

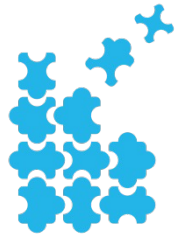
The European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Rome, 27 September 2023



Summary

1. What the EHEA and the «Bologna Process» is
2. How the EHEA works, and wishes to build dialogue
3. Possible themes
4. Conclusions



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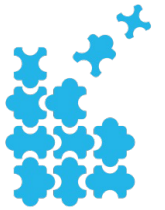


1. First of all ...

«**Bologna**» is a process: a cooperation process that has developed over decades and **continues to develop** new tools and perspectives in a changing higher education world.

«**Bologna**» is not a ‘quality label’, it is not a quick recipe, it is not a short cut to higher education modernization and reform.

.... But **it can be a model** and a **source of inspiration** for countries interested in higher education reform and in developing cooperation with other parts of the world.

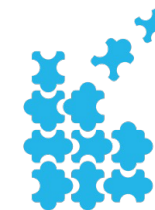


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The **European Higher Education Area**, with its orientations, achievements, tools and activities is the product of the «Bologna Process».



The **European Higher Education Area** is not the same as the European Union!



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It includes the EU countries and many more.

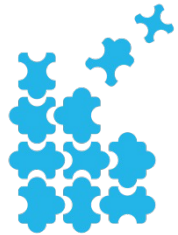
Membership is restricted to countries that are members of the **Council of Europe**, and signatories of the **European Cultural Convention**.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The 'Bologna Process' has its **roots** in the 1980s and the hopes for stronger cooperation in the European Community (later the European Union): at that time the higher education systems in Europe were very different, so different that transfer of students from one country to another was in practice very difficult, as was the recognition of their studies.



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The basic idea of agreeing on certain common structural reforms was first expressed at the **Sorbonne** in September 1998 by the Ministers of Education of France, Italy, Germany and UK.

The next year (June 1999), in response to an open call, 29 countries came to **Bologna** and committed to work together to make their HE systems compatible.

That was the '**birth certificate**' of 'Bologna'.





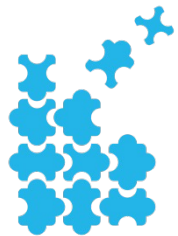
Bologna Declaration 1999 Signatories



- Yellow: EU
- Green: EFTA
- Orange: Non-EU, non EFTA (in 1999)

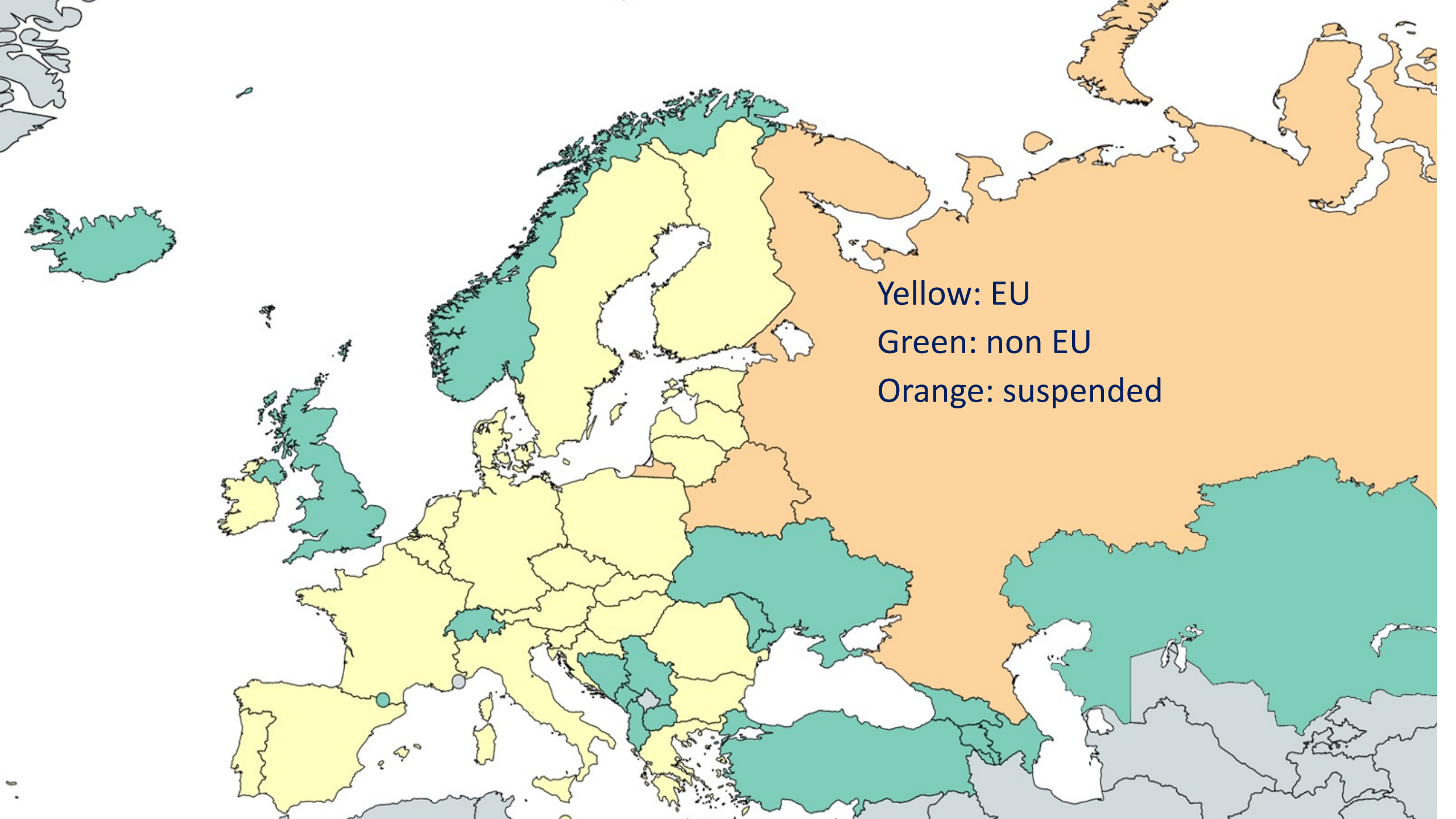
Since then 'Bologna' has **grown**.

In the **number** of countries it comprises, and also in the **aspects** of higher education that it addresses, and in its **aspirations**.



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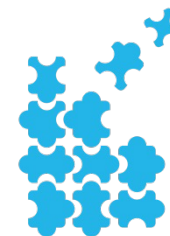
Rome Ministerial Communiqué

19 NOVEMBER 2020

The Rome 2020 Communiqué illustrates the EHEA ‘vision’ for European and Global HE in 2030.

https://www.ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf

The next Communiqué (Tirana 2024) is now in draft form, the writing is in progress.



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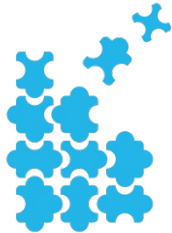


2. How 'Bologna' works

The EHEA is **not** the EU!

The **European Union** -- something between a federation and a confederation – has no 'hard power' over education – although it provides important support to HE and to the EHEA.

The **European Higher Education Area** is a '**loose intergovernmental cooperation**', with **no 'hard power' at all**: it works through **consensus of Ministers**, in practice, representatives of the 'members' **Ministries of Education**, with the contribution of the **Consultative Members**, the transnational stakeholder organizations (BusinessEurope, Council of Europe, EI-ETUCE, ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, UNESCO).



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The **Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG)** is the organism that **supports** the operation of the EHEA between Ministerial Conferences.

It is formed of **two delegates** designated by **each member country**, delegates from the 'Consultative members' (the organizations): more than 100 people, who meet at least once a semester.



The BFUG has many Working Groups that meet and work constantly to move forward on many themes:

- Learning, Teaching and Assessment,
- Social Dimension
- Fundamental Values (academic freedom, institutional autonomy, public responsibility)
- Linking Teaching and Research
- Monitoring
- Enhancing Knowledge Sharing*

There are two 'Coordination Groups':

- Bologna Implementation Coordination Group
- Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue*

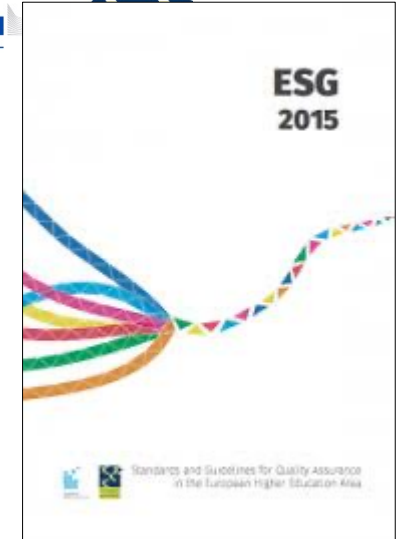
*supported by the IN-GLOBAL project,
more information on www.in-global.eu

The EHEA in 2018 identified three «**Key Commitments**», the very basic elements which **must** be implemented in all EHEA countries in order to ensure easy and transparent mobility and quality higher education:

- the **Qualifications Frameworks** (QF-EHEA; EQF) and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) according to the **2015 edition of the ECTS Users' Guide**;
- **Lisbon Recognition Convention and Diploma Supplement**
- **Quality Assurance** according to the **ESG** (Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area)

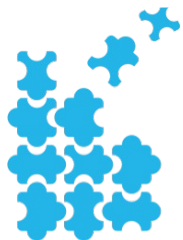


ECTS Users' Guide

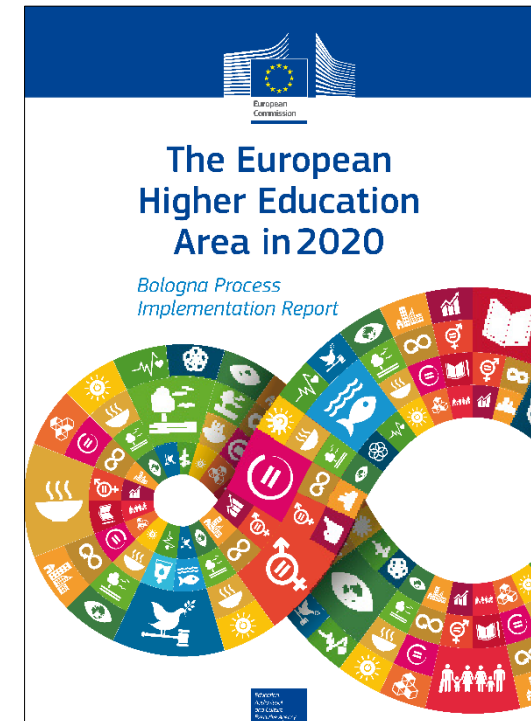


The full implementation of the ‘Key Commitments’ is overseen by the «**Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)**» and monitored by the working group on Monitoring.

The BICG coordinates three ‘**Thematic Peer Groups**’ to which almost all ‘members’ (countries) belong, and where, through peer support and knowledge sharing, we try to ensure complete and compatible implementation in all countries.

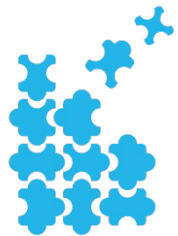


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Mobility is at the heart of Bologna, and the EHEA: It is connected to the 'vision' (hypothesis/hope) that 'Europe' could/can become a place of **free, untrammled, fair and well documented mobility**, for education, as well as for the 'economy' and for employment.

The EHEA **extends that hope to other world regions**, and entrusts its **Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue** with working for that end.



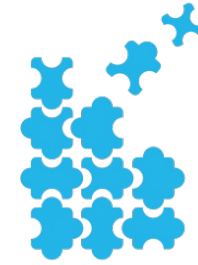
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Members of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Albania
Austria
Belgium Flemish Community
Belgium French Community
Cyprus
EI-ETUCE
ENQA – European Association
for Quality Assurance in Higher
Education
ESU – European Students' Union
EUA – European University
Association
European Commission

France
Germany
Holy See
Ireland
Italy
Kazakhstan
Malta
Montenegro
The Netherlands
Romania
Spain
Ukraine;
UNESCO
United Kingdom.

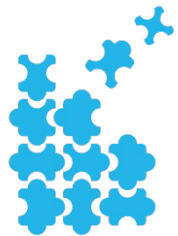


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The CG GPD works to build cooperation with other world regions, and sees the following as possible building blocks:

1. reciprocal referencing of Qualifications Frameworks
2. reciprocal referencing of credit systems
3. development of transparent, compatible and secure systems for transfer of learners' records
4. further development of competence- output based student-centered Learning flexible learning paths,
5. digitally enhanced international learning environments and mobility
6. shared principles of quality enhancement and assurance



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4. Conclusions (1)

1. Bologna is a '**process**' that started long ago and **continues to develop**.
2. The European Higher Education Area is the **product and protagonist** of that process. Its general goal is to ensure the quality, the relevance and the compatibility of its higher education systems.
3. The EHEA seeks **dialogue** with other countries and macro-regions, in the general framework of reciprocal efforts to achieve the UN SDGs and fair and inclusive education for everyone.



Thank you!
<http://www.ehea.info/>

