

## HERE Seminar

### **Towards the 2024 Tirana Ministerial Conference: Implications and points of interest for higher education systems in Partner Countries neighbouring the EU**

**7-8 November 2023**

**University of Sarajevo**



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## HERE Seminar Towards the 2024 Tirana Ministerial Conference: Implications and points of interest for higher education systems in Partner Countries neighbouring the EU

### INTRODUCTION

The Bologna Process is in its second decade of implementation. In advancing the agenda of the [European Higher Education Area \(EHEA\)](#), its long-standing objectives have been augmented by others prompted by social change and technological progress.

Through the work of various structures of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) there is still a strong focus on the three “[key commitments](#)” - (1) the implementation of a three-cycle tertiary education system, (2) recognition of study periods and degrees in alignment with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and (3) quality assurance practice which complies with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). These three commitments serve as the foundation of the Bologna Process. Until they are implemented, the EHEA cannot be brought to completion. This sustained focus is conditioned by the fact that not all higher education systems have fully implemented the three objectives; even if they feature formally at system level, higher education institutions and their members still have to cope with major challenges, as confirmed by the experience of the [European University Alliances](#).

Moreover, the ongoing changes in higher education and society require the Bologna Process commitments to be adapted and augmented. Currently, there are many questions still to be resolved. For example, can the existing quality assurance and recognition frameworks accommodate micro-credentials and digital learning formats? Is the challenge of climate change, with the net zero goal now enshrined in national and institutional policies, compatible with the further expansion of physical mobility?

At the same time, it is now clear that some of the Bologna commitments have been taken for granted - such as the importance of academic freedom, autonomy, staff and student participation. In the Bologna Declaration and early Communiqués they appear as key conditions for the success of the reform of higher education, while it is only in recent years that the question of how they can be defined and assessed has emerged.

This is the context for which the upcoming HERE Seminar organised under the SPHERE project will provide an update and facilitate debate on the major developments. With the upcoming Tirana Ministerial Conference taking place in Albania in May/June 2024 this is a good time for looking at the recent achievements, ongoing challenges as well as the future orientation of the EHEA.

Through a mix of plenary discussions and smaller workshop sessions, the event will offer space for region-specific exchanges with an EHEA focus, as well as for consideration of any parallel developments in the [European Education Area \(EEA\)](#). (The EEA is a specifically EU project encompassing primary, secondary and tertiary education.) The participants will also be invited to engage in discussions on the situation in their own institutions and systems.

The event addresses those involved in higher education policymaking at all levels of experience and knowledge. It will be especially relevant for HERE from national authorities/ministries, higher education leaderships and student representatives.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Gain insight on the state of art of the Bologna Process, as well as on the future developments towards the Tirana Ministerial Conference in 2024
2. Identify how the Bologna Process is currently perceived by different HERE countries, and in which ways it remains relevant.
3. Critically reflect on the implementation of the Bologna key commitments at system and institutional levels, identify new approaches to address them in the context of participants
4. Explore examples of higher education greening policies and understand better how this can translate in the context of participants
5. Reflect on the correlation between emerging higher education policy issues and the Bologna Process
6. Understand the role of student involvement in the Bologna Process and identify approaches for addressing student expectations



## PROGRAMME

**Venue:** Ceremonial Hall. Rectorate  
UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO  
Obala Kulina bana 7/II  
71000 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

### DAY 1

**Tuesday, 7 November 2023**

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| 3.30 – 9.00   | Registration and welcome coffee   |
| 9.00 – 9.30   | Welcome and introduction<br><i>Moderated by Elizabeth Colucci, SPHERE team</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome from prof. dr. Enita Nakaš, Vicerector for International Relations, University of Sarajevo</li><li>• Welcome from Xavier Flament, Project Officer, EC/EACEA</li><li>• Welcome from the SPHERE Team &amp; Introduction of the SPHERE initiative and the event: Michael Gaebel, SPHERE Team Lead</li></ul> |
| 9.30 – 10.30  | Session 1: Where does the Bologna Process stand now?<br><i>Chair and Introduction – Michael Gaebel, SPHERE Team Lead</i><br><br><i>Panel:</i><br><i>Horia Onita, President of European Student Union</i><br><i>Aida Duric, HERE, Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</i><br><i>Banu Narvekova, Chairman Higher Education, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Kazakhstan</i><br><i>Ben Mrad, Ministry of Higher Education, HERE Tunisia</i>  |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee break  |
| 11.00 – 12.30 | Session 2: Intro presentations followed by parallel workshops<br><br>Parallel Workshops 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshop 1: Quality Assurance (<i>Chair: Elizabeth Colucci</i>)</li><li>• Workshop 2: Recognition of Qualifications (<i>Chair: Gohar Hovhannisyan</i>)</li><li>• Workshop 3: Mobility and Student Exchange (<i>Chair: Michael Gaebel</i>)</li></ul>   |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch   |

13.30 – 15.00	Session3: Student Perspectives and Engagement  <i>Interventions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Horia Onita, President, European Students' Union</i></li><li>• <i>Representative from a student union in Bosnia and Herzegovina</i></li></ul> Chair: Gohar Hovhannisyan, <i>SPHERE team</i>
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 – 17.00	Session 4: Greening in HE: Reflections on the SPHERE Study  Chair: Elizabeth Colucci, <i>SPHERE team</i>
17.00 – 17.30	Closing of day 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Announcements about day 2: Introduction to day-2 break-outs</li><li>• Group photo</li></ul>
19.00 – 21.00	Dinner offered by SPHERE at the Pivnica Sarajevo Restaurant Maršala Tita 7, Sarajevo 71000. Website: <a href="https://pivnica-sarajevo.ba/">https://pivnica-sarajevo.ba/</a>

## **DAY 2**

### **Wednesday, 8 November 2023**

8.30 – 9.00	Welcome coffee
9.00 – 10.00	Session 5: Parallel Workshops 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshop 1: Quality Assurance and Accreditation</li><li>• Workshop 2: Recognition of Qualifications</li><li>• Workshop 3: Mobility and Student Exchange</li></ul>
10.00 – 11.00	Sessions 6: Parallel Workshops 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshop 1: Micro-credentials (Chair: Elizabeth Colucci)</li><li>• Workshop 2: Academic freedom and other values (Chair: Michael Gaebel)</li></ul>
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee break

- 11.30 – 12.45      Session 7: Outlook towards Tirana
- Implementation for SPHERE and the collaboration it offers
  - Information on national Bologna related events in all HERE countries + discussion

Chair: Elizabeth Colucci, *SPHERE team*

- 12.45 – 13.00      Closing of the event

- 13.00 – 14.00      Lunch

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- 14.00 – 15.00      Post-event session: Erasmus+ interim review  
*This session is designed to provide feedback on the interim review of the Erasmus+ programme from, the perspective of the HERE. I will be chaired by EUA.*

Presentation: Michael Gaebel, *SPHERE team lead*

Chair: Gohar Hovhannisyan, *SPHERE team*

- 15:00                Optional City Tour

**End of the seminar**