



Pan-European Structure

Higher Education and Research Standing Committee

London, 7 February 2007 Report

The HERSC Meeting took place in London on 7th February 2007, prior to the Bologna Process Official Seminar on the Mobility of Staff and Students (“Making Bologna a Reality: Mobility of Staff and Students”) in London. This report reflects the brevity of this meeting, and its focus on the Bologna Process. The report is divided into 3 parts – initial matters, the Bologna Process, and other matters.

Part One: Initial Matters

1.1 **Presentations:** The HERSC participants each introduced themselves briefly.

1.2 **Report of the September Meeting:** Accepted without opposition.

1.3 **Matters Arising**

1.3a Membership issues:

- Monique Fouilhoux (EI Secretariat) mentioned that the Czech higher education union sent EI a letter at the end of December mentioning that they will withdraw their affiliation to EI due to the problems they are facing in their union because of the implementation of a new law in their country, by which departments are now autonomous, and the union does not have a real organised union at the national level. Monique mentioned that this is the first time that EI has heard of this, and that she does not know if any union in Eastern Europe has any information on this. She considered this to be very bad news. Paul Bennett (outgoing HERSC chair) suggested that we send them a letter, expressing regret as to what has happened and offering any solidarity/help they may need.
- Monique Fouilhoux mentioned that EI has been visited by another French union (SGT) – the trade union confederation in France – which is now a member of ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation), and which, by means of this legitimacy, will apply to be an education federation in EI.

1.3b ETUCE Documents for Discussion:

ETUCE sent papers on the night of Monday 5th February, and Martin Romer (General Secretary, ETUCE), in his message, expressed the wish to have these papers discussed during the HERSC meeting. Brian Everett (UCU,UK) commented that he was dissatisfied with this situation and that this is not an adequate way of dealing with the volume of information sent, especially as the documents were not sent to the secretariat organising the HERSC. There was a short discussion as to the unsatisfactory way in which ETUCE coordinated this work with HERSC, and a mention of it being part of a wider dissatisfaction as to the information flow and cooperation efforts from ETUCE to HERSC. Paul Bennett was asked to raise the concerns as appropriate with the Officers of the Pan European structure.

Part Two: The Bologna Process

2.1 Bologna Process Follow-Up

2.1a Update from the Secretariat:

Monique Fouilhoux gave an update on the process from the perspective of the EI Secretariat. She mentioned that many EI affiliates participated in the Oslo seminar on external dimension (September 2006); the secretariat participated in the Bologna Follow-Up Group Meeting in Helsinki (October 2006), Jens Vraa-Jensen (HERSC Vice-Chair, and DM, Denmark) participated in the EUA Official Bologna Seminar on Doctoral Studies in Nice (December 2006). She mentioned that she had alerted affiliates on the

necessity to take care of the national reports to the BFUG. The original deadline for these reports was 15th December 2006, and Monique has posted many of them on the HERSC network. Finally Monique mentioned that in the reader for this HERSC meeting, two items of these reports have been analysed - partnership and mobility of staff. On this, Paul Bennett expressed thanks to Angele Attard (Consultant to EI on higher education issues) for preparing the reader, and mentioned that he hoped that similar preparation will be made for the HERSCs in the future.

2.1b National Reports from Affiliates: This mainly concerned what happened with the national reports, either on content or process/access.

- Ryszard Mosakowski (Poland) mentioned that 2 days prior to the HERSC meeting, he asked the BFUG representative in Poland whether the report was ready or not. She said that it was, but that it was secret, and also that it had not been accepted - he doubts how much of this is true.
- Kari Kjenndalen (Norway) reported how NAR had an influence on the national report in 2 ways: regarding a point on the appointment of rectors, and also a point in the last section on the challenges ahead, which said that time for research had been challenged by the workload due to the new study reforms. From NAR's point of view, this was a very important point to be integrated, so they are very pleased with the situation.
- Ann Fritzell (Sweden) reported that Sweden has a national Bologna group on which Ann (SULF) is a consultative member. They meet regularly (approx. every month) and normally do not really discuss important matters. However, they had a very thorough discussion regarding the national report, and SULF had the possibility to influence both minor and major details, so they are very pleased with the situation as well.
- Jens Vraa-Jensen (Denmark) reported that the Ministry promised that a draft would be circulated before 15th December 2006, within the consultative group. This never happened, and the ministry just sent the report to the Bologna Secretariat instead. The consultative group was not not happy about this, so that a revision of the report is now underway, to be sent to the Bologna Secretariat in a few weeks' time.
- Pedro Gonzalez-Lopez (Spain) reported that FE.CC.OO wanted to be consultative members to be involved in the preparation of the report. They had a meeting with the Ministry 2 weeks prior to the HERSC, and the Ministry said that they sent the report before 15th December, and they said that the matter is now out of their hands, and they were not longer able to influence it.
- Manuel Pereira Dos Santos (Portugal) reported that there is no real national Bologna follow-up group in Portugal, and that students and unions are kept away carefully, so that he knows nothing of what the government is doing from that point of view
- Razvan Bobulescu (Romania) mentioned that the national B follow-up group does not include unions and that he does not even know who is the head of this group. Usually it is the Secretary of State for higher education who is responsible for this, but this position is currently vacant, and it is not known who will be nominated for this.

Monique Fouilhoux told affiliates that it is important to have a careful look at the reader for this HERSC meeting and comment, particularly with changes in terms of developments (e.g. situation of Denmark), or anything they disagree with. She mentioned that she has posted the reports on the network, and that these reports will be useful for 2 elements : stocktaking, and also to be used by the Bologna Secretariat for a Bologna Secretariat report, which will be submitted to the next BFUG (Bologna Follow-Up Group) meeting at the beginning of March.

Jens Vraa-Jensen commented that it is incredible that anyone from the Ministry will claim that these reports are secret, when they are working in terms of the Bologna Process, which tries to enhance transparency and openness.

Paul Bennett commented that one of the good things about EI being in the BFUG, is that it is possible to raise these issues with the BFUG.

2.2 The EI-ESIB-UCU Official Bologna Seminar on Mobility, 7-9 February 2007

2.2a Last developments concerning the Official Bologna seminar on Mobility: "Making Bologna a reality: mobility of staff and students"

- Paul Bennett mentioned that EI has managed to attract nearly 200 participants to this seminar, and this is a great success. He noted that, if the capacity had been available in the conference venue, we could have taken in another 100, as many more applied.

- Regarding Organisational Arrangements: Monique Fouilhoux mentioned the following: This is the only Bologna Seminar that has translation, especially Russian translation, which has attracted a large number of participants from Eastern Europe. EI has also translated the executive summary and the conclusions of the studies prepared for the seminar - into French, Spanish and Russian. EI has received positive comments also outside its membership in terms of inclusion, so this is an important aspect. Participants from 33 countries from the 46 Bologna countries will be present, which is significantly more representative than previous Bologna seminars. There will be many academics; the majority of consultative members will also be present except for UNESCO-CEPES (as Jan Sadlak, Director of UNESCO-CEPES, will retire in a few months); UNICE has changed its name to Business Europe and will be present with 1 participant; EUA has a large visibility; and EURASHE's general secretary will chair one of the panels. A government representative from Croatia will also be present.

2.2b Regarding Academics' Perspective and Outcomes of the Seminar:

Monique Fouilhoux remarked that the fact that many participants outside EI's membership will be present is a good thing, but this means that EI affiliates have to be very serious in raising our voice, and raising our concerns and what we want to recommend.

Paul Bennet commented that it is necessary to get the trade and student union view across, so that it can be visibly picked up by the rapporteur at the end of the seminar.

Koen Geven (ESIB Chairperson) highlighted 3 main areas of concern to ESIB:

- The lack of data on student mobility (except for that which concerns taking credits for one semester abroad). This is a crucial issue which comes out of the ESIB study.
- Visa regulations, regarding which issue Koen commented that he was very pleased that there would be many participants from Eastern Europe. He remarked that, from the ESIB study, it is visible that immigration procedures have been tightened.
- Financing of mobility for students.

2.2c BFUG (Bologna Follow-Up Group) Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility: Ann Fritzell (SULF, Sweden, and EI Representative to the BFUG Social Dimension and Mobility Working Group) explained that the main part of the work of the BFUG working group on social dimension and mobility, had been on the social dimension. On the day prior to the HERSC meeting, during a meeting of the working group, she found out that there was no data on mobility. One reason for this lack of data was that there is no good definition of mobility/indicators. She reported that the working group will have one more meeting before they draw up the final report. She noted that some of the things that Conor pointed out in his study on the mobility of academics, and some of the things that the HERSC had pointed out, would be picked up in the final report. She remarked that she was therefore quite pleased with the way things had gone, though she thought it was quite embarrassing that the working group did not have more to offer. Ann also addressed the issue of stocktaking on mobility, which the working group had concluded was not a very appropriate method when complicated matters are concerned e.g. social dimension and mobility, as, in such areas, there is a lack of clear and uniform measures for comparison.

2.2d The Programme of the Mobility Seminar: Monique Fouilhoux presented and explained the programme, stressed that it was important for there to be a consensus on the final recommendations, and that it was necessary for all representatives of EI affiliate unions to go to the specific workshop to which they had been assigned.

Part Three: Other Matters

3.1 Election of Chair: Jens Vraa-Jensen was unanimously elected as new Chair of the HERSC

3.2 Research Matters

Monique Fouilhoux briefly reported on developments regarding research matters:

- The OECD will organise a one-day workshop on international researchers' mobility on the 28th March 2007. Within the main issue of mobility of researchers, that of conditions of mobile researchers will also be tackled.

- The European Commission's Proposal for a Regulation on the EIT (European Institute of Technology). Monique reported that ETUCE had prepared a draft statement, to which the EI Secretariat had already prepared some amendments. She indicated that this text (with amendments) would be put on the HERSC Network by the end of the week, and that affiliates would have 2 weeks to react to the text, with this being an absolute deadline, after which point, the text would go back to EUCE. In relation to this, it was stressed by some that there was a need for greater synergy between EI Europe and ETUCE, on this, as well as other issues.

Regarding the EIT itself:

Kari Kjenndalen (NAR, Norway) put forward objections to the proposed funding sources (from the Framework Programme 7 and Lifelong Learning Programme), and also to the EIT becoming the model for higher education institutions in Europe, as suggested in the Commission Proposal.

Jens Vraa-Jensen (DM, Denmark) commented that he was very concerned regarding issues related to intellectual property rights within the Commission Proposal on the EIT. Apart from that, he expressed his concern that the ETUCE Paper is very near to the position of the Commission, which, he indicated, is a problem in general, as a trade union should not adopt the language of the Commission on matters such as the EIT. He stressed that it is important that this does not happen again, and that a similar way of dealing with important issues such as this does not slip through the work of the HERSC in the future.

Brian Everett (UCU, UK) expressed the hope that some lessons will be learnt from the manner in which the EIT has been dealt with.

Riku Matilainen (FUURT, Finland) reported that he had attended a meeting on the EIT in Helsinki (May 2006), as Martin Romer was unable to attend this meeting. He mentioned that the original idea was that industry would put up the money for EIT, and that even though this is no longer the case, he was of the opinion that this was not a higher education project at all, but rather something that would support the industry. He agreed to post a report/document with information from the May meeting on the network.

Odile Cordelier (VP ETUCE/EI Europe) remarked that it is important to have more synergy between EI Europe and ETUCE at all levels, from the national to international.

Paul Bennett commented that the HERSC is the locus for any debate, and reminded all present that the HERSC online network includes ETUCE.

3.3 Working programme for the HERSC 2007-2009:

- Monique Fouilhoux outlined the EI/ETUCE work programme for the period 2007-9, as adopted at the EI Europe/ETUCE Pan-European Conference in Luxembourg in December 2006.
- Jens Vraa-Jensen reminded affiliates that EI Europe would also be applying for consultative status with the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Higher Education and Research.

3.4 Any other business:

3.4a Koen Geven on Student Persecution in Belarus: Koen reported that on 27th December 2006, Nadzeya Mantsevich, who represented the Belarusian student movement during the ESIB Board Meeting in Belgrade (May 2006), was arrested, and expelled from her university – the Belarusian State Pedagogical University. The formal reason given by authorities was "systematic breaching of discipline and university rules". In January 2007, a range of expulsions then took place. He asked EI affiliates to send letters of solidarity, and indicated that the relevant documents would be distributed during the mobility seminar.

3.4b Update from Monique Fouilhoux on the OECD Future Scenarios Project: Monique reported that since the last HERSC meeting in Oslo (September 2006), another workshop took place in November 2006 as part of this project, for which David Robinson had sent a report. She mentioned that during the week following this HERSC meeting there would be one final workshop, and EI (represented by David Robinson, CAUT, Canada) and TUAC (represented by Monique) would be present. This workshop was to discuss the issue of the Labour Market and Higher Education Reforms. She further mentioned that this workshop would be organised in Paris on the invitation of

the French government, after which, the government would be organising a one-day session on professionalisation of higher education. This session would therefore address how to develop more professional degrees in connection with vocational education, employability and the labour market, and would draw on examples from Canada, Australia, etc. She indicated that affiliates would receive a report on this as soon as possible.

3.4c Update from Monique Fouilhoux on the OECD Project on PISA for Higher Education: Monique mentioned that this issue would be discussed again during the next OECD Education Committee meeting in March 2007, and that the EI Secretariat is preparing a text (on the basis of the discussion on the network) which will be circulated, and which will be on the Agenda of the TUAC Committee (as in this case, the EI position is quite different, so it was decided that there will be a separate statement on the basis of affiliates' comments).

3.5 Next Meetings.

- A one-day higher education caucus on 20th July 2007, prior to the EI 5th World Congress in Berlin (22nd-26th July).
- The next HERSC (Autumn) Meeting will be from 11-12 October 2007 in Brussels.

Note: List of Participants: Attached

List of Participants

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