



Pan-European Structure

Higher Education and Research Standing Committee

Lille, 8 – 9 October 2008

Report

After welcoming the participants and colleagues from Canada and New Zealand, Jens Vraa Jensen, Chair of the Committee, invited the group to pay tribute to Concha Espinoza from FETE.UGT who recently passed away.

2. Matters arising

2.1. Brian Everett raised the issue of how the Executive Board has taken up the matter regarding Climate Change. Monique Fouilhoux (Deputy Secretary General) informed that the Executive Board wants this issue to be discussed in the OECD affiliates meeting to be held in Åre, Sweden. By raising it there she hoped to increase everybody's awareness of these matters. It should be discussed how the trade union movement can take this challenge up.

Paul Bennett argued and hoped for activity on climate change at the institutional level.

2.2 Paul Bennett reported on the UCU work on LGBT issues, as well as on a Leonardo project on work-life balance and gender specific career patterns in higher education and science. The latter project also involves affiliates from Germany, Sweden and Latvia. To contact the project officer please mail satkin@uc.org.uk

3. Evaluation of the Mobility Conference and Lets' go Campaign

This section of the minutes is written thematically rather than chronologically, reporting on the different parts of the discussion.

3.1 Positive feedback on the conference

- The keynote speech was good;
- the background documents can be developed and used again;
- discussions with students were good, as well as information on their situation;
- discussions in working groups were good.

3.2 Negative feedback on the conference

- Many HERSC members missed oral reporting from the working groups in a plenary session as well as the inclusion of the working group results in the final report;
- there is a need to become more concrete and to be clear on what we want to recommend to the ministers;
- the conference lacked gender perspective and discussions on different opportunities for men and women to be mobile.

The final report will include the working group recommendations.

3.3 Level of activity of EI affiliates

Monique Fouilhoux as well as Paul Bennett commented on the fact that the EI affiliates have been less active than the student unions on the national level. This risks leading to EI commitment to mobility being seen as weak. EI arguments then risks looking thin and we might get problems in the Bologna Follow-up Group. Paul Bennett argued that if EI affiliates are not able to carry out this kind of work, without it showing us very thin on the ground, we need to discuss other tactics regarding what activities we should undertake.



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Ann Fritzell argued that the national affiliates need more time to include work into their work plans and budgets. She had also wished for more information from the European level about the campaign and what was expected from affiliates.

Razvan Bobulescu explained that mobility is not the highest priority for staff unions at the national level and that this needs to be recognised. This however does not mean that we should be inactive in the area of mobility.

The HERSC was reminded that the Mobility campaign was one of the outcomes of the 2007 London mobility seminar, also organised together with European Students' Union, and a mandate was given to the Secretariat from the HERSC to work with a campaign. The HERSC has also gotten continuous information about the campaign, both at HERSC meetings and via the circulars that have been sent out.

3.4 Reports from the national level

Norway reported that they have organised a national seminar on the issue of mobility, there has also been meetings between the staff and student unions. They are preparing for a white paper from the government concerning internationalisation and mobility. Both unions also reported that mobility is a high priority both for the government, the institutions and the unions. The main issue is funds for mobility.

A short report on the Norwegian seminar has been published on the mobility campaign website.

Sweden reported that they have written a "debate article" on mobility together with the students. The article has not yet been published.

In Sweden they are waiting for a bill from the government regarding internationalisation of higher education, SULF is afraid that this bill will include the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students. Apart from this mobility is not high on the agenda in Sweden at the moment.

In Denmark DM has tried to include mobility into the collective agreement, but this has been totally rejected by the government.

Poland has organised a seminar on mobility together with the students.

The HERSC was urged to send a few lines to the Secretariat to outline what has been done at the national level. The Secretariat also accepts reports or materials in national languages.

3.5 Discussion points and matters for action

3.5.1 Definition of mobility

Mike Jennings reported that his working group became aware that the generic term mobility entails a lot of different policies and understandings. Many HERSC members agreed with this comment.

Jens Vraa-Jensen reminded the HERSC that the report written by Conor Cradden before the London mobility seminar 2007 included a very useful discussion on the definitions of mobility.

David Robinson commented that mobility is not only a physical phenomenon. He reported that they in Canada also are struggling with the definition of mobility. But he regretted that the HERSC and the conference did not discuss programme or institutional mobility. These other forms of mobility are very important to discuss and confront. What happens when institutions put up branch campuses overseas with lower quality and worse staff conditions? In Canada they are trying to work with making sure that the same standards are used everywhere.

3.5.2 Compulsory mobility

Mike Jennings (IFUT, Ireland) pointed out that mobility should not be a pre-requisite or compulsory for advancing an academic career. EI need to be clear on what groups would benefit and be disadvantaged by such policies.

Andreas Keller agreed that we should not demand mobility to be compulsory.



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It was argued that if mobility was to be enforced on academic staff, which it would be easier to work with since it would become more of a trade union issue. If mobility would become a requirement in the future of the Bologna Process, then we need to discuss and prepare for this now. Compulsory mobility would become a big concern for our members, and maybe especially for staff in poorer countries. Staff unions need to explain to members why mobility is important, as it might become a requirement for the job in the future.

Jens Vraa-Jensen argued that we should reject that mobility becomes a compulsory step in the academic career, but that it at the same time would be good if better possibilities to be mobile could be installed, since this would improve our knowledge development.

3.5.3 Social security, pension matters and funding

Mike Jennings pointed out the importance of that mobility is not being used as a way to support market forces, but only as a way to improve academic work. EI and its affiliates must make sure that our work does not support market forces.

Ryszard Mosakowski noted that the debate had become a bit more nuanced, along the lines of Mike's comment and he welcomed that.

Paul Bennett stressed the importance of cracking the finance issue since we will go nowhere otherwise. Also Ragna Rönholm (FUURT, Finland) stressed the importance of funding and job security after a mobility period.

Furthermore the issue of pensions and a European pension fund for supplementary pensions was touched upon. Andreas Keller raised the question if we want such a pension fund? Razvan Bobulescu reported that his working group made the recommendation to install information centres spread over the different EHEA countries.

Monique Fouilhoux pointed out that the pension fund is a proposal from the European Commission and it deals with supplementary pensions in relation to the Directive from the EU. Peter Griesler from the German federal ministry of education was clear on that Germany will propose a feasibility study on this issue. EI will need to know what we want on this.

3.5.4 Quality

In the debate the importance of quality was raised several times. It was pointed out that we need to be clear on how mobility improves the quality of education.

Gabor Szabo pointed out that language is an element of significance and that it influences the quality of education. He pointed out that it is a difficult task to find the right balance between the international tool (the language) and your national language.

3.5.5 The Mobility Campaign and BFUG/Ministers – What happens next?

The report from the Conference will be sent to the BFUG, along with the recommendations from the working groups.

The Mobility Campaign as such needs to be reported on to the European Commission and therefore the Secretariat urges the unions to send in any material they have regarding work on mobility issues. Please also make use of the mobility campaign website, www.lets gocampaign.net Also make use of the Wiki part of the website, where you can exchange information and experiences.

The petition will be handed over to ministers at their meeting in April 2009. It is therefore important that affiliates sign the petition, in case it is signed on behalf of your organisation please state that. Even if it is signed on behalf of your organisations more signatures from your members are welcome.

There is a proposal to create a Charter for mobility, together with European Students' Union and the European University Association. EI will try to have a meeting as soon as possible with EUA on this topic. Monique Fouilhoux also urged the HERSC to make contacts with the national rectors' conferences.



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4. Bologna Process follow-up

Update on ongoing work and preparation of next BFUG meeting

Andreas Keller expressed worries about the fact that the employers are the only ones being recognised as representatives of professionals in the Bologna Process. Both the Berlin seminar on staff mobility and the coming Employability seminar are examples of this.

Brian Everett confirmed Andreas' worries. He reported problems in the employability working group regarding engaging the trade union side in discussions. ETUC and ILO will be invited to the Employability seminar, but still many issues are unsolved, such as employer engagement in curricula design.

Paul Bennett argued that there is an ongoing problem of recognition of EI and affiliates as the voice of professionals. However, there has been an increased awareness of the added value of the consultative members and EI. EI also has a good perspective from the global level that is unique and needed in the Bologna Process.

Monique Fouilhoux pointed out that EI is in the ambiguity of being both a social partner and recognised as professionals. We have to remind the BFUG about that we are also professionals.

To solve the problem regarding the issue on not being consulted and involved HERSC will adopt a resolution that will be presented to the BFUG 14-15 October. The fact that the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) now invited Andreas Keller to do a written contribution to the Berlin seminar shows that continuous pressing for being invited pays off.

Bologna beyond 2010 paper

HERSC commented on the paper and reported on what they have commented upon at national level.

Ann Fritzell

- SULF thinks that ministers should concentrate on only a few things during each period of time;
- still many "old" challenges need to be worked upon;
- the goals for the social dimension are missing.

Ryszard Mosakowski

- The paper needs to divide actions into what has already been done and what will be done in the future;
- called for better knowledge of the implementation progress;
- matters need to be better defined (for example mobility and the social dimension);
- higher education institutions should cooperate more closely at European level cause the most important thing at the moment is qualification frameworks and learning outcomes;
- more training should be undertaken for academics, this could be done by the Bologna Experts (formerly Promoters);
- we should also discuss the structures of the Bologna Process. The BFUG board should either be removed or selected in a different manner.

Paul Bennett

- the level of action coming from the 2010 paper is not really corresponding to what seems to be undertaken at the ground;
- issues need to be better defined and we also need to take our responsibility to do that.

Jens Vraa-Jensen

- The main remark is that the paper is focusing on competition and competitiveness of European Higher Education Institutions and does not give any credit to public goods and basic research. We need to find the right balance regarding these issues. Academic work needs to be disseminated without losing its core and public good profile.

Dominique Lassarre ;



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- We do not agree on the European Higher Education Area becoming a European labour market, this is not how staff mobility should be promoted;
- we do not agree on the classification proposals;
- the paper is lacking environmental issues.

Monique Fouilhoux commented that the European University Association has asked for a complete re-writing of the text, therefore the text will probably change and EI will put forward our comments.

Denmark, France, Norway, Poland, Sweden (to some extent), have been consulted on the paper.

Strategy for the 2009/2010 Ministerial Conferences and Beyond

For 2009 there is a usual ministerial conference, with reporting and the usual documents.

Monique Fouilhoux presented the 2010 ministerial meeting and informed that the conference will be mostly a celebration. The meeting will take place in Budapest and Vienna. In 2010 there will be an independent assessment of the Bologna Process presented as well as a EUA TRENDS report.

It was decided to have the HERSC Meeting in spring 2010 in Vienna after the ministerial meeting on the 12th of March.

Before the 2009 ministerial meeting there are still a number of seminars possible to attend. The following was proposed regarding attending these meetings:

Seminar	Where	When	Who goes?
Conference on Europe as Area of Student Mobility	Nancy	4-5 November 2008	Monique Fouilhoux
"Employability - the Employers' Perspective and its implications"	Luxembourg	6-7 November	Brian Everett and perhaps Andreas Keller and Jens Vraa-Jensen
Equality in a knowledge based society – How to widen opportunities? Best practices in National Action Plans	Budapest	10-11 November 2008	Gabor Szabo
Conference on indicators for international comparison of education and training	Nice	13-14 November 2008	Nina Gustafsson Åberg
Transnational education (TNE) and the OECD-UNESCO-Guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education	London	1-2 December 2008	Paul Bennett
Accreditation of Prior Learning	Amsterdam	11-12 December 2008	Nobody



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Joint Programmes
and Student Mobility

St. Petersburg

22-23 January 2009

Monique Fouilhoux

EI contribution to the 2009 Conference: First results of the survey

Dominique Lassarre (UNSA Education, France) presented the results of the questionnaire that has been sent to European EI affiliates. 21 organisations from 18 countries answered so far. Dominique Lassarre has made the quantitative analysis, but not yet the qualitative part, affiliates have commented a lot to the open questions.

The HERSC discussed the outcomes of the survey and what the different answers might imply.

Brian Everett (UCU, UK) argued that it would be useful to point towards the underlining trend in Europe towards increased bureaucratisation, reduction in governance, reduction in democracy and also the issue of tuition fees and point to that Bologna can not be used as a cover for all these trends.

Jens Vraa-Jensen (DM, Denmark) argued that the positive issues Bologna has influenced should be pointed out. The analysis should be done in the light of the communiqués and we need to point that the reduction in academic freedom does not come from the Bologna and the communiqués.

Riku Matilainen (FUURT, Finland) proposed that we should include concrete proposals and constructive arguments in the report.

5. EUA, European Universities' Charter for lifelong Learning

The French government has asked the European University Association to draft a charter on Lifelong Learning. In April 2008, a meeting was convened of between EUA and key stakeholders, Paul Bennett (UCU, UK) attended the meeting. The document is divided into two parts: commitments for governments and institutions, which both seem to reflect both a public responsibility and university autonomy in the context of lifelong learning. Paul Bennett mentioned that lifelong learning is not a sole responsibility of universities, but also other sectors of education.

Auke van Nie expressed his concern over university setting the rights for admission.

Jean-Paul Laune asked if Lifelong Learning is meant to be a source of income for universities or whether it is meant to be part of a public framework.

Brian Everett expressed his concern about the word 'agency' under point 8 of the charter.

David Robinson mentioned that universities in Canada have mostly outsourced lifelong learning activities to private bodies, active in the market.

6. ETUCE/EU matters

There has been discussion about how the two structures of EI and ETUCE can be integrated in a better way to serve the needs of both members. Paul Bennett reported that discussions will continue in about a month's time in a meeting in Luxembourg.

Constitutional proposals will be made next year. The current discussion paper will be put on the HERSC network.

The need for information from the EU level about what happens within the European Union regarding higher education and research was pointed out.

Issues for future discussion include:

- Update from the Secretary General of ETUCE on social dialogue.
- The ETUCE has developed a policy on teacher education in Europe, which states that teacher education should be organised on Master level. It should be discussed what this statement mean for EI and the Bologna Process.



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7. OECD initiatives: Updates and discussion about EI strategy

7.1 AHELO: International Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes
www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo

In Malaga EI produced a statement on AHELO, which was endorsed by EI's Executive Board. OECD has now decided to proceed with the project and is doing a feasibility study on the topic of learning outcomes.

7.2 OECD-France International Conference on Higher Education 2030: What futures for quality access in the era of globalisation?

This conference will be the final conference on the CERI project on the future of higher education. EI has been involved in the project for a long time, organising a session on the conference in Melbourne in 2005, participating in the OECD workshops and finally adopting a scenario itself. EI has been invited to contribute to a panel in the conference.

David Robinson raised the point that both projects are related and tries to provide new accountability mechanisms for higher education institutions. One of the worrying aspects is the balance between societal expectations and academic freedom that OECD tries to strike. The OECD has a very instrumental view on higher education, which is reduced to a vocational exercise. Furthermore, the AHELO project is aimed at creating a more consumerist information system on higher education.

Mike Jennings raised the problem that the OECD has an important status and that it is taken very seriously by media and politics. It is important for EI to state that the research is very simplistic and does not reach quality standards.

Jens Vraa-Jensen mentioned that the OECD has set up a stakeholder group to hear the feedback from organisations such as EI in an early stage.

Monique Fouilhoux raised the idea that EI should develop a methodology of its own for assessing learning outcomes. This would be developed from the previous work EI has done on PISA. As a preparation of the upcoming meeting of TUAC on 13-14 November, EI will circulate a paper about the project. Also, EI will, in the future, send the agenda of TUAC meetings to the affiliates of the HERSC meeting so unions can better prepare for these meetings.

8. UNESCO and Higher Education: EI involvement and initiatives

8.1 6-9 July 2009 World Conference

Monique Fouilhoux introduced the July 2009 World Conference of UNESCO and indicated that EI will organise a side event prior to this Conference in order to assure the visibility and voice of academics. As a consequence she explained that the next EI International Higher Education and Research Conference will take place in 2010, this also means that the EI Congress and the Higher Education conference will not take place the same year.

8.2 European Preparatory Conference May 2009

The European regional conference will be organised by UNESCO-Cepes, EI is in the planning committee of this conference. There is a large debate on the programme as the director of UNESCO-Cepes is pushing for issues such as rankings and privatisations to be included. EI would like topics such as e on academic staff, working conditions, academic freedom and similar issues.

Brian Everett (UCU, UK) proposed to think about if we can use the inference concept present in for example English law regarding academic freedom. According to this concept higher education institutions would have to prove that they have not violated academic freedom, instead of the other way around.

David Robinson agreed to Brian's proposal and argued that the indirect attacks on academic freedom are increasing, both in developed and developing countries.

Monique invited the HERSC to read the declaration adopted by the Regional Conference in Latin America in June 2009.



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Monique Fouilhoux urged the HERSC to send the Secretariat concrete examples on academic freedom and collegial governance in your HEI, problems need to be documented. This will feed into the report to the CEART committee.

9. Update on WTO and GATS issues

David Robinson (CAUT, Canada) informed the HERSC about the latest developments in the WTO negotiations. Pascal Lamy (Director-General, WTO) has called ministers back to Geneva. If there is a breakthrough in agriculture and industry, then there will be a tremendous pressure that services should be agreed on too. The US seems to have pulled back from a more aggressive interest in education, but Australia is still very aggressive.

David Robinson also informed the HERSC about the EI/Public Services session in the WTO Public Forum. The seminar was one of the most well attended seminars, with many WTO secretariat people and parts from all major countries.

Furthermore he informed that the EU position is that there should be no more commitments on education in GATS. However, the EU's position on domestic regulation is dreadful and this might have effects on education. EU could also make commitments on other services that can also effect education, for example the research services. David Robinson recommended a follow up on how the EQF might or might not be consistent with what the EU is negotiating on domestic regulation principles.

Moreover the HERSC was informed about TRIPS, regarding for example copyright rules. David Robinson argued that we need to be concerned about how these new rules could make access to copyright materials more difficult.

10. Magna Charta Observatory: XX Anniversary and future collaboration

Jens Vraa-Jensen informed the HERSC about the 20th Anniversary meeting held in Bologna. EI will invite the General Secretary of Magna Charta to the next HERSC in order to discuss issues related to academic freedom.

11. Resolution on Bologna adopted.

A resolution demanding EI affiliates inclusion in work with the Bologna Process on the national level was adopted.

12. Any other business

Brian Everett will retire from UCU at Christmas. Monique Fouilhoux thanked Brian for all his work and his good working spirits. She also hoped that Brian will be around in one way or the other.

Brian Everett will work with Paul Bennett and Rob Copeland on a major conference on Privatisation of Education in London on the 9th of May, to which the HERSC will be invited.

Monique Fouilhoux informed the HERSC that also EI has been asked by the Executive Board to also organise a conference on Privatisation of Education. There is a need to make sure that these conferences do not overlap.

Mike Jennings added that in Ireland the government is considering the re-introduction of tuition fees on the Bachelor level. If colleagues have any statistics or resolutions or any material that can be helpful in the campaign Mike would appreciate help.

13. Next meetings 2009 and 2010

Läraryrbundet and SULF (Sweden) will host the HERSC meeting in autumn 2009.

Alma Mater will host the meeting in autumn 2010.



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Resolution

The EI Standing Committee for Higher Education and Research in Europe assembled in Lille on October 8-9th, discussed the evaluation of the implementation of the Bologna Process in the run up to the Ministerial meeting in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve. The Committee notes with concern that higher education staff organisations are not involved in the work of the Bologna Process on the national level in all the countries of the Bologna Process, in particular regarding the Stocktaking report, the consultation on the "Bologna beyond 2010" document and in the National Bologna Follow-up Groups.

Education International Pan European structure therefore:

- calls for the inclusion of the unions of academic staff in the drafting of the national reports to be submitted to the ministerial meeting in 2009. The academic staff has important perspectives and knowledge to contribute to the drafting process and to the content of the report. For the report to be truly national it is crucial that students, staff and institutional leaders are given their right to take active part in the creation of the report.
- calls for the inclusion of academic staff unions in the National Bologna Follow-up Groups. The staff must also have the right to elect their own representatives.
- urges the ministries not yet having a National Bologna Follow-up Group in place to create such a group and include all relevant stakeholders, including staff organisations, in that group.
- urges ministers to include representatives of higher education staff unions in the national delegations to the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Ministerial Conference in April 2009.