

Minutes of the XCII BFUG Board meeting – Reykjavik, Iceland 3rd of September 2024

List of participants

Nr.	Name	Role & Country/Organisation
1.	Una Strand Vidarsdottir	BFUG Co-chair, Iceland
2.	András Báló	BFUG Co-chair, Hungary
3.	Zsolt Dános	Hungary
4.	Cristina Ghițulică	BFUG Vice-chair & Co-chair former TF EKS, Romania
5.	Melanie Rosenbaum	Outgoing BFUG Co-chair, Holy See
6.	Liesbeth Hens	Outgoing BFUG Co-chair, Belgium – Flemish Community
7.	Caroline Hollela	Ongoing BFUG Co-chair, Belgium – French Community
8.	Kinga Szuly	European Commission
9.	Jakub Grodecki	EURASHE
10.	Michael Gaebel	EUA
11.	Catherine Dolgova Dreyer	Council of Europe
12.	Iris Kimizoglu	ESU
13.	Jordi Llombart	Co-chair former WG on San Marino Roadmap, Andorra
14.	Tone Flood Strøm	Co-chair former WG on Monitoring, Norway
15.	Helga Posset	Co-chair former BICG, Austria
16.	Cezar Mihai Hâj	Co-chair former WG on Fundamental Values, Romania
17.	Horia Onița	Head of EHEA Secretariat
18.	Lilia Parhomenco	Deputy Head of EHEA Secretariat

19.	Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi	Former Head of EHEA Secretariat, Albania
20.	Linda Pustina	Outgoing Vice chair, Albania
21.	Aleksander Xhuvani	Incoming Co-chair, Albania

Poland (incoming co-chair) was absent.

Meeting starts at 9:34 GMT

1. Welcome and introduction

1.1. Welcome by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of Iceland

The Icelandic co-chair opened the meeting and gave the floor to Dr. Sigríður Valgeirsdóttir, Director General of Policy Development and International Affairs of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, who welcomed the participants. The Director explained that Iceland has 7 higher education institutions, and they have been working on motivating universities to work more closely together, reducing the administration costs and improving the administration quality of these HEIs. She explained that the ministry aims to merge some higher education institutions to become stronger in the international field and that the ministry's activities are based on the work in the Bologna Process. Among their priorities, mobility is very important in both incoming and outgoing components. The director expressed their wishes for a productive meeting and discussion on the Work Programme, mentioning their interest in making the work of the BFUG working structures more efficient.

1.2. Welcome by the BFUG Co-chairs (Hungary and Iceland)

The Hungarian co-chair thanked Iceland for their hospitality, looking forward to their BFUG meeting in Budapest. They extended their appreciation to the Belgium-Holy See outgoing co-chairmanship and the work done in the previous semester.

1.3. Welcome by the BFUG Vice-chair (Romania)

The Vice-chair highlighted this being the first meeting for the Moldovan-Romanian Secretariat and herself as a vice-chair and that she is honoured to having been appointed in this position, fully aware of the responsibility. The Vice-chair expressed confidence that together with the co-chairs and the Secretariat, the Moldovan and Romanian ministries will organize a successful Ministerial Conference in 2027.

1.4. Information from the outgoing BFUG Co-chairs (Belgium Flemish and French Community, Holy See)

Documents: Minutes of the BFUG Board LXXXIX meeting (Vatican City, March 2024), BFUG XC meeting (Brussels, April 2024), Extraordinary BFUG Board XC/II meeting (online, April 2024) and BFUG XCI meeting (Tirana, May 2024)

The outgoing Belgian (French Community) co-chair thanked the outgoing and current Secretariats for dealing with the finalisation of the minutes. The minutes of the BFUG Board

LXXXIX meeting (Vatican City) and the Extraordinary Board XC/II meeting (online, April 2024) were acknowledged.

2. Adoption of the agenda

Documents: Agenda of the meeting

The agenda was adopted without comments.

3. Information from EHEA Secretariat

Documents: Presentation from the EHEA Secretariat

Draft ToRs for the Secretariat

Draft Approach for minuting

Draft Co-chairing arrangements for the BFUG

3.1 Presentation from the EHEA Secretariat

The Head of EHEA Secretariat presented the Secretariat, including the handover activities, the archiving process, the current team and the future staff. He continued by presenting the tasks done so far, the materials prepared by the Secretariat and the software tools that would be used during their term. He thanked the Outgoing Albanian Secretariat for their support during the handover process. More information can be found in the presentation.

Upon a question from the outgoing Holy See co-chair, the Head of Secretariat clarified that while there will be two headquarters, the oversight of activities will be ensured by both parties through the Head and Deputy Head of Secretariat and that there will not be a formal division among topics.

Regarding the Secretariat attending the CDEDU Sub-group on higher education meeting, the Council of Europe clarified that as one customary point on the agenda is EHEA, they reached out to the new Secretariat and Vice-chair to invite a representative. The Icelandic co-chair mentioned that upon discussion between the BFUG Co-chairs, the Vice-chair and the Secretariat, it was deemed fit that the Head of the Secretariat attends the meetings in order to inform on the work in EHEA, while otherwise their role remaining neutral in relation to the discussions in the sub-group, since the role is to report on the work, not to influence decisions within the Council of Europe. Following an inquiry from the former co-chair of the WG on Monitoring, the Council of Europe will look into whether such invitation would also be possible for the CDEDU meeting, if deemed relevant.

3.2 Draft Terms of Reference

The Head of Secretariat presented the draft Terms of Reference for the Secretariat, which had been elaborated based on the new Rules of Procedure, the experience of the previous Romanian Secretariat and the ToRs of the last five Secretariats. He mentioned the evolving communication roles of the Secretariat, based on the work done by the previous Secretariat, the desire to restrengthen the policy support role of the Secretariat and to contribute to enhancing knowledge sharing.

The outgoing Holy See co-chair inquired about the representation role of the Secretariat, having increased from the previous Albanian Secretariat. The Head of Secretariat replied that the Terms of Reference only clarify pre-existing provisions, included also in the Albanian or Italian Terms of Reference, distinguishing between the EHEA Secretariat attending external events to present

the work of EHEA (e.g. Albanian Secretariat presenting the Work Programme at DGHE or the Romanian Secretariat's work with UNESCO) and the EHEA Secretariat attending external events to represent the BFUG, where explicit and concrete mandate must be given by the BFUG co-chairs. Austria and EUA mentioned that in such cases the mandate should be clearly defined and limited.

The Council of Europe inquired about the role of policy experts and the outgoing Belgian-Flemish Community co-chair regarding how they would be linked to the experts in projects. The Secretariat clarified that according to the RoP, the staff supporting the working structures should have experience in higher education policy, however this also includes those early in their career, and the support will be determined by the requirements of the co-chairs of working structures.

The European Commission requested that legal advice is also included in the Terms of Reference and inquired about the role of the Secretariat in communication, where there should be an oversight from the BFUG. The Vice-chair and the Secretariat mentioned that some aspects are the direct responsibility of co-chairs, such as the newsletter. For social media, approval from the co-chairs would be sought for posts that may be considered in any way sensitive.

EUA and the outgoing Holy See co-chair inquired about the role of the Secretariat in supporting national enhancing knowledge sharing activities, including groups of experts. Upon clarification that the Secretariat would support those countries or groups of experts seeking support from the Secretariat, the EUA suggested to add that supported be given based on the limited availability of the Secretariat, since the priority is to support the BFUG as a whole.

The outgoing Holy See co-chair gave several recommendations on the ToRs: adding sharing information within the BFUG as a responsibility, mentioning the back office, clarifying the support of the Secretariat for the Ministerial Conference and streamlining the text in relation to the communication and liaison activities of the Secretariat. They also asked about the form that the certified copy of the RoP-EHEA would take. The co-chair of the former WG on Fundamental Values suggested that the process does not become formalised and that a simple certification from the Secretariat should be sufficient.

3.3 Guidelines for minuting and formatting

The Secretariat presented the draft Guidelines for minuting and formatting, which seek to clarify existing rules and adopt a common framework that unifies the practice of minuting. The outgoing Holy See co-chair mentioned they would send comments in writing, while EUA required a template for documents to be provided by the Secretariat. The outgoing Belgian-French community co-chair suggested the use of Artificial Intelligence to help minuting, which the Secretariat confirmed it is being planned. The European Commission stressed the importance of focusing on actions and positions of countries rather than details in the minutes.

3.4 Co-chairmanship arrangements 2024-2030

The Head of Secretariat presented the document, mentioning that an agreement was reached between Republic of Moldova and Norway to swap their places, which both parties confirmed. The outgoing Holy See co-chair mentioned that in such case Moldova would be outgoing Vice-chair and incoming co-chair simultaneously during January-June 2027 period.

Since de facto Romania took the position of Vice-chair and both parties consented to the change, the Board agreed to send the document to the BFUG while adding a clarification note in the document about the situation mentioned above.

3.5 Outlook & requirements for the website and Individual membership

The Secretariat presented the Outlook & requirements for the website, which include a new structure of the website, desired functionalities and rules for redesigning the website, and the proposed Membership profile for members and consultative members on the website.

The outgoing Belgian-Flemish Community co-chair stressed the importance of ensuring that the website is transferable from one Secretariat to another and that the types of national strategies/policies listed in the membership profile should be flexible, as some countries do have policies on certain subjects, but they are not captured in a formal strategy. The outgoing Holy See co-chair questioned the relevance of a Live chat facility (supported by the European Commission) and suggested using CMS instead of WordPress. They also suggested using a tool similar to an RSS feed to be notified when documents are uploaded on the website and uploaded on their servers. The European Commission mentioned that the website should be overseen and adopted by the BFUG, and delicate situations could arise in the descriptions of countries, including a decision on whether to include Russia and Belarus. They also suggested a very good search engine, including the possibility of finding commitments in the text of the communiqués.

The Secretariat mentioned that the transferability of the website and the search engine optimisation are included in the paper. In terms of including strategies, the intention is to use the Bologna Process Implementation Report, while BFUG members can also share additional input or amend their entries. The structure of the profile would be flexible and include any type of strategy that a country would like to add, without highlighting where such strategies are not in place. Regarding the structure of the website, it has not been agreed by the BFUG before, however the plan is to discuss it in the BFUG and to seek approval for sensitive topics if the case.

4. Feedback on the organisation of the Ministerial Conference from the out-going Secretariat

Documents: Presentation from the outgoing Albanian Secretariat

The outgoing Head of the BFUG Secretariat hosted by Albania presented their activity for the 2021-2024 period. The Secretariat was operational until July 2024, with ten staff in the Secretariat. They mentioned noteworthy initiatives such as three reports, the analysis of the Ministerial Communiqués, three newsletters, the social media of the EHEA being restructured, the revamping of the EHEA website and the final work report. 156 meetings in 17 cities across the EHEA as well as online were organised during the duration of their Secretariat. She thanked the colleagues from the current Secretariat for the handover and for taking their suggestions on board.

The outgoing Head of Secretariat continued by presenting the evaluation of the Tirana Ministerial Conference, which included 320 delegates from 60 EHEA delegations and 10 non-EHEA delegation. A novelty of the report is the final section on lessons learnt, to be used by future hosts.

The Vice-chair thanked the Albanian Secretariat for the handover and their willingness to support the Moldovan-Romanian Secretariat. The outgoing Belgian-French Community co-chair asked to include in the report more detailed information about the countries present, where students were part of the delegation, the list of non-EHEA countries attending, and the full programme of the Conference. ESU mentioned that student delegates had fewer opportunities for participation by having to pay for their travel in the case of several delegations, not being

seated next to their delegation, having to pay for lunch due to insufficient amount of food provided by the host and cancelling the social programme in short notice and students having to pay for accommodation themselves contrary to the announcement of arrangements by the host country. The Board agreed that in the future invitation letter, an explicit request to cover the costs of all delegates would be included.

The chair of the former WG on Monitoring mentioned that we also must take note of the uncertainty preceding the event, and the Icelandic co-chair mentioned that the scale used for the evaluation survey was not the standard one, including 4 positive options and a negative one. They raised the possibility of introducing the practice of doing an independent assessment of the Ministerial Conferences, to enhance objectivity.

5. EHEA Work Programme 2024-2027

Documents: Draft working document on the Work Programme
List of commitments from Tirana communique
Result of the consultation on EHEA priorities
Background document

Proposed action: agreeing on draft WP to be sent to the BFUG and for a timeline for establishing the working structures (selection of co-chairs, ToRs, membership, tentative first meeting)

The Icelandic co-chair presented the background document for this meeting, reiterating that the BFUG should adopt the Work Programme at its meeting in Budapest. In the meanwhile, the call for co-chairs would be sent out, with the caveat that co-chairmanships are dependent on whether the BFUG agrees to establish the groups. Thanking the Secretariat for preparing the timeframe, they mentioned that the call for interest in membership would be launched in October. The expectation is to have consultations with the members of the working structures at the beginning of November, so that the ToRs can be adopted through written procedure in the second part of November. The ToRs should clearly indicate the number of meetings and if there are any expected sub-structures. She also proposed an in-person meeting of the co-chairs in November, a practice having taken place before in similar situations when the Work Programme was not agreed upon before the Ministerial Conference. The proposal considers the calls for a leaner structure.

The outgoing Holy See co-chair expressed their support for an outcome-based approach which enables measuring whether the working structures were successful. To achieve this, they called for an operationalisation of the commitments in the Communique, which implicitly included compromise formulations.

The outgoing Belgian-Flemish community co-chair suggested that the meeting of co-chairs should be hybrid and asked for a clarification of the number of co-chairs that would be invited, with Iceland replying that one co-chair per group would suffice. As the Belgian-French Community co-chair inquired whether the BFUG members would have the opportunity to orally comment on the ToRs, the Icelandic co-chair clarified that an online meeting of the BFUG would be considered only if relevant issues of divergence arise.

The discussion continued topic by topic:

5.1 Monitoring

As the support for continuing the Working Group on Monitoring was unanimous, the only discussion focused on the naming of the group, with the alternatives of naming it Working Group on Monitoring or Working Group on Monitoring implementation, as the option 'Working Group on Implementation' would not adequately indicate the main purpose of the structure.

5.2 Future of the Bologna Process

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic, pointing out that the commitment in the Communiqué to mandate the BFUG in proposing new priorities up until 2027 was not much debated within the BFUG. The outgoing Belgian-Flemish Community co-chair, the outgoing Belgian-French Community co-chair and the outgoing Holy See co-chair disagreed, highlighting that the commitment stems from the survey and discussion on the future priorities, outlining three elements: vision for 2040 on content priorities (where EHEA brings added value), efficient & effective structures for EHEA (structure and governance) and tools.

The co-chair of the former WG on Fundamental Values proposed that since future topics are within the remit of all working structures and the BFUG should maintain ownership, at the mid-cycle they are invited to propose topics that are collected by a Task Force established only for the second part of the cycle. While the importance of maintaining BFUG ownership was supported across the room, the proposal itself was contradicted by EUA, which proposed to create a Task Force for the whole duration of the cycle but with a more limited mandate, which identifies topics and brings them to the discussion of the BFUG. The proposal by EUA was supported by the outgoing Holy See co-chair, who also argued that the Communiqué includes the task of reanalysing the key commitments, and the BICG would not be suitable for strategic discussions as it includes mostly technical experts.

The Council of Europe suggested that the mindset for the Task Force should be different, including externals and consulting with the developments outside the Process, so new perspectives can be brought in. They also suggested having the TF on a long-term Secretariat subordinated to this Task Force. On the contrary, the outgoing Belgian-Flemish Community co-chair argued that the group should be composed of BFUG members rather than externals, and that they should not only bring topics to the BFUG, but also test how to do it efficiently.

For the latter part, the co-chair of the former WG on Monitoring suggested that it could be the Secretariat proposing ways to structure the discussions, leaving for the TF the role of identifying topics. In this regard, they argued that we have countries questioning the relevance of EHEA and new processes emerging, such as the European Education Area. Against this backdrop, the BFUG should discuss what happens to countries not attending and how to make the Bologna Process more appealing. However, they suggested not naming the group as 'on the future of Bologna'.

ESU, in turn, expressed that in their opinion the TF should focus more on bringing back the importance of EHEA as perceived by the ministries rather than discussing new topics while the current ones are not being implemented.

Members agreed that a priority is to bring back content discussions within the BFUG. Since the nature of the TF is political, there should be regular updates and discussions at each BFUG. The co-chair of the former BICG suggested that the BFUG duration could be extended to two full days, allowing for half a day of content discussions and showcasing the discussions within the working structures before proceeding to procedural elements or reporting. This was echoed by the Council of Europe, which also suggested invited keynote speakers at the BFUG. EURASHE

suggested that the focus should be on bringing the message from the bottom rather than from top and using novel communication strategies.

The Vice-chair argued that similar discussions took place in 2018-2019 with little follow-up. In their opinion the lack of interest for content discussion was shown in not focusing on the topics within the Learning and Teaching dimension, which should be the core of the Bologna Process. Furthermore, several proposals discussed at this point are rather on dissemination and enhancing knowledge-sharing, where the TF on EKS already proposed solutions for the issues raised and the topic should be addressed by everyone, not only the BFUG. Considering this, the TF should focus on priorities for higher-education system-level and how EHEA can contribute, consulting with stakeholders as mentioned in the commitment, and not on procedures or the work of the BFUG.

The Icelandic co-chair summarised the discussion and stated that they will put forward to the BFUG the proposal for a Task Force on the Future of Bologna, which should focus on identifying topics, engaging stakeholders and preparing working methods to organise debates in the BFUG on themes relevant to the future of the Bologna Process.

5.3 Fundamental values

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic, pointing the mandate in the Communique that the BFUG reports back on this in 2027. They asked whether the monitoring framework could be done by the Working Group on Monitoring.

The co-chair of the former Working Group on Fundamental Values replied by stating that we need to maintain the topic of fundamental values in the forefront, finalise and approve the framework of indicators, which are already prepared by the NewFAV project experts for the debate of the BFUG, and finalise the first round of monitoring which should be comprehensive. They argued that if Eurydice cannot do it within the WG on Monitoring, then a dedicated group should continue in close cooperation with the WG on Monitoring and, due to the sensitivity of the topic, report on it at every BFUG meeting. The co-chair of the former WG on Monitoring agreed and confirmed that the WG on Monitoring does not have the capacity for it.

The outgoing Holy See co-chair disagreed, stating that we need to discuss how the monitoring of fundamental values goes back to the Working Group on Monitoring and that just accepting the hypothesis that WG on Monitoring would not be able to do it is not a valid reason. In this sense, they argued we should instead discuss how they would be able to take it back. They also recalled that WG on Monitoring also worked on creating indicators.

The Vice-chair replied that creating indicators is not only a technical endeavour, but also a political one. Furthermore, the role of the structure on fundamental values would also be to support countries, not only to monitor. The latter part was supported by EUA, stating that there should be continued activities on enhancing awareness of fundamental values, and by ESU stating that there is still different understanding across Europe of what fundamental values are.

EUA also mentioned that at one point a structure under the BFUG would need to do the monitoring of fundamental values regularly, to which the co-chair of the former WG on Fundamental Values replied that initially a more in-depth monitoring is required for a few exercises, while afterwards the monitoring could rely on tertiary data and stakeholders, as the Bologna Process Implementation Report is only one side of it.

The Icelandic co-chair suggested that in relation to the future of the topic, this should be given to the TF on the Future of Bologna.

The Icelandic co-chair concluded that they would put forward an AG/WG on the Fundamental Values.

5.4 Internationalisation and Mobility

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic saying that mobility is crucial for the Bologna Process and emerged as a top priority in the discussions within the BFUG and the Communiqué. While several working structures contributed to mobility, their work was not coordinated in this sense.

The outgoing Holy See co-chair suggested a Task Force that creates the action plan on mobility, also taking into account that in the survey for the BFUG there were 14 interpretations on what working on mobility includes, so they should start with identifying focus.

The outgoing Belgian-Flemish Community co-chair suggested that a potential avenue is to have BICG working on mobility, with the action plan on mobility being the activities within the TPGs, to which the co-chair of the former BICG and the Vice-chair disagreed. The Vice-chair mentioned that the group should work on both internationalisation and mobility, and the purpose of the action plan mentioned in the communiqué was to support attaining the mobility targets, which goes much beyond the key commitments.

EUA supported the creation of the working structure, adding that in the Rome Communiqué the ministers stated that all students should have an international experience. As such, the group can work on various topics from brain drain to virtual exchanges and responsible internationalisation, with a clear role for Bologna to coin terminology in this area.

The European Commission stated that all the topics discussed so far are already being tackled in the European Education Area with the Europe on the Move, and that several studies for barriers to mobility have been commissioned, including a future one on balanced mobility. As such, the Commission questioned the added value of a working group on mobility within the Bologna Process. The Icelandic co-chair, the co-chair of the former WG on Monitoring, EUA, the co-chair of the former TF on San-Marino Roadmap and the Vice-Chair disagreed, with the Icelandic co-chair stating that the Bologna Process includes 47 countries as opposed to 27 in the European Union. The co-chair of the former WG on Monitoring mentioned that we need to have mobility raised up in the Bologna Process, looking at why we failed to improve rates despite having portability, recognition and a common degree structure in place.

ESU stated that the issue with not attaining the mobility rates relates to financing mobility, questioning what a Working group on mobility could do in this regard. While not opposing the creation of a WG, their proposal was to streamline the work on mobility within various working structures. The co-chair of the former TF on San-Marino Roadmap mentioned that several issues, including housing and scholarships, should be addressed in this regard.

The Icelandic co-chair summarised the discussion with the conclusion of putting forward a Working Group on Internationalisation & Mobility, which should look at the EHEA as a whole, prepare the action plan and collect information from other structures on what they are doing to support mobility.

5.5 Social Dimension

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic and congratulated the former WG on SD on the good work done. That being considered, they proposed that the working group on Social Dimension is not continued, as there are no specific new tasks, while continuing to work on promoting social dimension. This was supported by EUA, the outgoing Holy See co-chair and outgoing Belgian-French community co-chair.

ESU underlined that the Social Dimension is obviously a priority for them, but the question would be what a WG on SD could actually do. ESU suggested to work on implementing the Principles and Guidelines at national level via projects instead of a Working group on Social Dimension.

The co-chair of the former BICG replied that in 2015 the Ministers adopted an annex of communique on social dimension, asking countries to work on implementation. As there was no working group on social dimension to follow-up on it, the topic was buried. As several countries said that the BFUG should continue working on social dimension, their proposal is to choose the option from the background paper on establishing a Thematic Peer Group D on Social Dimension, which garnered support in the room.

The Icelandic co-chair concluded that the proposal would be to establish a TPG D on Social Dimension.

5.6 Learning and teaching

The Icelandic co-chair proposes not to continue with a working structure on learning and teaching. EUA agreed, stating that they would submit a project on student-centred learning. EURASHE suggested having pre-conferences in BFUG on the topic, looking into emerging developments.

The outgoing Holy See co-chair and the Vice-chair emphasised the importance of not neglecting student-centred learning, a key commitment in the Bologna Process which still needs attention for implementation. The Head of Secretariat said there is a link between Principle 7 of the Principles and Guidelines on Social Dimension and student-centred learning, and that WG on Social Dimension and WG on Learning and Teaching collaborated in previous cycle, on common topics. The co-chair of the former BICG supported the possibility of linking the two topics within the TPG D.

The Icelandic co-chair concluded that a separate working structure for learning and teaching would not be proposed for the BFUG, while issues related to student centred-learning could be tackled by the TPG on SD.

5.7 Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the group, with members agreeing to propose its continuation. It is expected that in this cycle there will not be sub-groups attached to CG GPD.

5.8 BICG and the three TPGs on Qualifications, Recognition and Quality Assurance

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic, with members agreeing to propose its continuation, with the additional TPG D on Social Dimension.

5.7 TF on long-term Secretariat

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic, suggesting having a relatively small group of members and not have countries/organisations interested in hosting apply as co-chairs of this TF. The outgoing Belgian-Flemish community co-chair added that members should be independent of the countries represented. The outgoing Holy See co-chair and Council of Europe disagreed, stating that members should be mandated by their governments. Furthermore, the outgoing Holy See co-chair stated that no one in the group should be interested in hosting, as this would create a conflict of interest and would benefit themselves, in addition to decreasing the chances of those interested in applying that are not members of the Task Force.

The European Commission replied to the statement of the outgoing Holy See co-chair, arguing that interested parties for hosting should be in the group to help with national legal and administrative requirements for hosting the Secretariat. The Head of Secretariat added that the ToRs of the Task Force could state that before choosing a location, interested parties can join the Task Force while not being engaged in the selection process, and after choosing a location the host would by default be added in the Task Force.

EUA raised the issue of calling for the hosts of the Secretariat already at the BFUG in Budapest, so the process can start as soon as possible. The outgoing Holy See co-chair argued that we cannot call for hosts while there is a go/no-go decision to be taken in 2026 and no call could take place before, to which the European Commission replied that we cannot progress on moving towards a decision before having concrete information about the location and implicitly the financial costs, as this was raised by BFUG members as a barrier towards taking a decision.

The outgoing Belgian-French Community co-chair suggested a compromise that the call would be for expressions of interests, not a call for applying for hosting the Secretariat, which was supported by the Board members.

The Icelandic co-chair concluded that a TF on a long-term Secretariat would be put forward to the BFUG.

5.8 TF on outreach and dissemination

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the topic and suggested this could be a continuation of the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing.

ESU suggested not to continue with the group, arguing that the members of the group had more expertise in policy creation than dissemination and that all working structures should create together another group for dissemination. The Vice-chair disagreed, showcasing outcomes produced by the Task Force, which were possible by a mixture of expertise, both in what it concerns the policy areas and communication.

The Icelandic co-chair suggested that each group could create their own dissemination plan. At the same time, the Head of the Secretariat argued that there should be only one dissemination plan at the level of the BFUG, with the possibility of addressing the topic in the meeting with the co-chairs in November. He also suggested that the TF takes outreach on the Future of Bologna, while the EHEA Secretariat takes dissemination in cooperation with the co-chairs. On the other side, it is important that the action plans on enhancing knowledge sharing, a commitment in the Communique, and the support for Bologna experts are not omitted.

The chair of the former WG on Fundamental Values suggested that the ToRs include more transversal things, including the obligation to contribute to dissemination.

The conclusion summarised by the Icelandic co-chair was not to propose a continuation of the Task Force.

5.9 Network of national correspondents for Qualification Frameworks

The Council of Europe mentioned that they are not convinced they need to sustain the network. Since the group was supported by the Council of Europe, the conclusion was not to add the network in the Work Programme.

6. BFUG Rules of Procedure (RoP-BFUG)

Documents: Draft RoP-BFUG

Background note – RoP BFUG

Proposed action: agreeing on submitting the draft RoP-BFUG to be approved in the BFUG XCIII meeting in Budapest

The Hungarian co-chair introduced the document, expressing the desire of the co-chairs not to open the document for discussion since there were extensive debates during the Belgian-Holy See co-chairmanship on the documents.

The Board endorsed the RoP-BFUG for the approval in the BFUG meeting.

7. Application from Eurodoc to become consultative member of EHEA

Documents: Eurodoc application and Eurodoc Statutes

Background document – Eurodoc application

Proposed action: provide advice to the BFUG in relation to the application of Eurodoc

The Icelandic co-chair introduced the application and highlighted that the previous application was refused in 2020 due to their mandate being covered by ESU or ETUCE. She put forward the proposal not to accept the application, since it is the appreciation of the co-chairs that the reasons justifying the rejection of application in 2020 remained consistent.

The Board agreed to put forward to the BFUG the proposal not to accept the application of Eurodoc.

8. Agenda for the XCIII BFUG meeting

Documents: Draft agenda for the BFUG meeting

Proposed action: advice the co-chairs on the proposed BFUG agenda

The Hungarian co-chair introduced the BFUG meeting agenda, presenting the Board with a proposal for a thematic session on the Future of Bologna in connection to mobility and the European Degree, with a focus on how the European Degree is linked to the Bologna Process. The proposal was supported by the outgoing Holy See co-chair, which mentioned there are challenges for non-EU member states in this regard, while EUA questioned whether the reason

is sufficient enough to address the topic as a thematic session in the first BFUG after the adoption of the Communiqué.

The Hungarian co-chair proposed they would prepare a background document for the discussion, while the European Commission said they would present the Communication on the European Degree (label) at the session if requested, however they had not yet been contacted .

The Vice-chair, supported by the co-chair of the former BICG, suggested that the focus of the thematic session should be on how to implement the Communiqué not only at BFUG level, but also at national level, emphasising what countries are planning to do on different issues and learning from each other. The Head of Secretariat mentioned that in previous settings, networking sessions were organised during the first BFUG of the cycle in order to brainstorm project, which this time could include brainstorming the work of the working structures.

EUA suggested that the adoption of the BFUG Rules of Procedure comes at the beginning of the meeting and having the presentation from the European Commission on the Erasmus+ earlier in the programme.

9. Information by the incoming co-chairs (Poland and Albania)

Documents (if the case): Presentation from Albania for XCIV BFUG Board meeting

Presentation from Poland for the XCV BFUG meeting

The incoming Albanian co-chair presented information about the upcoming XCIV BFUG Board meeting in Tirana, which will take place on the 9th of January 2025. An informal dinner will be organised on the 8th of January, with the exact place of the meeting to be confirmed.

The presentation of incoming Polish co-chair was received only in writing since they could not attend the meeting.

10. Any other business (AOB)

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 16:35 GMT.