



BELARUS ROADMAP FOR HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

In view of the fact that Belarus will be joining the European Higher Education Area 16 years after the launch of the Bologna Process, the Belarusian authorities and the BFUG will work together on developing and implementing a roadmap for higher education reform in Belarus in accordance with the values, principles and goals of the EHEA, as detailed below.

Under this roadmap the Belarusian authorities would, in full respect of the powers of the Government, the national parliament, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders:

Structural reforms

Qualifications framework

Commit to developing a National Qualifications framework compatible with the QF-EHEA.

Commit to establishing a timetable for this work and to identify a national steering group by the end of 2015 and to launch work on the NQF in the first half of 2016.

As part of this work, commit to introducing the three-cycle system on the agreed Bologna model, establishing a first degree of 180 - 240 ECTS credits and consequently to gradually phase out the remaining 5 year *bakalavr* degree, and subsequently measure student workload in ECTS, as stipulated in the revised ECTS Users' Guide.

Quality assurance

Commit to establishing, by the end of 2017, the legal basis for an independent quality assurance agency in conformity with the European Standards and Guidelines.

By the end of 2015, develop a timetable for establishing this agency.

Through the BFUG, invite foreign quality assurance experts to advise on the timetable and plans for establishing the agency as well as on the process leading to it being established.

Recognition

By the end of 2016, review legislation and practice with a view to identifying any modifications needed to bring them into conformity with the obligations undertaken by Belarus as a State party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

By the end of 2017, implement any required modification of practice that does not require amending legislation.

By the end of 2017, develop a timetable for the implementation of required legislative modifications.

Transparency instruments

By the end of 2015, develop a plan to implement ECTS in accordance with the revised ECTS Users' Guide by the end of 2017, with a strong focus on learning outcomes, curriculum design, delivery as well as assessment and applied to mobility programmes

By the end of 2017, develop a plan to issue the Diploma Supplement in the format developed by the Council of Europe, the European Commission and UNESCO to all students automatically, free of charge and in a widely spoken language (other than Russian).

Mobility of higher education staff and students and internationalization

In autumn 2015, launch work on a plan to facilitate, develop and diversify the international mobility of staff and students to as well as from Belarusian higher education institutions. Such a plan would be expected to include changes to the current system of mobility permits, to allow longer periods of mobility within the EHEA for both staff and students, without ministerial approval. The plan should be completed by the end of 2016 and should outline policy measures as well as any required legislative measures required to increase and diversify academic mobility from Belarus to its partners in the EHEA. Any required legislative measures should be introduced by mid-2017.

Lifelong learning and the social dimension of higher education

By the end of 2015, develop a plan for the recognition of prior learning and implement the plan by the end of 2017.

By the end of 2016, review the obligation for students whose education is financed by public funds to accept work placements on graduation with a view to limiting it to specific professions for which there is a significant unmet need in the country and taking into account practice in other European countries.

By the end of 2017 review the criteria for financial support for students with a view to ensuring social equity unaffected by applicants' gender, race, colour, disability, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Fundamental values of the EHEA

Implement the commitments made by the ministers at their meeting in Yerevan, as stipulated in the Yerevan Ministerial Communiqué.

By mid-2017, the Ministry will conduct an analysis of national legislation and submit to Parliament proposals for required measures to incorporate the principles of the Magna Charta Universitatum and Council of Europe recommendation Rec/CM(2012)7 on the public responsibility for academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

By mid-2016, develop a plan detailing legislative and policy measures aimed at enabling students and staff to organize freely and to register their organizations. By mid-2017, introduce any required legislative measures.

Implementation

Commit to providing the necessary data for the 2018 Implementation report, in the format and by the date that will be determined by the BFUG.

Commit to appointing a contact person for the 2018 Implementation report exercise. The contact person will coordinate the gathering of information for Belarus and will ensure that all information requested is provided in English within the deadlines stipulated by the BFUG. The contact person should have a good knowledge of English orally and in writing.

Participation in the work programme

Appoint a delegation of 1-3 members to the BFUG with good working knowledge of English. It will attend meetings of the BFUG and will ensure continuity in its representation throughout the work period.

Ensure participation in relevant seminars and peer learning activities and is welcome to nominate candidates for working groups in the 2015 – 18 EHEA work programme.

Cooperation with the BFUG

This roadmap will be implemented by the Belarusian authorities and stakeholders in cooperation with the BFUG. The BFUG will appoint a coordination group of members and consultative members that will facilitate cooperation, seek to identify possible partners for developing specific policy areas, and advise the BFUG on progress in the implementation of this road map. The Belarusian authorities will facilitate the work of this group and provide a contact person or contact group for this work. The coordination group will, among others, cooperate with the Belarusian delegation to the BFUG. The coordination group and Belarus will meet at least twice a year to discuss developments. The coordination group will report back from these meetings to the BFUG.