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DRAFT ROADMAP TOWARDS THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

1. Aim

Progressing towards the EHEA Ministerial conference in Albania in 2024, there is a growing need to plan relevant steps, inputs and inform corresponding groups in order to allow their own planning. The following roadmap brings together several strands of activities which should feed into the proposed final documents to be discussed by the ministers in Tirana:

- A Drafting Committee (DC), the task of which is to prepare the draft communique reflecting also the work and outputs of various working groups (coordination groups, task forces, in the roadmap referred to as WGs)
- Coordination group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG GPD) which in charge of proposing the format of the Global Policy Forum and its Statement
- BFUG and BFUG Board, the executive structures to which the WGs report and which approve the final documents and decisions within the mandate given to them by the Ministers of the EHEA countries.

Two additional activities are included in the roadmap and require a special attention:

- The steps necessary for a call and identification of the host of the further ministerial conference, the date of which might be around year 2027, yet even this has to be still agreed within the BFUG;
- The role of the Task Force on the Review of the Rules and Regulations for the Governance of the European Higher Education Area (TF RR) which is proposed to be set up by the BFUG in November 2022 including a mandate to propose any systemic reforms within EHEA structures identified within the review of existing rules of procedures.

This document aims to provide a complex overview of the steps to be taken in relation to the development of the documents for the Ministerial Conference 2024 (Communiqué, Global Policy Forum statement), an overview of links and coordination between various EHEA working structures and proposes potential time frame. Yet, this is still a matter of discussion and coordination with all those engaged. Thus, the document should be considered as a working, living proposal, not a definite prescription.

A *Communiqué* is adopted at each Ministerial Conference that outlines decisions taken by the Ministers. The Drafting Committee prepares the Communiqué.

In connection with the Ministerial Conference, since 2009, a Bologna Policy Forum (BPF) has been organized, including countries and regional higher education organizations from around the world. Since 2020, this forum is renamed as Global Policy Forum, and Albania will host the next Global Policy Forum in 2024. The Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue prepares the *Statement* of the Global Policy Forum.

It is also desirable that the roadmap be regularly revised and updated at the upcoming BFUG meetings.

2. Background and context

a) Drafting Committee

“Drafting committee is a task force of the BFUG, entrusted with the task to prepare the draft *Communique* for the upcoming Ministerial Conference. Drafting Committee is composed by the Co-chairs of the last three semesters before the Ministerial Conference (Sweden, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Spain, Georgia, Belgium and Holy See) of the actual BFUG Work Plan, the Vice Chair and one consultative member. The consultative member is suggested by the consultative members and approved by the BFUG. The drafting committee agrees on the chairing arrangements during its first



meeting. The current Drafting Committee is foreseen to start its work on first semester of 2023, as the year that precedes the Ministerial Conference. Drafting Committee meets every time after the Board and BFUG meeting, as well as in other times of necessity, as accordingly decided beforehand. Drafting Committee prepares a roadmap of its work, which is forwarded to the BFUG for its approval.” (Rules of Procedures 2021 – 2024)

The task for the BFUG in November 2022 is to agree on the member suggested by consultative members and confirm the set-up of the Drafting Committee. The Drafting Committee should agree on its chairing, develop its roadmap (using or modifying the following proposed schedule where necessary) and inform the relevant Working Groups about the schedule of their expected input (again proposed in the following roadmap).

b) Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

The CG GPF has its own terms of reference, yet should consider the overall schedule and interaction with the BFUG and any other EHEA structures. Considering the specific role of the Global Policy Forum in the preparation of its *Statement*, this group has been especially emphasized within the proposed roadmap.

c) Task Force on the Review of the Rules and Regulations for the Governance of the European Higher Education Area (TF RR)

The Task Force is still a subject to the BFUG approval, including the detailed Terms of reference. However, while it focuses on a complete review of existing rules of procedures, there is a mandate to propose any systemic reforms within EHEA structures identified as opportune during their review. This may open a number of various questions which are likely hardly to be fully concluded within the remaining period – e.g. the role and position of the BFUG secretariat, issues of communication and desired engagement of the wider academic community, interaction with various partners. The BFUG might thus propose to the ministers to make decisions on further arrangements or giving the BFUG a mandate to proceed with further steps. Therefore, this new Task Force has been included under the issues of EHEA organization – together with a few notes on planning the call for the host of the next Ministerial conference.

d) Host of the next Ministerial conference

The call for the host of the next Ministerial conference may be an item for the BFUG meeting in the spring 2023, still, the BFUG might discuss in November 2022 a few issues important for such call:

- Timing. The most likely time may be the first half of 2027, in recent years the periodicity of three years between the ministerial conferences has been most common (April 2009 in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium; April 2012 in Bucharest, Romania; May 2015 in Yerevan, Armenia; May 2018 in Paris, France; November 2020 in Rome, Italy (online)).
- Coordination. Considering the issues addressed above, there may be some uncertainty. The BFUG should therefore consider whether, within the next working periods, the model for the BFUG Secretariat accommodation and provision should continue to follow the current practice where the host of the upcoming ministerial conference hosts also the BFUG Secretariat. Or discuss any alternative provisions such as decoupling the two and ensuring more continuity in the secretariat provision, to be reflected within the upcoming call for the host.

3. Roadmap

The following table includes the proposed roadmap until the Ministerial Conference in Tirana, Albania in 2024. The dates included in the schedule are still provisional ones, proposed for consideration of a suitable timing of various steps, still to be confirmed by relevant BFUG co-chairs and working structures. Thus some of these are indicated in *italics*.



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Action	Communique	GPF Statement	EHEA org.	Proposed date	Meeting	Who?	Note
Co-chairs Czech Republic & Kazakhstan (2nd half 2022)							
Composition of the Drafting Committee (DC)	x			Nov 2022	BFUG CZ (Brno)	BFUG	Confirmation of countries included, nomination of a representative of consultative members - meetings to be set by the Drafting group - any open space for other inputs (academic networks, projects....?)
TF Rules and Regulations (TF RR) set up			x	Nov 2022		TF RR	Rules of procedures, but also comments on the BFUG structure, secretariat
Roadmap approved			x	Nov 2022		co-chairs, Sec	including possible timing and conditions for next ministerial conference (2027?)
Co-chairs Sweden & Bosnia and Hercegovina (1st half 2023)							
Potential inputs from WGs	x	x	x	Feb - Mar 2023		WGs	The WGs to be invited to indicate emerging issues to be addressed within the Communique and GPF statement
Concept of the future Communique: Draft list of topics	x			Mar 2023		DC	The concept and timing to be confirmed within the DC schedule
Framework of Rules of Procedures, issues to address within the EHEA/BFUG structure			x	Mar 2023		TF RR	discussion on EHEA/BFUG structures a possible thematic block
Draft call for the next ministerial conf. host			x	Mar 2023		co-chairs	
Reporting to the BFUG Board	x	x	x	31.3.2023	BFUG Board BiH	DC, WGs	Report by relevant groups (DC, CG GPD, TF RR) Interaction with the WGs, possible Drafting Committee meeting (up to DC schedule)
Concept of the Communique, key issues discussed at the BFUG	x			11-12.5. 2023	BFUG SE	DC	Feedback and comments from BFUG members on: - communique concept and themes

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							- GPF - call for host of 2027 ministerial conference
Call for the next ministerial conf. host launched			x	Jun 2023		Secr	
Co-chairs Spain & Georgia (2nd half 2023)							
Potential inputs from WGs	x	x	x	Sep 2023		DC, WGs	further identification of key issues framework of any potential EHEA/BFUG structure review (TF RR)
Communique: draft 0	x			Sep 2023		DC	input for the BFUG Board
Reporting to the BFUG Board	x			Sep/Oct 2023	BFUG Board GE	DC, WGs	Report by relevant groups (DC, CG GPD, TF RR) Interaction with the WGs, possible Drafting Committee meeting (up to DC schedule)
Communique: draft 1	x			Oct 2023		DC	Reflecting comments from the BFUG Board
Draft GPF statement, concept		x		Oct 2023		CG GPD	concept of the Global Policy Forum (GPF), comments from BFUG
BFUG Comments and feedback	x	x	x	Oct/Nov 2023?	BFUG ES	BFUG	comments at the meeting + written comments within 2-3 weeks after BFUG Draft Com. Meeting
Co-chairs Belgium & Holy See (1st half 2024) <i>the BFUG & BFUG Board meetings to be harmonised with previous co-chairs</i>							
Final thematic input from WGs	x	x	x	Dec 2023/ Jan 2024		DC, WGs	Key issues, proposed formulations including any structural changes to be addressed by the Ministers (TF RR)
Draft Communique version x Draft GPF statement version x	x	x		Dec 2023/ Jan 2024			The plan to be fine-tuned by the Drafting Committee in coordination with relevant co-chairs and updated plan of the meetings

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Reporting to the BFUG Board	x			<i>Dec 2023/ 22-23 Jan 2024</i>	BFUG Board/ <i>Rome</i>	DC, WGs	The timing and location is to be agreed by the co-chairs from 2023 and 2024
BFUG comments and feedback Followed by written comments	x	x	x	19-20 Feb 2024	BFUG BE/Bruss.	BFUG	Details to be agreed by the relevant co-chairs and Drafting Committee
Communique: draft xx	x			<i>Feb 2024</i>		DC	might be reviewed before the BFUG
Global Policy Forum statement draft xx		x		<i>Feb 2024</i>		CG GPD	
Reporting to the BFUG Board	x	x	x	21-22 Mar 2024	BFUG Board Rome/VA	DC, WGs	report by relevant groups (Drafting Group, CG GPD, TF RR) date to be aligned with arrangements on previous BFUG meetings
Communique: draft xxx	x			<i>Apr 2024</i>		DC	
BFUG final comments and agreements on the text	x			18-19 Apr 2024	BFUG BE Brussels	BFUG	comments at the meeting + written comments fine-tuning Draft Com. Meeting finalising the text
Global Policy Forum statement: final		x		May 2024		CG GPD	
Communique: final proposal	x			May 2024		BFUG	
BFUG meeting in Tirana	x			21 – 31 May 2024	BFUG AL	BFUG	if necessary, further plans and preparations
Ministerial Conference communique and Global Policy Forum statement adopted by the Ministers in Tirana 2024	x	x		21-31 May 2024	Tirana 2024	Ministers	Ministerial Conference + Global Policy Forum in Tirana



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Co-chairs Hungary & Iceland (2nd half 2024)							