

Summary of Session 1.2 Role of Fundamental Values in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

This highly interactive, informative and productive session covered the current debates about Values within the Bologna Process and interrogated how best to ensure their visibility and relevance in Bologna post 2020. It included both practitioners and academics and a wide range of countries were represented.

Agneta Bladh, Vice-President Magna Charta Observatory (MCO), chaired the first session and explained the relationship between the MCO and the Bologna Process. The *raison d'être* of the MCO is to promote fundamental values across universities and through the current Living Values Project to support universities in developing and articulating their values. Agneta observed that although Values are absolutely fundamental and of 'first order' to the aims of the Bologna Process they had not been very visible until the 2018 Ministerial Declaration in Paris. The discussion showed that values are now fundamentally important for every aspect of the Bologna Process, ranging from harmonisation and modernisation and relations with External Partners to specific concerns such as student centred learning and social mobility. One of the challenges that the Bologna Process faces is that, as a grouping of 48 Countries (plus the European Commission), it has a fluid form of governance with no permanent secretariat and a limited budget. This system has both strengths and weaknesses. It can be dynamic and wide ranging but at the same time can lack continuity and be somewhat distant from the voice of the universities. Participants in the session stressed the need to involve students and academics in current EHEA debates and the importance of building on existing research, reflection and experience in areas such as Values.

The current phase (2018-2020) of the Ministerial cycle on Bologna has prioritised values which are being seen by the EHEA as increasingly salient at a time when even fundamental values such as independence and autonomy are being challenged across different political systems. To this end it has set up a task force to work on how to evaluate and monitor the realities of values and principles in the EHEA. This group is to inform the next Ministerial meeting in Rome 2020. An analysis of the work in progress of that group was shared by Monica Steinel, Senior Policy Advisor at the EUA who emphasised the important role of the European Students' Union in the group. She noted that it has made good progress by developing a monitoring framework for academic freedom in universities. This builds on the work that the European Universities'

Association has done on the autonomy scorecard. There was then an interesting discussion on how to measure values, on the differences between *de jure* and *de facto* values.

Sijbolt Noorda, President of the Magna Charta Observatory ended the session by stressing the importance of having a developmental system that would be of value to universities as well as being a comparative tool. He welcomed the idea of a schema to look comparatively at values (whilst noting the dangers of self-reporting) but emphasised the importance of strongly relating the discussion about values to the academic community. The work of the Living Values project can offer some valuable insight into how universities can effectively incorporate values.

The workshop was valuable in bringing colleagues up to date with the current issues and 'governance' around values in the development of the EHEA.

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