Stakeholders' Perceptions of the Bologna Process

Survey of Stakeholders from Beyond the EHEA

(February 2024)

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1. Introduction

As part of the work programme of the BFUG Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG GPD, https://www.ehea.info/page-Coordination-Group) and supported by the IN-GLOBAL project (https://www.in-global.eu/), a survey was conducted to gain insights into different stakeholders' perception of the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The aim of the survey was to ascertain stakeholders' perceptions and level of knowledge about the Bologna Process in order to inform the CG's deliberations on proposals for additional activities to enable policy dialogue and exchange between the EHEA and other regions, including proposals for a more structured cooperation between the EHEA and other countries.

The survey was drafted in consultation with the CG GPD and had a broad, inclusive target audience: the survey addressed all members of the higher education community from beyond the EHEA – students, academics, staff, managers, leadership – as well as outside stakeholders – e.g. employers –, regardless of whether they are active in a stakeholder organisation, higher education institution governing body or not. While the dissemination of the survey focused on representatives who would complete the survey officially on behalf of an organisation (e.g. higher education institution, stakeholder organisation), the survey was open also to individual respondents.

The survey was distributed to contacts gathered specifically for the IN-GLOBAL project and via social media (LinkedIn, X/then Twitter, Facebook). It was open from 23 June until 11 September 2023.

The survey was anonymous, but allowed respondents to leave their contact details for follow-up questions and to remain informed of the results.

1.1 Survey Structure

The survey was structured in the following parts:

A) Information about the respondent

B) Knowledge of the Bologna Process

C) Impact of the Bologna Process

D) Needs and priorities for future activities

E) Contact details

The substantial chapters of this report mirror parts B – D of the survey.

1.2 Known Limitations

The desired broad and open target audience led to limitations or caveats that should be borne in mind when considering the survey results:

1. While respondents were asked to indicate whether they respond personally or on behalf of their organisation, there was no possibility to check whether those responding on behalf of their organisation actually did, i.e. submitted a coordinated response.

We can neither rule out that an individual simply chose that option, nor that several people from the same organisation submitted responses declared as "organisational". (And that these answers may have differed in substance.)

Some cases suggest that there are inaccurate responses indeed, e.g. there are several organisational responses from the ministry of education in a country that is not known to have several ministries. Hence, in most of the analysis no difference was made between individual and organisational responses.

2. Similarly, there was no way of validating the basic information provided by respondents about themselves (section A of the survey).

3. We registered a large number (190) of incomplete responses. These are most likely from individuals who filled some of the initial pages and then dropped out. After considering whether to include those responses, they were eventually omitted to avoid distorting the results by including possible duplicates or test responses.

4. Some of the survey questions, e.g. on the impact of the Bologna Process, de facto required a minimum of knowledge or exposure to EHEA tools to provide meaningful responses. There was no "protection" to prevent respondents from answering without any knowledge.

5. Finally, the broad target group allowed huge imbalances to occur, as described below this happened especially in the geographic coverage.

1.3 Data Cleaning

Before processing the data, a few data cleaning steps were performed:

1. A few respondents chose "other" as their main role or affiliation, but – based on their comments and contact details – clearly fitted one of the provided categories. They were re-assigned accordingly.

2. To simplify aggregation by respondent profile, roles/affiliations (as presented in the survey) were merged into a smaller number of broader groups for further analysis:

| Broader role/affiliation	Narrower role(s)/affiliation(s)
Students	- Students
Working in HEIs	- Academic - Higher education institution (HEI) leadership - HEI management or administration (unless working for a national or European organisation)
Working in ministries, agencies	- Ministry responsible for higher education - Quality assurance (QA) agency - National recognition information centre (ENIC-NARIC) - Agency/organisation for internationalisation or international promotion + previous row, when working for a national or European organisation
Others	- Other ministry or governmental agency/organisation - Private/profit-oriented company - Other non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation

– 4 –

As the latter category only included 8 respondents, breakdowns by role/affiliation only include the other three categories.

1.4   Respondents

The survey attracted 750 responses – 560 full and 190 partial responses, which were discarded for the analysis (see above).

Figure 1: Profile of respondents

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/n0UGe/?v=2
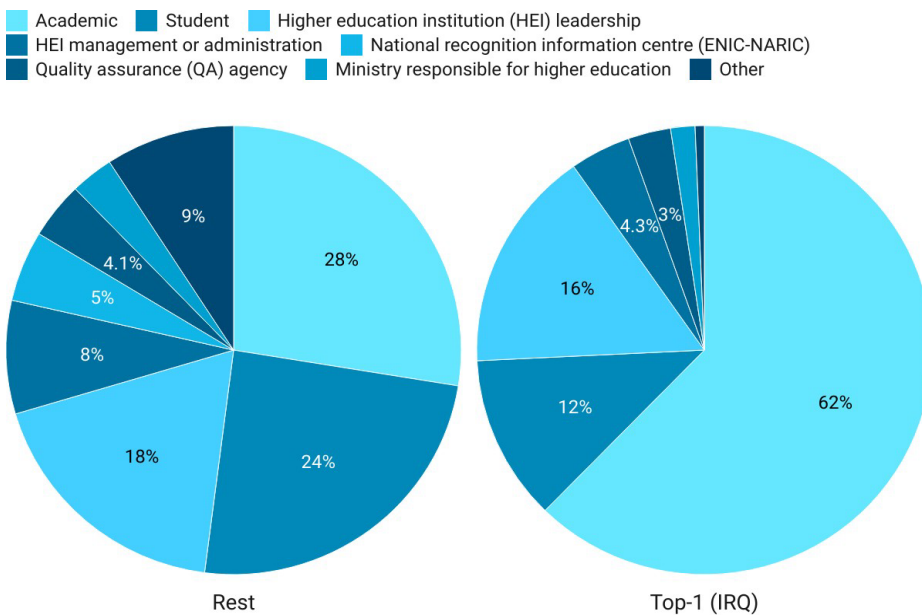
"Other" includes: agency/organisation for internationalisation, other ministry or governmental agency/organisation, private/profit-oriented company, other non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation

Chart: Colin Tück • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

The survey analysed in this report was open to respondents from countries outside the EHEA only. A parallel survey was open to respondents from EHEA countries; both surveys contained links to direct respondents to the respective other survey in case.

Due to particularly intense dissemination efforts – in the context of a project with EHEA experts as well as by the local ministry for higher education – the survey attracted a large number of respondent from Iraq compared to all other countries: 462 responses (83%) were from Iraq. In comparison, there were no more than 3 responses from any other country and from the majority of countries there was only a single respondent. The following table provides a breakdown of respondents by UNESCO Regions:

Region	Respondents
Africa	11
Arab States (without Iraq)	7
Asia and the Pacific	16
Europe and North America	7
Latin America and the Carribean	6

International organisations or undefined	51
Iraq	462
Total	**560**

Not surprisingly, respondents from higher education institutions (academics, students, leadership and management), or representing these stakeholders, make up the large majority of respondents. The profile of respondents is shown in Figure 1.

It is interesting to note that the share of student respondents is lower than for the parallel survey of stakeholders from the EHEA. Given that countries beyond the EHEA generally do not themselves implement Bologna policies and tools, it is, however, logical that the topics covered by the survey are more relevant for academics and individuals working in organisations than for individual students.

Similarly, more than half (51%) of the non-Iraqi respondents are working for sub-national, national, regional or international organisations. These are likely individuals who deal with international cooperation on a daily basis.

Considering the overall small number of responses (except from Iraq) and the large imbalances, the analysis focuses on discussing differences, e.g. between stakeholder groups or between the perception of different tools, rather than conclusions from absolute numbers. Due to the large number of responses from Iraq, a comparison between respondents from Iraq and elsewhere was made for most statistics.

2. Knowledge of the Bologna Process

2.1 Tools

The knowledge of the Bologna tools and policies varies: two EHEA key commitments, namely quality assurance and the three-cycle structure including ECTS, are rather well-known, while other tools are less well-known (see Figure 2). The overall level of knowledge is slightly lower than of EHEA respondents. Moreover, the ranking of tools by level of knowledge mirrors the results of the EHEA survey, too: the most and least well-know tools and policies are very similar.

Some differences are noteworthy, however: the Qualifications Framework for the EHEA (QF-EHEA) and the involvement of stakeholders rank higher in the survey with participants from beyond the EHEA. In the analysis of the EHEA survey, the less widespread knowledge of these tools was explained by the fact that these have larger importance at system/structural level than for individual students or academics. As noted above, the survey of stakeholders from beyond the EHEA predominantly gathered responses from individuals who work at those levels (i.e. sub-national, national, regional and international organisations); this might explain the better knowledge of such tools.

On the other hand, knowledge about the goals of automatic recognition and removal of obstacles to trans-national cooperation (e.g. joint programmes) seems lower with respondents from beyond the EHEA.

The (subtle) difference between EHEA and non-EHEA respondents might also reflect different priorities in the national implementation of Bologna tools and policies within the EHEA, versus in the communication and dialogue between the EHEA and other countries/regions.

Given the large number, the knowledge of EHEA tools and policies is presented separately for respondents from Iraq in Figure 2.

Generally, EHEA tools appear slightly less well-known amongst respondents from Iraq. Considering that a large number of individual academics and students have responded from Iraq – compared to predominantly people working in organisations from elsewhere – the knowledge of EHEA tools is actually remarkably high amongst respondents from Iraq. On the other hand, the way the survey was disseminated in Iraq most likely attracted mainly individuals with some interest and knowledge of the Bologna Process.

Figure 2: Knowledge of EHEA tools and policies
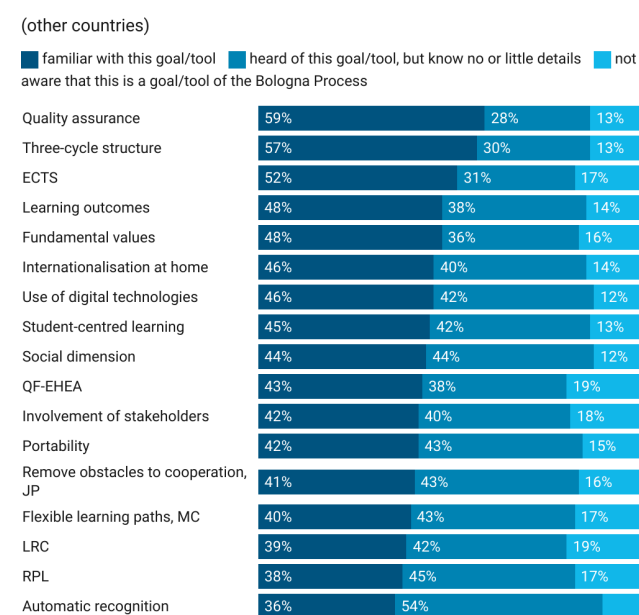
https://www.datawrapper.de/_/JQ9mQ/   https://www.datawrapper.de/_/U3Knd/

(other countries)

■ familiar with this goal/tool ■ heard of this goal/tool, but know no or little details ■ not aware that this is a goal/tool of the Bologna Process

Goal/tool	familiar	heard	not aware
Quality assurance	59%	28%	13%
Three-cycle structure	57%	30%	13%
ECTS	52%	31%	17%
Learning outcomes	48%	38%	14%
Fundamental values	48%	36%	16%
Internationalisation at home	46%	40%	14%
Use of digital technologies	46%	42%	12%
Student-centred learning	45%	42%	13%
Social dimension	44%	44%	12%
QF-EHEA	43%	38%	19%
Involvement of stakeholders	42%	40%	18%
Portability	42%	43%	15%
Remove obstacles to cooperation, JP	41%	43%	16%
Flexible learning paths, MC	40%	43%	17%
LRC	39%	42%	19%
RPL	38%	45%	17%
Automatic recognition	36%	54%	

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

(Iraq only)

■ familiar with this goal/tool ■ heard of this goal/tool, but know no or little details ■ not aware that this is a goal/tool of the Bologna Process

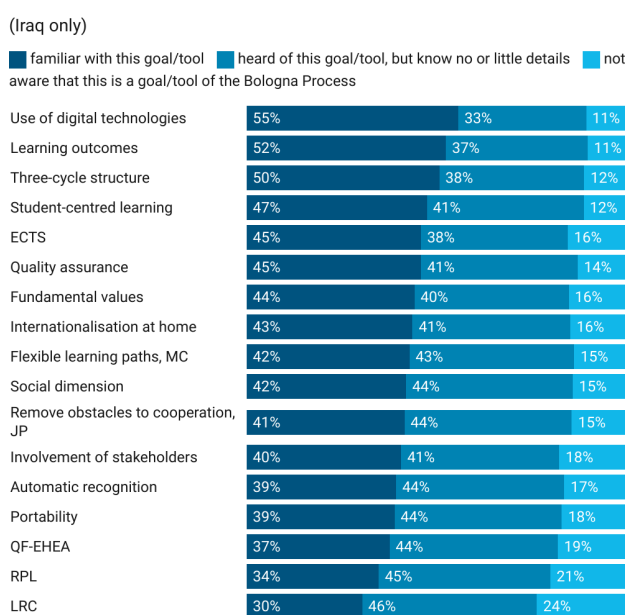| Goal/tool	familiar	heard	not aware
Use of digital technologies	55%	33%	11%
Learning outcomes	52%	37%	11%
Three-cycle structure	50%	38%	12%
Student-centred learning	47%	41%	12%
ECTS	45%	38%	16%
Quality assurance	45%	41%	14%
Fundamental values	44%	40%	16%
Internationalisation at home	43%	41%	16%
Flexible learning paths, MC	42%	43%	15%
Social dimension	42%	44%	15%
Remove obstacles to cooperation, JP	41%	44%	15%
Involvement of stakeholders	40%	41%	18%
Automatic recognition	39%	44%	17%
Portability	39%	44%	18%
QF-EHEA	37%	44%	19%
RPL	34%	45%	21%
LRC	30%	46%	24%

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

The use of digital technologies in teaching and learning came out as the most well-know EHEA topic in Iraq. This is noteworthy considering that this is a relatively new EHEA policy area and that there are no very concrete commitments or tools in that regard yet. It might reflect national priorities, or priorities set in dialogue and training activities conceived by Iraqi stakeholders with EHEA counterparts or experts.

2.2   EHEA Website and Logos

The EHEA website is partly known to respondents from beyond the EHEA: even though 44% (34% of respondents outside Iraq) have never visited it, 30% (38% without Iraq) of respondents visit it at least once a year. Most students and academics from the EHEA visit the website less often. As it might be unlikely that the EHEA website is better known to the overall higher education community beyond the EHEA than within, this result might indicate that a generally more informed and involved audience participated in the non-EHEA survey.

While the EHEA survey results suggested that the EHEA website is primarily an internal communication tool for people involved in the EHEA structures (at European or national level), it seems that the website additionally

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serves as a reference point for those stakeholders beyond the EHEA who have an interest or seek to engage with the Bologna Process.

Figure 3: Knowledge of the Bologna Process and EHEA logos

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/yCXfX/

	Yes, know what it stands for	Seen it before, but don't know exactly	Not seen this logo before

Bologna Logo

Working in HEIs	38%	28%	34%
Working in ministries, agencies, etc.	53%	22%	25%
Students	47%	32%	22%

EHEA Logo

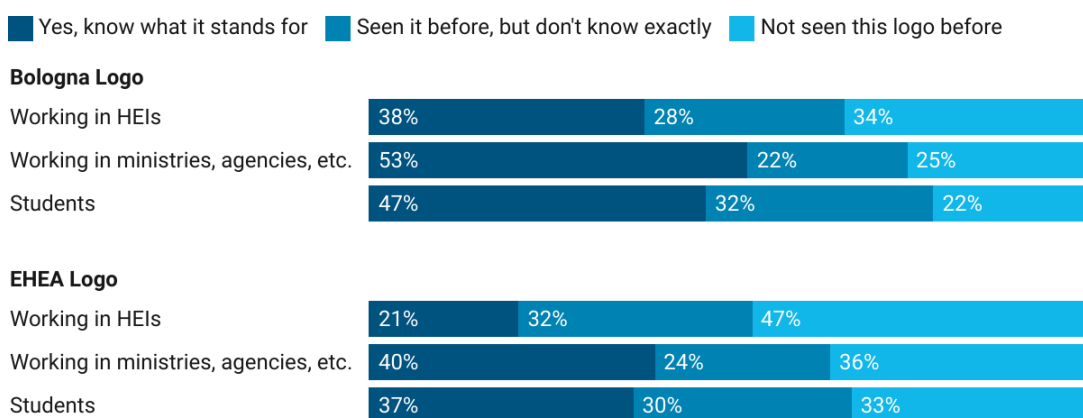|			
Working in HEIs	21%	32%	47%
Working in ministries, agencies, etc.	40%	24%	36%
Students	37%	30%	33%

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

The majority of respondents from ministries, agencies and other organisations have seen the Bologna Process logo and know what it stands for (see Figure 3). Interestingly, also nearly half of the students responding have seen the logo before, and amongst students the share of respondents who have never seen the logo is lowest.

This suggests that the students responding to the survey included mainly well-informed students and representatives, who probably had some engagement with EHEA policies. This contrasts with the EHEA survey, which attracted responses from a large number of "grass roots" students with little knowledge of the Bologna Process other than being enrolled in a "Bologna-style" study programme.

Both logos are much better known to respondents working in HEIs from the EHEA. Similar to the findings of the EHEA survey, the EHEA logo is clearly less well-known than the Bologna Process logo.

3. Perception of the Bologna Process' Impact

3.1 Relevance

The Bologna Process and the development of the EHEA are perceived as highly relevant by a considerable number of respondents, see Figure 4.

It is interesting to note that respondents working in higher education institutions in Iraq seems to be the most uncertain about the Bologna Process' relevance for their daily work. This is interesting given the remarkable emphasis on the actual implementation of EHEA tools and policies in Iraq (see below), which would most likely affect the daily work of many academics and other HEI staff. As several comments pointed out that these discussions have only recently started, it seems that for many people in Iraqi HEIs it is to early to tell what sustainable impact and relevance the Bologna Process will have on their work.

3.2   Impact by Areas

Stakeholders have an overall positive assessment of the Bologna Process' impact, see Figure 5. Given that the Bologna Process primarily seeks to impact higher education systems within the EHEA, non-EHEA respondents were presented with a more limited selection of areas, focusing on those where the Bologna Process might have an impact on the relation/interaction between the respondent's higher education system and the EHEA.

While both EHEA and non-EHEA respondents' overall assessment is positive, EHEA respondents see the Bologna Process' impact slightly more positive than stakeholders from beyond the EHEA: in those areas presented in both surveys, often ca. 10% more EHEA respondents regarded impact as "strongly positive";

Figure 4: Relevance of the Bologna Process and the EHEA
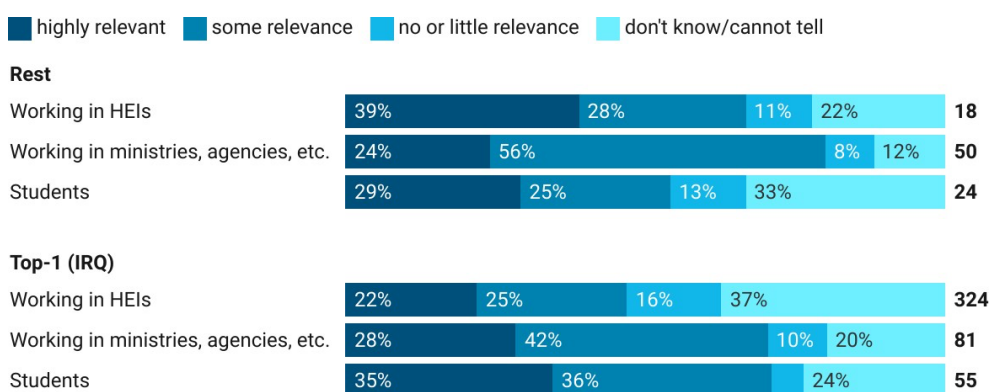
https://www.datawrapper.de/_/nZiz5/

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

likewise, more respondents from beyond the EHEA considered that the Bologna Process led to "mixed results".

It is remarkable that the perceived impact as regards incoming vs. outgoing mobility, or recognition of qualifications in vs. from the EHEA, is nearly identical.

It must be noted that mobility between the EHEA and third countries was not necessarily advanced by the Bologna Process, but also by other policies and programmes, such as the EU Erasmus+ programme and its Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programmes for example. The EHEA tools and policies, dialogue between the EHEA and other regions/countries organised under the EHEA working structures' umbrella and EU activities, such as the EU neighbourhood policy, are closely intertwined. This makes it difficult to "isolate" the distinct impact of the Bologna Process itself.

Ca. 21% of respondents from Iraq chose "cannot tell", compared to ca. 13% of respondents from the remaining countries. This confirms the initial observations that a broader sample of the higher education community in Iraq participated in the survey, compared to a more "specialist" audience elsewhere.

The differences between respondents from Iraq and elsewhere are subtle (see Figure 5). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the impact on incoming mobility and recognition are more positively assessed than outgoing in Iraq, while the situation is vice-versa for other countries.

A more remarkable difference is visible in the free-text comments provided by survey respondents: many

Figure 5: Impact of the Bologna Process
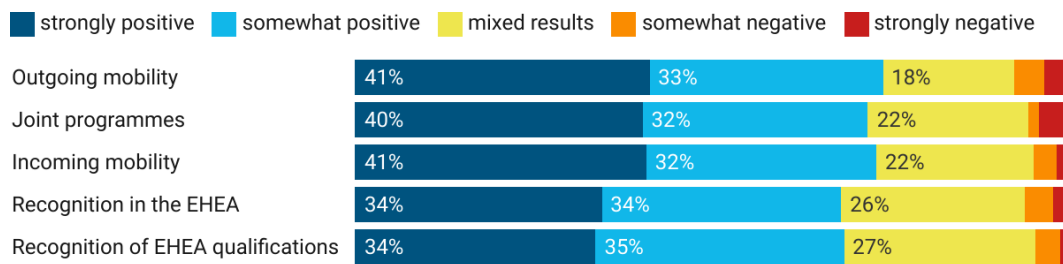
https://www.datawrapper.de/_/yYStS/

| | strongly positive | somewhat positive | mixed results | somewhat negative | strongly negative |

Outgoing mobility	41%	33%	18%	
Joint programmes	40%	32%	22%	
Incoming mobility	41%	32%	22%	
Recognition in the EHEA	34%	34%	26%	
Recognition of EHEA qualifications	34%	35%	27%	

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/TYVFl/

(average by country group)

● Rest ● Top-1 (IRQ)

Outgoing mobility
Incoming mobility
Joint programmes
Recognition in the EHEA
Recognition of EHEA qualifications

0   0.5   1   1.5   2

2 = strongly positive / 1= somewhat positive / 0 = mixed results / -1 = somewhat negative / -2 = strongly negative / "no impact" and "don't know / cannot judge" not counted

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

stakeholders from Iraq talk about "implementing Bologna" in their comments, reflecting local government policies and ambitions to implement EHEA tools and policies as such. This might go significantly beyond what the EHEA policy dialogue initiatives aim for, as it was not necessarily the aim for third countries to implement EHEA tools directly.

Most comments reflect a positive stance, either noting that EHEA tools are a useful framework or noting challenges in using and implementing them, but still with a positive, forward-looking perspective. Interestingly, a small number of comments, however, included a more critical appraisal and reflection, mainly pointing out that the respondents do not consider the EHEA tools and policies suitable and stressing that they would need to be adapted for their local context.

Most comments from other countries have a different perspective, regarding the EHEA tools and policies as a useful reference and inspiration in developing their own national or regional frameworks – rather than discussing the implementation of EHEA tools directly.

3.3   Familiarity with Communication Activities

Respondents are most familiar with conferences and the activities of the BFUG Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG GPD), see Figure 6. On average, stakeholders from beyond the EHEA are more familiar with the existing activities and communication tools than respondents to the EHEA survey. This confirms the assumption that more knowledgable and involved individuals have participated in this survey.

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Comparing respondents from Iraq and elsewhere, it seems that the Higher Education Reform Experts activities are particularly well-known to the Iraq higher education community.

Figure 6: Familiarity with activities and communication tools

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/FxhcJ/

(Iraq vs. other countries)

● Rest ● Top-1 (IRQ)
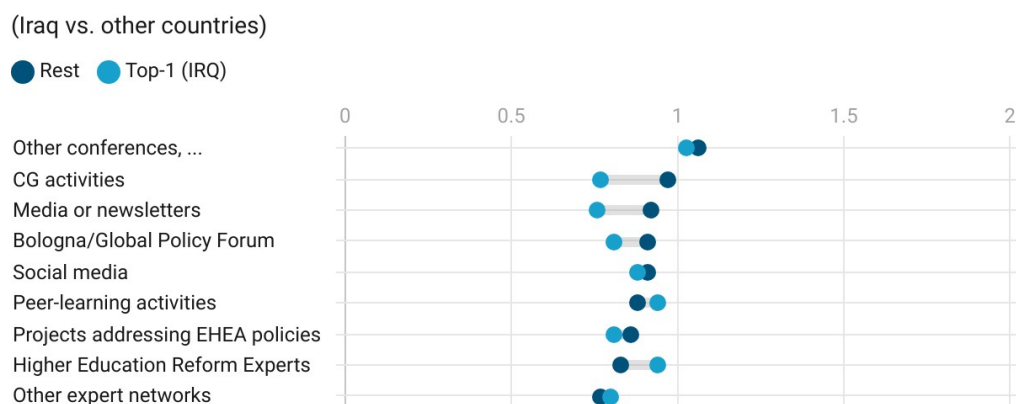
2 = familiar, have participated in/engaged with/used it / 1 = heard of it, but have not participated/engaged/used this / 0 = not familiar

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

Good practices mentioned by survey respondents included several national and regional activities, such as the UNESCO-managed TVET2 project in Iraq, as well as EU-funded initiatives for dialogue with other regions, e.g. the EU-SHARE project. A comprehensive overview of good practices mentioned by respondents is available in the annex.

4. Needs for Future Activities

4.1 Topics of Interest

Survey respondents were asked to rank the topics they consider most interesting and relevant for future dialogue and exchange, based on a list of topics identified by the BFUG CG.

The topic of innovation, new skills and their link to employability comes out clearly with highest priority (see Figure 7), followed by student-centred learning. It should, however, be noted that the top three topics exactly mirror the first three topics presented in the list.

Inclusion as a driver for excellence – covering inclusion with regard to access, admission, retention and employability as presented in the survey – turned out to be a particularly divisive topic: there is notably less interest in the topic among the Iraq higher education community than elsewhere. On the other hand, when analysing the ranking of topics by stakeholder group, students assign a significantly higher priority to this topic.

Whereas in the EHEA survey the most highly-ranked topics coincided with the topics already most well-known by respondents, this differs for respondents from Iraq: even though the use of digital technologies is a well-known policy area (see section 2.1 above) to respondents from Iraq, this area does not feature particularly high as a topic of interest for dialogue.

Figure 7: Topics of interest for dialogue and exchange

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/pckXF/

Average priority assigned by respondents
Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

While a number of additional comments were made by respondents, many of those referred to the format of dialogue rather than topics, or stressed the importance of academic exchange and mobility. Topics mentiond in addition to those already listed in the survey were:

· Social responsibility and sustainability in higher education;

· Lifelong learning and continuing education;

· Internationalisation of higher education;

· Artificial Intelligence (AI), its potential use in higher education as well as its impact;

· Social inequality and inclusion;

· Labour market relevance and dialogue between higher education and businesses.

4.2   Priority Goals from the Rome Communiqué

The Rome Communiqué formulated three priority goals for the EHEA and the survey sought feedback to what extent these goals are shared by other countries/regions/institutions beyond the EHEA.

Overall, the vast majority of respondents have indicated that they share all three goals, although with some interesting variations as shown in Figure 8.

The goal of being inclusive ("every learner will have equitable access to higher education and will be fully supported in completing their studies and training") appears to be slightly more divisive than others: while this is clearly the goal for which most respondents note that it is shared and a high priority, it is also the goal for which most respondents – even though that still means only 10% – express that they do not share the goal, and it is the goal for which the least respondents are unsure and cannot tell.

The least shared goal is interconnected ("our shared frameworks and tools will continue to facilitate and enhance international cooperation and reform, exchange of knowledge and mobility of staff and students"). This might be a result of the fact that this goal could be seen as more inward-focused on the EHEA itself than on mobility and exchange between the EHEA and third countries.

Figure 8: Sharing the priority goals of the Rome Communiqué
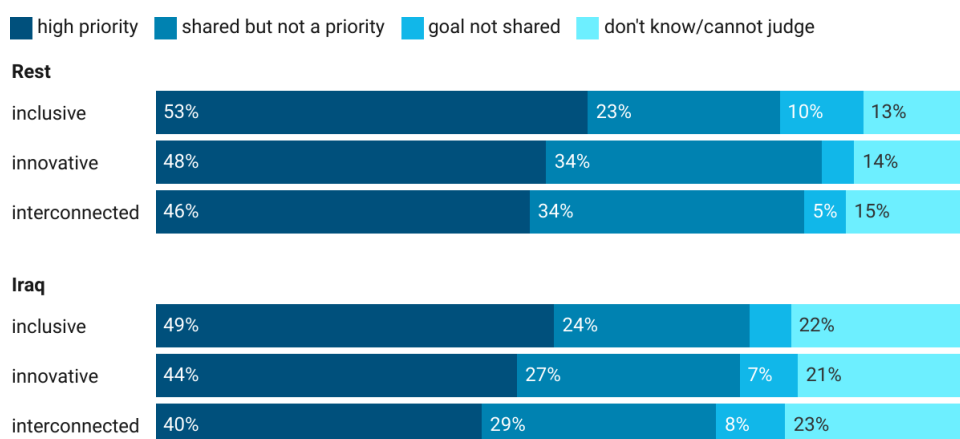
https://www.datawrapper.de/_/Zrc60/

Legend: high priority · shared but not a priority · goal not shared · don't know/cannot judge

Rest

	high priority	shared but not a priority	goal not shared	don't know/cannot judge
inclusive	53%	23%	10%	13%
innovative	48%	34%		14%
interconnected	46%	34%	5%	15%

Iraq

	high priority	shared but not a priority	goal not shared	don't know/cannot judge
inclusive	49%	24%		22%
innovative	44%	27%	7%	21%
interconnected	40%	29%	8%	23%

Chart: CT · Source: IN-GLOBAL survey · Created with Datawrapper
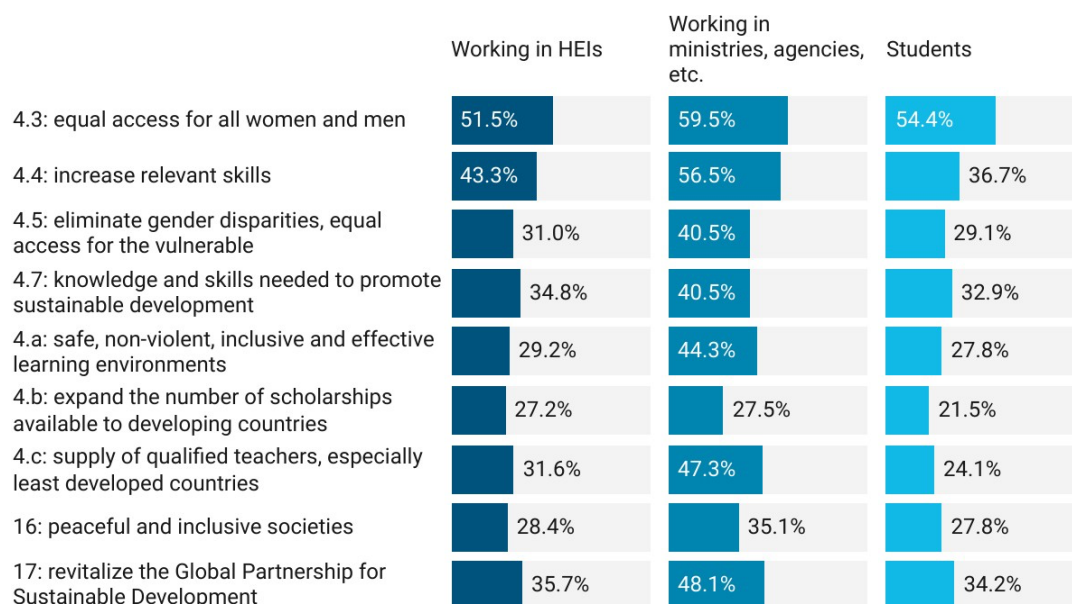
It is also interesting that the interconnected goal is regarded as most close to achieved by EHEA survey respondents, which reflects the fact that this is one of the original/initial goals of the Bologna Process.

4.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

As the EHEA is committed to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), stakeholders from beyond the EHEA were asked to indicate which goals and targets related to higher education are prioritised in their region/country/institution. The focus was on SDG 4, but not exclusively.

Figure 9: Prioritising the relevant SDG

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/b2O2d/

	Working in HEIs	Working in ministries, agencies, etc.	Students
4.3: equal access for all women and men	51.5%	59.5%	54.4%
4.4: increase relevant skills	43.3%	56.5%	36.7%
4.5: eliminate gender disparities, equal access for the vulnerable	31.0%	40.5%	29.1%
4.7: knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development	34.8%	40.5%	32.9%
4.a: safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments	29.2%	44.3%	27.8%
4.b: expand the number of scholarships available to developing countries	27.2%	27.5%	21.5%
4.c: supply of qualified teachers, especially least developed countries	31.6%	47.3%	24.1%
16: peaceful and inclusive societies	28.4%	35.1%	27.8%
17: revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	35.7%	48.1%	34.2%

Share of respondents indicating that SDG is prioritised in their region/country/institution

Chart: CT · Source: IN-GLOBAL survey · Created with Datawrapper

The responses show that items 4.3 and 4.4 are shared more widely than others. In line with the feedback received on the Rome Communiqué priority goals, also here equal access is a topic of key concern to many respondents.

4.4   Formats of Activities

Respondents already saw themselves as well-informed about the Bologna Process and EHEA concepts: 51% (EHEA: 46%) consider the information available as about right or more than enough. 25% (EHEA: 24%) however consider that information could be better and 8% (EHEA: 11%) deem it insufficient (remainder: don't know / cannot tell).

Respondents were asked to rank their preferred formats for activities to enhance dialogue between the EHEA and stakeholder beyond the EHEA. The most "popular" format (see Figure 10) are workshops for practitioners, followed by other types of events at the level of ministers or policy-makers.

Figure 10: Preferred formats for dialogue and exchange

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/2gZgd/
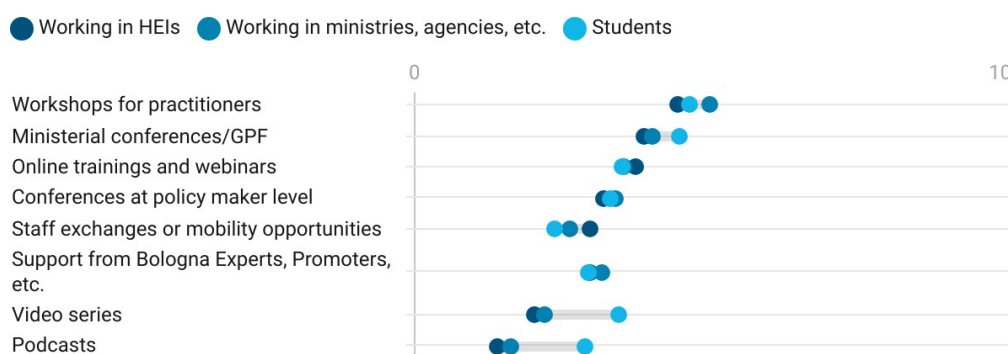
Average priority assigned by respondents

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

While video series and podcasts are seen as the least interesting formats overall, these are regarded as significantly more interesting by students – a result visible also in the EHEA survey. As visible in Figure 10, variations are not particularly strong between stakeholders groups otherwise.

4.5   Structured Cooperation with the EHEA

The CG GPD has been considering various options for a more structured connection, cooperation or status between the EHEA and other countries or regions. To inform these deliberations, respondents were asked to indicate whether their country, macro-region or organisation would be interested in establishing such a more structured connection with the EHEA.

A majority of respondents expressed a clear interest in a form of structured cooperation, followed by a relatively large group of respondents that would like to explore this and where interest depends on what such a structured cooperation would entail.

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It is interesting that respondents from higher education institutions in Iraq seem to be the most hesitant when it comes to a possible structured cooperation, despite the Bologna Process and EHEA reforms apparently featuring strongly in domestic policy developments. At the same time, Iraqi students are the most interested.

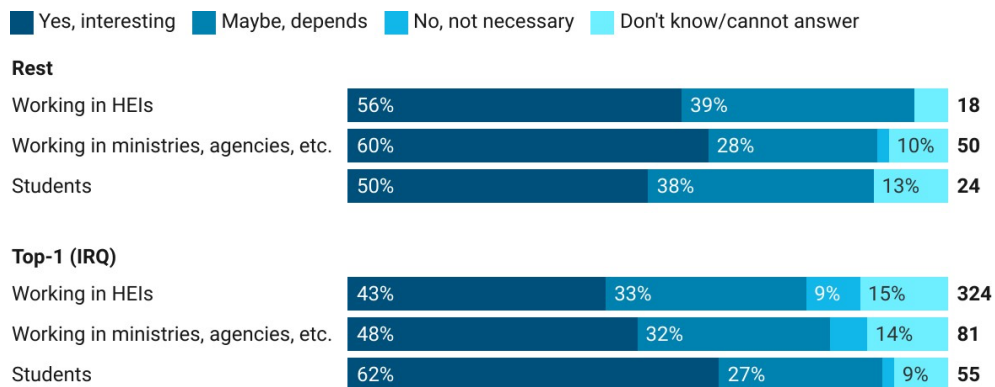Figure 11: Interest in structured cooperation with the EHEA

https://www.datawrapper.de/_/CUEfW/

Legend: Yes, interesting | Maybe, depends | No, not necessary | Don't know/cannot answer

Rest
Working in HEIs	56% / 39%	18
Working in ministries, agencies, etc.	60% / 28% / 10%	50
Students	50% / 38% / 13%	24

Top-1 (IRQ)
Working in HEIs	43% / 33% / 9% / 15%	324
Working in ministries, agencies, etc.	48% / 32% / 14%	81
Students	62% / 27% / 9%	55

Chart: CT • Source: IN-GLOBAL survey • Created with Datawrapper

A number of respondents left free-text comments to indicate their preferences in this regard. The overwhelming majority of comments show a strong demand for dialogue through training opportunities, staff exchange, field trips etc. at practitioner level. Only a small number of comments suggest to establish a formal status of affiliation to the EHEA, membership or similar.

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5. Conclusions

Similar to within the EHEA, stakeholders from beyond the EHEA have a generally positive perception of the Bologna Process' impact; the perception is largely balanced as to how the Bologna Process has facilitated mobility and recognition to and from the EHEA.

There is a difference in focus between respondents from Iraq and elsewhere: while the former focus on actual implementation of the Bologna Process and EHEA tools in the higher education system of Iraq, most other countries and regions see the EHEA primarily as an inspiration and useful reference in developing their own regional and national policies.

The survey showed a strong interest in further policy dialogue as well as in-depth exchanges at practitioner level on a range of topics that are of common interest to the EHEA and stakeholders from other countries and regions. The priority goals formulated in the Rome Communiqué are widely shared by stakeholders across the world, even more strongly than the UN SDG related to higher education. Next to current societal developments and challenges, such as the increased use of artificial intelligence (AI), these represent a solid platform for dialogue and exchange between the EHEA and other regions.

Most stakeholders have a clear interest in stabilising such dialogue and exchange to possible new forms of more structural cooperation between the EHEA and other countries. The respondents' focus, however, lies on exchange and dialogue at practitioner level, i.e. between HEIs, academics and students, rather than on a new formal association or similar status.

As regards the survey, the broad approach – targeting organisations and individuals at all levels, with different levels of knowledge and insight – probably caused more challenges than advantages. For future reference, it might be preferable to consider separate surveys. Especially for survey(s) aiming at a broad group across Europe, strong dissemination efforts are needed to reach a balanced sample of respondents.

6.   List of Figures

Table of Figures

7. Annex

The following sections contain the full text comments made by survey respondents for reference. Please note that these comments are not necessarily representative, as only some respondents have provided free-text comments.

Comments that contained no relevant information were omitted. Moreover, comments are sorted according to the actual topic they address, rather than the survey field into which they were entered.

A digest of the comments is contained in the main body of the report.

Comments: relevance, impact and critique

What is happening in the EHEA IS A TOOL AND GUIDE FOR US TO DEVELOP LOCAL STRATEGIES [Academic, Lebanon]

As an academician who has and is involved in programme and institutional quality assurance, credit accumulation and transfer system, what happens in the EHEA is of great importance to HEIs in my country and the region. [Academic, Kenya]

It is useful to use the EHEA developments as a reference point for work on the harmonisation of qualifications in the SADC region. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

some relevance, as it serves as an example for modernisation, innovation, new forms of partnerships. it also serves as an example for ASEAN for regional harmonisation of HE. [Agency/organisation for internationalisation or international promotion, nan]

I think, the principles of Bologna process are very applicable in our country. Our higher education system is fully prepared to work in accordance with the quality standards of the European Union, and the leaders of higher education in all levels have a great desire for our country to be part of the higher education system in the European region. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Yes, it has a significant impact because the outcomes of education determine the progress, development and prosperity of countries [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Enhancing Mobility: One of the primary objectives of the EHEA is to promote student and staff mobility across European countries. By implementing a common framework for higher education, including credit transfer and recognition systems, the EHEA enables students to study abroad easily and enhances their employability. Increased mobility also fosters cultural exchange, intercultural understanding, and the development of a European identity. [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

Polona process is still not applicable in our region and we are not familiar with this experience. It will be applicable next year in our country [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

We can't judge now, this is because it was the first academic year where the EHEA was applied in our country. Thus it was so difficult to give an opinion about this subject. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Iraq]

we like to transfer to Bologna system [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

It has been 4 years, we are as a Soran University practice Bologna Process, still we are in the process of learning and developing this process and use many tools like sminare, easy, report, presentation and .. ect, to assess our students. [Academic, Iraq]

Bologna process is fantastic [Academic, Iraq]

We are new to adopting the Bologna process, and we hope to learn more through cross-fertilization of ideas with your organization , because we want to develop education in our country, and keep pace with European Union countries in modern educational systems. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

It is not suitable to apply in Iraq now [Academic, Iraq]

For sure, the international cooperation establish one of the most important channels for improve the higher education system and that enable strengthened relations between international actors and new projects [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Ecuador]

In Kurdistan of Iraq, we are applying Bologna Process in our institutions as part of the ministry of higher education policy. Further, there are lots of activities going on locally and internationally that our academic staff participate and do workshops afterwards for other staff members. [Academic, Iraq]

we hope that the Bologna Process will improve the quality of our graduates [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Best benchmarking for our countries. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Algeria]

It can help astudent to be innovetive [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Uganda]

Bologna Process reforms, such as greater use of credit, the development of qualifications frameworks and European quality assurance all facilitate mobility in Europe by creating a higher education area built on trust and high quality HE. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Unfortunately, up to this page you are seeking for good practises only!!! I may ask you to try to understand the negative impact of applying such scheme to 3rd world countries. Where the number of students exceed the class rooms limits. The learning outcomes are impossible to be defined due to the limited job opportunities and the spectrum is wide. number of students assigned to each professors are extremely high, which can make the follow-up hard or might effect negatively on the quality. Nevertheless, the intermediate and high school is marked based system rather than student well. Furthermore, applying such policy will sacrifice the quality of learning because student failure will reduce in order to prevent the stack students in a level. [Academic, Iraq]

Bologna Process is a promising system for teaching and learning. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

The Bologna must be practiced on the ground not only via statements. because many Universities are propagating that bologna is implemented properly while the outcome is not matching with such statements. Students should be in the center of our learning process. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, United States]

We hope to increase the effectiveness of linking curricula to the labor market, and raise practical skills related to the requirements of the labor market [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Bologna process is perfect specially for the ECTS and students exchange among the universities [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

Bologna is not suitable for the Iraqi universities, the gools are different and the student have no plan for their future which makes it had to plan for the learning outcome. Strongly disagree to continue the process. [Academic, Iraq]

Bologna processus good opportunity to develop high education in our region. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Algeria]

It is good to implement the bologna process in Iraq because, in my opinion, it is the best educational system that focuses on student learning as well as gives priority to the practical side. We hope that this system will continue to progress. [Student, Iraq]

This is an evolutionary program for higher education provided it is widely shared and supported by those who use it. Regards [Academic, Iraq]

This program is very flexible for transfer knowledge [Academic, Iraq]

I see theat Bologna system is very difficulte to me, and is a new system. [Academic, Iraq]

I believe that the Bologna system must be corrected to suit the country in which it will be applied [Academic, Iraq]

as the program is some what new to most of our staff we need more clarification and continuous meeting to enhance our understanding about Bologna Process [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Comments: good practices

Please apply care when opening any links, they have not been checked against possible malicious ones.

(only specific comments with clear references to initiatives)

Web site of Erasmus + Lebanon [Academic, Lebanon]

TIGRIS project in Duhok Polytechnic University And Member of APPRAIS project [Academic, Iraq]

EU-SHARE Project (https://www.share-asean.eu/ - stopped operating in 2023) Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) projects bringing together Asian and European stakeholders (e.g. https://asef.org/projects/cbw_equitable_access_he) [Agency/organisation for internationalisation or international promotion, nan]

UNESCO Iraq, working in partnership with government and the private sector, is implementing a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) reform project funded by the European Union. The initiative aims to support the establishment of an open, stable, and sustainable society, based on a diversified and growing market economy that generates employment, reduces poverty, and promotes equitable economic and social development. Throughout this project we are in the Ministry of higher education & scientific research implementing the principles of Bologna process in our technical universities as first step. the second step is to implementing Bologna process in the Engineering and sciences programmes in whole higher education system. https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/reforming-tvet-iraq [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOOUW1LA5B93j5V0oNVYN6Q [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

Certainly, here are a few good practices/projects that focus on informing international stakeholders about the Bologna Process activities, policies, and reforms: 1. The Bologna Process Beyond 2020: The Future of Higher Education in Europe: This project was launched in 2019 and aims to develop a shared vision of the Bologna Process beyond 2020. The project involves a range of stakeholders, including policymakers, academic experts, students, and employers, and is designed to inform and engage these stakeholders in the development of a new overarching framework for European higher education. 2. The European University Association (EUA): EUA is a key stakeholder in European higher education and works to foster the development of a unified European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The EUA provides valuable information and resources about the Bologna Process, including policy documents and research reports, and works to ensure that the voices of its members are heard in the policymaking process. 3. The Bologna Process Implementation Report: This report is published by the European Commission on a regular basis and provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made by European countries in implementing the Bologna Process reforms. The report includes information on policies, best practices, and challenges faced by different countries, and is an important resource for policymakers, academics, and other stakeholders. 4. The Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG): The BFUG is a key stakeholder in the Bologna Process and provides a forum for the exchange of information and best practices among European higher education stakeholders. The BFUG is comprised of representatives from Bologna Signatory countries, the European Commission, and other stakeholders, including students and employers. I hope these resources are helpful to you in your work informing international stakeholders about the Bologna Process activities, policies, and reforms. [Academic, nan]

The Secretariat of the Tokyo Convention Committee at UNESCO Bangkok keeps close contact with EHEA colleagues for knowledge sharing and outreach. [Other non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation, International organisation]

https://www.uni-med.net/priority-areas/university-governance/ [Academic, nan]

We have co-organized Colloquio last december with BFUG I've participation in EHEA Ministerial Conference, Rome 2020 (on line) [Ministry responsible for higher education, Uruguay]

https://www.appraisproject.eu/ [HEI management or administration, nan]

Enable strategic alliances with iberoamerican organizations like SIACES, for make a better integration between higher education actors from Europe and America. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Ecuador]

https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100093992407919&mibextid=ZbWKwL [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

As a university representative I participated in a training in Raparin University in KRG and it was fantastic, learning ECTS and learning outcomes thanks for all. [Academic, Iraq]

UNESCO's TVET 2 Project in Iraq [Ministry responsible for higher education, International organisation]

https://bpc-krg.com [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

https://uotelafer.edu.iq/ [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

mu.edu.iq [Academic, Iraq]

I am working with UNESCO in Iraq, TVET2 project. The project has a component related to higher education which we support 7 technical universties to develop new degree programs that are aligned with bologna process and international standards, in addition to quality assurance and internationalization. This project helps to create a pool of academics that have knowledge and had worked on international standards and bologna process. [Agency/organisation for internationalisation or international promotion, Iraq]

RecoASIA project, https://www.recoasia.eu/ [National recognition information centre (ENIC-NARIC), Mongolia]

https://horizon2020projects.com/ [Other non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation, Venezuela]

https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/bologna-process [Student, Algeria]

The Bologna Process has been a significant inspiration for the development of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF). The AQRF is the first regional qualifications framework in Asia and serves to function as a regional benchmark for qualifications and NQFs in the ASEAN region. Australia and New Zealand have been working in partnership with ASEAN for over a decade as technical experts to support implementation of the AQRF. The AQRF has provided the impetus for substantial reforms within ASEAN Member State (AMS) education and training systems, including NQF development and quality assurance under the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF). Australia and New Zealand's technical support has complemented European assistance to the AQRF under the EU-SHARE project, leveraging Europe's experience in harmonising its education systems and promoting mobility under the Bologna Process. Refer: https://asean.org/our-communities/economic-community/services/aqrf/ [National recognition information centre (ENIC-NARIC), Australia]

I request that the stakeholders should visit countries or continents to sensitize people [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Uganda]

NZQA attends the ENIC-NARIC events and conferences to learn about issues and understand changes and developments in other countries. [National recognition information centre (ENIC-NARIC), New Zealand]

Erasmus [HEI management or administration, nan]

Comments: topics for future policy dialogue

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Classification systems that assist institutions in the global south in planning their contribution to the global SDGs. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

The higher education system in Iraq witnessed a significant improvement driven by the returning scholars and graduates of the Iraqi National Scholarship Program where knowledge, skills, and practices have been brought into the system from the US, UK, EU, and Australian Universities. However, we, at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, found that it is possible and feasible to strengthen the academic relationships with the EU institutions. For that, we are keen to be involved in activities such as conferences, symposiums and workshops that will help us get closer to apply what is currently applicable in the EHEA. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

It is important that the educational outputs be linked to the needs of the labor market and that the curricula be compatible with this goal [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Many of Iraqi graduates have been able to finish studying in EU countries and many other are currently working world wide, the current system is efficient or has very limited defects. The Bologna processes will impact the quality of the graduate and will not add to the graduates except lack of knowledge. Keep in mind reversing will not be easy. [Academic, Iraq]

Certainly! Here are a few additional important topics for dialogue related to European higher education: 1. Social responsibility and sustainability in higher education - Addressing the need for higher education institutions to take a more active role in promoting sustainable development and social responsibility. 2. Digital transformation of higher education - Exploring the impact of new digital technologies on higher education and the implications for teaching, learning, and research. 3. Diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education - Focusing on the need to promote greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in European higher education institutions, including supporting underrepresented groups. 4. Lifelong learning and continuing education - Recognizing the importance of continuing education and lifelong learning to support individuals in adapting to a changing job market and society. 5. Internationalization of higher education - Addressing the growing importance of internationalization in higher education and the need to develop policies and practices that support the mobility of students, staff, and researchers [Academic, nan]

Internasional colaborations would opens more effecient learning outcome [Academic, Iraq]

Building the needed infrastructure of Bologna Process. [Academic, Iraq]

We would like the European Union to contribute to activating visiting professor programs, to contribute to the transfer of knowledge, and to increasing scholarship programs for outstanding students from developing countries. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Staff entitlements such as financial support and promotions. You cannot force individuals to handle a big job without a proper support, here in Kurdistan, we suffer from that inequality between hard work and less salary or financial support. [Academic, Iraq]

Educating the system with more training courses [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Iraq]

We suggest to conduct virtual and/ or in presence workshops and conferences by international and national experts in this field to explain how and when the institutions that have not beed involved yet to implement Bologna process and HEI's concepts. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

MI and learning/teaching systems, hiw can we protect the students [Academic, Belgium (German-speaking Community)]

The possibility for the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications to establish guidelines for the mutual recognition of degrees, diplomas, and qualifications between ratifying Member States, and for the regional recognition agreements (Lisbon, Buenos Aires, Tokyo, etc.) to operationalize these guidelines until a high degree of convergence is reached (both for mobility and employability). This is a means to expand the scope of EHEA and foster global dialogue and cooperation on higher education issues, but very particularly in student mobility, the flow of knowledge, and human talent. [Other non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation, Venezuela]

Cooperation with less degelopped countries. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Algeria]

Mechanisms for enhancing cooperation to address barriers to the recognition of three-year first-cycle degrees worldwide, where these have comparable learning outcomes to other forms of first-cycle qualification and are underpinned by comparable quality assurance mechanisms. Common focus on internationalisation of education through digital innovation, including promoting recognition of online, blended and distance learning programs worldwide where these are subject to the same quality assurance requirements as traditional learning modes. Discussion towards internationally agreed principles for the recognition and quality assurance of degrees awarded through Trans-National Education (TNE), including joint, twinning, and dual programs, programs awarded through branch campuses and international partnerships, and international TVET pathway programs. Further discussion on international approaches to the design, quality assurance and recognition of non-traditional educational offerings,

including microcredentials and short-form programs, and their alignment to national and regional qualifications frameworks. [National recognition information centre (ENIC-NARIC), Australia]

inclusion of artificial intelligence [HEI management or administration, nan]

Support projects of engaging university with third mission and students with labor market [Academic, Iraq]

SARUA is part of the HAQAA process, and we have a focus area for quality assurance. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

Comments: structured cooperation with EHEA

Non EHEA areas having some form of affiliation or recognition for implementing Bologna process fully in their national systems [Ministry responsible for higher education, International organisation]

Through information sharing and project partnership with the Kenyan Higher Education Regulatory Agency (Commission for University Education - CUE). [Academic, Kenya]

Erasmus + projects MoUs [Academic, Iraq]

Support to the SADC in the implementation of reforms relating to the development of the SADC Qualifications Framework and the recognition of learning achievement (formal and non-formal). Support in development a system to map NQFs in the SADC onto the SADC Qualifications Framework. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

We would like to be full member in this group and to get use from all the regulations and guidelines which are going to be issued by EHEA. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Iraq]

We are ready to participate in all the conferences and forums held by the follow-up groups of the Bologna Process. We also have a strong intent for our experts to receive additional training on the Bologna Process. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Strengthening communication between NONE nonEHEA universities and institutions with EHEA [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Exchange the ideas Formation of research teams Facilitate access to information [Academic, Iraq]

Abolition of the Bologna process, as it is not compatible with the infrastructure in our universities [Ministry responsible for higher education, Iraq]

Meeting [Academic, Iraq]

By sending people for training in Europe universities [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

I think for the future and for more enhancing of the Iraqi teaching teams, then we should have an practices exchanging about many and many questions and ideas which are moved in our minds. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Iraq]

By supporting my Univeristy to make better familiar with Bologna Process, such as exchange staff, and holding some workshop and sminar. [Academic, Iraq]

In our case, using Ministry of education like a partner to determine some topics that came from Bologna process (like diploma supplement or credits), that could be interesting for higher education institutions. [Ministry responsible for higher education, Uruguay]

Through the exchange of field visits of higher education staff to the universities of the countries of the European Union, as well as the opening of the European Center for Education according to the Bologna process in one of the universities of our country, and with the honor of one of the well-known European Union consulates in education. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Maybe exchane studient and acadimic staff from one contry to another [Academic, Iraq]

Important but must be direct with specialists [Academic, Iraq]

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More training is important [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

I am pretty sure that our ministry make totally efforts to apply the Bologna process and employee so many ways to address all the aspects of its policy so that the process becomes fair and applicable, as it can be seen in the current state of our ministry works. [Academic, Iraq]

Creating affiliation or recognized status within EHEA [Ministry responsible for higher education, International organisation]

Holding training courses and workshops to train all teachers on this system [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Iraq]

Can do some share activities Exchange staff Share the practieces [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, nan]

I would probably see it as a future global connection plan. Moreover, it will mix the different higher education frameworks across the globe. [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

we hope that our universities will be able to cope with the EHEA concepts, policies and tools to improve their teaching curricula [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Online social media, emails and conferencies [Academic, Belgium (German-speaking Community)]

The EHEA should organise awareness seminars on their activities. [Academic, Botswana]

I would particularly like to participate -as an observer-in the different Lisbon Recognition Convention Thematic Peer Groups. [Other non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation, Venezuela]

Cooperation with experts exchange. [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Algeria]

Through working hand in hand with the ministry of education and NGOs I am also willing to volunteer if I am empowered [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Uganda]

Various other comments [E02]

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I have been previously involved in EHEA conferences / Webinars / Workshops. I have learnt greatly through these interactions which has helped me in imparting the knowledge gained in the East Africa region and Africa continent. I wish to continue being involved in new contexts of the EHEA to build capacity in similar ventures. [Academic, Kenya]

I highly appreciate you so much for giving us this opportunity to fill this survey. It is worthy to mention that my ministry (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research) in Kurdistan Regional Government KRG has implemented Bologna process with its universities since 2015 and since then we were able to get use from all the regulations and guidelines of Bologna process and also we were able to secure funding and grants from EU and other European Universities to work on Bologna. Iam quite open for any questions and would like to work and cooperate with you. Thank you [Quality assurance (QA) agency, Iraq]

Please regulate the academic pressure on the student [Student, Iraq]

The regions of the Near East suffer from outdated curricula that are not compatible with market needs and lag behind global development. We hope that our countries will join the Bologna process. Thanks [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

I believe that we need to establish plan for each university in order to apply this education system due to each university need special requirements and time to be ready for this activity [Academic, Iraq]

I hope that the implementation of this process will succeed in our academic institution, and I am ready with you to participate in any course or workshop that helps spread and succeed this process [HEI management or administration, Iraq]

Creat an environment that the new established universities will be able to take advantages from you to set up Bologna Process. [Academic, Iraq]

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We hope for joint cooperation, and support us for working according to the Bologna education system, and we would like to communicate. [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Iraq]

Experimenting and changing the teaching system in Iraqi universities requires a lot of time for students and professors to adapt, and requires governmental effort, exchange of visits to various disciplines, and not limiting visits to European universities to government officials. [Academic, Iraq]

I am [...] a student teacher from [...] Uganda I'm very happy for this bologna process I pray that you bring it down to Uganda and and LDCs I am also requesting for a scholarship so that I can attend the conference and I also study there so that when I come back to Africa I can work hand in hand with different governments so they explain in to different local languages so that the people at grass root understand the bologna process [Higher education institution (HEI) leadership, Uganda]

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