and cooperation, with the aim of addressing overarching issues more effectively, such as achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The coordination group is also tasked with the organisation of the 2024 Global Policy Forum and Statement, and where possible other appropriate events during the work period.

General objectives

- Reinforce ongoing dialogue at the global level;
- Achieve greater awareness of the various vital roles of HE in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and find paths for global collaboration to do so effectively;



Govern d'Andorra

- Propose how to enhance the EHEA's ability to foster, participate in and benefit from this dialogue.

Thematic objectives in the context of global cooperation

- Intensify focus on the societal role of higher education to foster effective inclusion of learners not only at the time of access to HE but also with respect to retention, success and employability;
- Promote inclusive mobility as one of the most important keys to global understanding and excellence in higher education;
- Promote further development and use in the practice of the transparency and quality tools necessary for advancing mobility and facilitating recognition;
- Create contacts and support reciprocal referencing of the several overarching Qualifications Frameworks and Qualifications Reference frameworks now functioning or being prepared in the EHEA and other macro-regions;
- Promote student-centred learning and understanding of credit systems or credit reference systems based on Learning Outcomes and student time;
- Develop dialogue about the challenges and opportunities offered by the shift towards digital learning environments, in part triggered by the pandemic;
- Ensure connection with the other BFUG Advisory, Working or Coordination Groups that address the above issues in the EHEA context.

Specific Tasks

- Suggest plans to the BFUG for the organisation of the Global Policy Forum to be held along with the Ministerial Conference to be hosted by Albania in 2024;
- Organise and implement events, meetings or other initiatives (including virtual events) to build awareness and dialogue with respect to the CG's overarching aims, the general or/and thematic objectives;
- Explore ways of initiating or consolidating contacts with other countries, macro-regions and organisations in order to develop and strengthen dialogue.

Reference to the Rome Communiqué

“While the COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible to hold the Global Policy Forum as intended, we are pleased that our Conference includes a global session. We recommit to international dialogue on higher education values, policies, and reforms, drawing on the experiences of the EHEA as well as those of other areas of the world, and ask the BFUG to further develop and strengthen Global Dialogue in the coming work period.”

Reporting

Minutes of coordination group meetings and updates on activities will be made available online to the BFUG by the BFUG Secretariat. The BFUG Secretariat, at the request of the





CG Chairs, may circulate relevant updates to the CG members. The BFUG shall also receive regular reports and updates from the group. To ensure good communication with the BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, progress reports shall be submitted two weeks before each BFUG meeting.

Meeting schedule

Meetings can be electronic or in presence, according to what will be possible and appropriate in the post COVID era. Smaller ad hoc groups or task forces may be delegated for specific tasks. The exact programming will be discussed by the Co-chairs and the members of the Coordination Group.

Liaison with other WGs' activities

TBD