

Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

30 November 2023, Ninth meeting

The Hague, The Netherlands

09:30-16:30 CET

Minutes of meeting

List of participants

Country/Organization	Name	Surname
Albania (Co-Chair) *	Linda	Pustina
Austria*	Michael	Roither
Belgium French Community	Adriana	Gonfroid
Belgium Flemish Community (Co-Chair)	Liesbeth	Hens
France	Mathieu	Musquin
Romania	Madalina	Matei
Germany	Nils	Tensi
European Commission*	Bianca	Busuioc
European Commission*	Unni	Sagberg
European Commission*	Adrian	Veale
ENQA	Anna	Gover
Holy See*	Melanie	Rosenbaum
Ireland*	Orla	Lynch
Italy (Co-Chair)	Ann Katherine	Isaacs
Italy	Vera	Lucke
Italy*	Teresa	Morales de la Fuente
Italy*	Sibeles	Chiari
Kazakhstan*	Asset	Darimbek
Malta	Jon	Vercellono
Montenegro	Dunja	Bulajic
The Netherlands	Jenneke	Lokhoff
Romania	Madalina	Matei
UNESCO*	Vanja	Gutovic
United Kingdom	Ella	Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat (Head)*	Edlira	Subashi
BFUG Secretariat	Enis	Fita

Cyprus, EI-ETUCE, ESU, EUA, Spain, did not attend the meeting.

*Online attendance.

1. Welcome

Sophie Duijser from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science welcomed the participants and gave the floor to Annelies Van Eenennaam the Director of Nuffic, who expressed her pleasure in hosting the meeting in cooperation with the Dutch Ministry of Education, as well as the importance of EHEA and cooperation in a global perspective.



The CG on GPD Co-Chairs welcomed the participants and held a tour de table. The last meeting's minutes were approved and the agenda of the meeting was adopted. Liesbeth Hens (Co-Chair) introduced the meeting and its objectives.

For more detailed information, please see: [CG GPD ES GA 9 Agenda](#)

2. Update by the Co-chairs on the Madrid BFUG meeting and other recent developments

Ann Katherine Isaacs (Co-Chair) presented the CG on GPD Report delivered to the Madrid BFUG in November. The report detailed the work done so far in the regional and functional subgroups and illustrated future plans, including the Africa-EHEA Conversation, to be held in Barcelona in January. The report included the CG on GPD's proposed contribution to the Ministerial Communiqué. The key points are the substantial progress in the development of dialogue since the previous working period, the proposed ministerial approval of the continuation and strengthening of CG's commitment, and the exploration of criteria for a future category of "EHEA Dialogue Partners". The report also mentioned a draft plan for the Global Policy Forum adopting a sandwich model and planning a panel and breakout sessions. No objections were raised with respect to the CG on GPD's proposals during the BFUG meeting in Madrid.

3. Update by the IN-GLOBAL project

Vera Lucke (Italy) provided an update on the IN-GLOBAL project, highlighting key additions to the homepage's highlights section. She discussed a comprehensive calendar featuring activities within BFUG and stakeholder events, including those beyond the EHEA. Emphasizing the swift dissemination of finalized project outcomes, she highlighted an interview filmed during the CG on GPD and ASEF meeting in Rome on September 27-29. Moderated by Ann Katherine Isaacs (CG Co-chair), the interview featured Orla Lynch, a CG member and Strategic Policy Advisor in Ireland, and Romyen Kosaikanont, Director of the Thailand Centre of SEAMEO Regional Centre for HE and Development.

The website now hosts interviews conducted by the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing with the European Students' Union. Ongoing efforts to promote BFUG and EHEA events through X (formerly Twitter) were noted. IN-GLOBAL successfully concluded its support for countries in translating the Rome Communiqué, with 16 translations available and three in progress. The Survey on the Perception of the EHEA and Bologna Process, conducted and published on the website and social media in June 2023, is awaiting preliminary results, which will be presented in reports by IN-GLOBAL experts.

The project's crucial role in supporting the preparation of the Global Policy Forum and the Global Policy Statement was underscored. Notably, assistance for diverse EHEA Dialogue formats with various regions was emphasized. This encompassed the joint Asia-CG GPD meeting in Rome in September 2023, a collaborative effort with the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), focusing on Sustainable Development in Higher Education. Two online EHEA-Africa Conversations have taken place, and a third in-person session is scheduled for Barcelona in January 2024, with a possible online follow-up in spring 2024. A virtual Colloquium with Latin America took place in December 2022, and additional sessions are in the planning stage. The Africa subgroup discussed the idea of initiating a specific dialogue with the Arab region; currently, colleagues from the Arab region are invited to the EHEA-Africa conversations. The project has supported CG members participating in meetings across various regions, with one potential participation in the African region still pending. HE expert Pablo Beneitone was contracted to provide information on global higher education events and identify opportunities for CG involvement.

IN-GLOBAL is actively supporting the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community through various initiatives, including a consultation on the perception of the Bologna Process within the EHEA, parallel to the consultation organized for the CG GPD beyond the EHEA. The



project is also involved in developing an EHEA Toolkit for Bologna events, formulating guidelines for internal and general communication within the EHEA, and organizing three focus groups to explore best practices in communication and knowledge sharing. Additionally, a draft version of recommendations for BFUG members was presented, aiming to promote active participation within the academic community to advance EHEA goals.

In response to a question about the consultation results, it was noted that the final version will be sent to the CG on GPD for comments if needed.

4. Update by the three regional subgroups and their plans

4.1. Asia subgroup

Liesbeth Hens (Co-Chair) pointed out that there is no update since there has been no meeting since the last Joint Meeting of the CG on GPD and ASEF (September 27-29, 2023) held in Rome.

4.2. Africa subgroup

Anna Gover noted that EUA, represented by Elizabeth Colucci, had taken over chairing of the Africa sub-group and thanked the European Commission for their chairing to date. In Elizabeth's absence, Anna Gover provided an update on recent developments within the Africa subgroup highlighting that the article based on the last second Conversation held, has been translated into French and Portuguese and was ready to be published in three languages. It was decided that the third Conversation will be held in Barcelona on January 18-19, in person and hybrid format, co-hosted with the HAQAA initiative, which is funded by the EU Commission and led by a consortium of OBREAL Global (Lead), the AAU, ENQA and the DAAD. EUA is involved as a strategic partner of the initiative.

She extended an invitation to participants for the upcoming CG meeting and Third Conversation on January 17-18-19, emphasizing the financial support provided by the IN-GLOBAL project, and urging attendees to promptly register. The program will feature keynotes and panels covering topics on regional integration processes in the EHEA and Africa, along with sessions addressing recognition, lifelong learning, micro-credentials support, and students' involvement. The event will also serve as an opportunity to consult with African stakeholders on the Global Policy Forum statement. She highlighted that, through the HAQAA initiative, 20 high-level African stakeholders, mainly representatives of continental and regional bodies, as well as the steering committee and the Advisory Board of the HAQAA Initiative, have been invited.

Co-Chairs of the BFUG TPGs on recognition and QA have been invited or are in the process of being invited, as they also cover the main topics that will be discussed at the meeting. The group was exploring the option to have an online consultation on the Statement with representatives of the Arab region to be held after the February BFUG Meeting and that would be discussed in the next January meeting of the CG. It was highlighted that the group has discussed and compiled a long list of countries and organizations to be invited to the Global Policy Forum. However, there is a need for further guidance on the number and level of participants (continental, regional, or national).

It was agreed that the deadline for presenting the Draft Statement to be submitted by the CG on GPD with its report for the BFUG Board is January 8, 2024, which will be based on the inputs of this meeting and that the GPS subgroup would prepare it and send it also to the CG on GPD. Then the GPS will prepare a new version of the statement to be sent with the CG on GPD Report for the BFUG Meeting by the 5th of February, taking into account any comments received from the HAQAA Initiative meeting and their own meeting.

4.3. Americas subgroup

Ann Katherine Isaacs (Co-Chair) provided an update on the state of the Americas subgroup, highlighting participation in the first Assembly of the Convention on the Global Recognition of



Qualifications in Paris. She expressed gratitude to Bruno Castro from the Commission and Andreas Snildal from UNESCO for facilitating invitations to crucial meetings and for organizing a meeting of UNESCO representatives for Latin America and the Caribbean during the Paris event. She noted that the Americas subgroup is yet to organize its second regional online meeting. An agreement with Argentina for a second Colloquium concluded with an online Argentinian Colloquium attended only by Argentinian guests. The subgroup is currently focused on Brazil, aiming to participate in the CRES+5 conference in Brasilia in early spring. Isaacs highlighted that the Americas subgroup has convened to draft a provisional list of 10 countries and 10 organizations to be invited to the Global Policy Forum. Stressing the importance of a meeting in early December, the group aims to review the proposed list of invitees and plan the upcoming online meeting in spring.

5. Planning the Global Policy Forum: Report from subgroup and discussion of the format with respect to the Ministerial Conference, breakout session, choice of speakers, overview of proposed invitees

Linda Pustina (Co-Chair) highlighted the process for the draft lists of invitees for the Global Policy Forum. She informed the CG that the proposed invitation list would need to be submitted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania for verification of the various countries and representatives to be invited.

Logistics for the Global Policy Forum were discussed, planning to host it in the same room as the Ministerial Conference, organized with ministers in the first row and other representatives in the second and third rows. The Co-Chairs deliberated on the number of invitations, suggesting 10 countries and 10 organizations from each subgroup or a total of 20 invitations for each group in the first round. This approach allows for an initial round of invitations, followed by subsequent ones based on confirmations from a reserve list to achieve the desired participant count. Emphasis was placed on the balanced representation, with ministers representing countries and organizations representing macro regions.

Linda Pustina endorsed the Co-Chairs' proposed two-round invitation strategy, highlighting its efficacy in securing an appropriate number of participants for the Forum. It was emphasized that determining the number of invited ministers is crucial for an effective and well-organized meeting, considering the 300-person capacity of the hall. The logistical workings of placing ministers in the same row were recognized as a diplomatic concern. In light of these practical challenges, it was ultimately agreed to delegate these matters to the subgroup of the Global Policy Forum for in-depth discussions and concrete proposals. Linda Pustina committed to meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to address the seating of ministers and discuss details resulting from the group's deliberations by December 15.

There was a request to establish a deadline for the subgroups' proposals to facilitate planning the date and confirmation of invitations by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Considering the need for ample time to finalize the process, an agreement was reached during the discussion to set a deadline of December 15 for the subgroups to submit draft lists with their proposals for invitees. Another suggestion made was that the overall lists could be sent to the BFUG Secretariat for management and subsequent verification.

The discussion also touched on the number of breakout sessions, considering three as the minimum and proposing a space with standing tables for discussions. The discussion revolved around the optimal organization of the breakout sessions, with one in the main room and two in additional breakout groups. Pustina requested prior information on the number of participants for the breakout sessions to facilitate arrangements with the organizers and allocate spaces for other activities.

6. Draft 4 of the Global Policy Statement, report by the subgroup, relation to the Draft Tirana Communiqué, discussion

Liesbeth Hens (Co-Chair) emphasized the need to clearly define the topics for the breakout sessions



and pre-determine the focus of the four sessions. To enhance interactions, she proposed preparing a concise summary or text outlining the main discussion points for each session. The discussion considered selecting or combining four topics from those proposed in the GPF Statement to formulate the primary theme for each breakout group. Several comments and suggestions were made regarding the topics for the breakout sessions, including the possible combination of mobility with recognition, sustainable degrees transition in HE, mobility within the global framework of the Global Convention, and adding a bullet in the statement to encourage countries to take steps to ratify the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications, as proposed in the EU Council recommendation. Transparency of mobility, inclusion and diversity (encompassing both access and retention), innovative digital learning and teaching methods (linked with unequal access), flexible learning paths aligned with professional labor market needs, and future planning for a student-centred HE and lifelong learning were also proposed topics.

A proposal was suggested to reorganize the statement, with a focus on the "HE in the global context" section. The recommendation was to focus the key paragraph and message on removing obstacles to mobility and strengthening cooperation, thus advancing global policy dialogue. The intention was to highlight specific areas or initiatives within this dialogue addressing mobility challenges and fostering increased cooperation. The Drafting Committee commenced work with the understanding that the current situation is more critical than before, planning for a more in-depth exploration in the next meeting to underscore the urgency as a central theme. Discussions also covered the link between macro regions and the inclusion of fundamental values, emphasizing that higher education connects people with diverse perspectives, serving as a tool for peace and a better world. It was noted that the GPS ought to address the importance of fundamental (academic) values within and beyond the EHEA, at the same time not alienating global partners. Additionally, there was a suggestion to incorporate the theme of green transition, and it was recommended that subjects dealt with by regional subgroups, such as recognition and quality assurance, be more prominently incorporated.

The discussion addressed the necessity for more concrete proposals in the statement and further deliberation on the meaning of phrases related to EHEA Global Partners or friends of the EHEA. It was clarified that these phrases originated from consultations on the expectations of global partners or friends of the EHEA, proposed for inclusion in the Communiqué as points to be acknowledged and worked on. The conversation also explored the approach to future global policy dialogue, highlighting the support for dialogue between the EHEA and macro regions, as well as potential global partners. To better understand which countries seek acknowledgement by the EHEA there was a suggestion to correspond with the people who provided their contact details in the consultation in order to flesh out their ideas about this issue. There was an agreement on the importance of creating a one-page summary exploring the global partner concept, to be delivered to the group by January 14th.

7. Draft Final Report, discussion, division of tasks and timeline for completion

It was noted that a preliminary draft of the Final report has been prepared, acknowledging the need for ongoing updates as activities progress. The introduction is modelled after the previous report, adapting to the changed situation, and substantial portions of the draft have been shaped by contributions from various subgroups. The draft final report, including the executive summary and introduction, is slated for resubmission to the group by January 14. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the necessity of further discussion on the concept of a global partner at the next meeting of the CG on GPD in January in Barcelona.

The Co-Chairs expressed gratitude for everyone's contributions, and with no further business put forward, the meeting was concluded.

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