Schedule of topics for BFUG meetings

This document has been prepared by the EHEA Secretariat based on the information provided in the Work Programme and the Terms of Reference of the working structures, previous practice and the discussions during the Coordination meeting between the co-chairs of the working structures. The Schedule of Topics provides an overview of the distribution of topics to be addressed during the BFUG meetings of the 2024-2027 working period and their progression between BFUG meetings. The BFUG is invited to discuss and agree on the document at its XCV BFUG meeting in Warsaw, while acknowledging that the document is a 'living' one that may be revised based on developments during the working period.

BFUG number	BFUG XCV	BFUG XCVII	BFUG XCIX	BFUG CI	BFUG CIII	BFUG CIV	Comments
Host	Poland	Denmark	Cyprus	Ireland	Lithuania	Lithuania	
Period	February 2025	December 2025	Spring 2026	Autumn 2026	Early Spring 2027	Late Spring 2027	
WG on Monitoring	Focus of BPIR - discussion	Focus of BPIR – decision			Draft BPIR	BPIR Final Report	
WG on Internationa-lisation and Mobility		Draft Glossary		Draft I Action Plan on Mobility	Draft Action Plan on Mobility II		
WG on Fundamental Values	Comprehensive framework and monitoring tool with indicators presented to the BFUG	Selection of indicators to be used by the WG on Monitoring for the BPIR			Draft Implementation report on FV	Final Implementation Report on FV	

BFUG number	BFUG XCV	BFUG XCVII	BFUG XCIX	BFUG CI	BFUG CIII	BFUG CIV	Comments
CG on GPD				Draft Statement GPF I	Draft Statement GPF II	Final Statement GPF	
TF on Future of Bologna	Debate	Debate	Debate	Future priorities to feed in the Communique			
TF on Long-term Secretariat	Call for expressions of interest	Discussion with shortlisted applicants	Go/No go decision	If Go: Statues for EHEA Secretariat + selection HoS			
BICG	Presentation of TPGs Action Plans	Statistics of national action plans by EHEA Secretariat					Discussion on the implementation of key commitments and social dimension (the work of TPGs) – Cyprus or Ireland
Revision of ESG	General discussion	TBC session for comments on draft of ESG	TBC session to discuss ESG and EAJP	BFUG approve the final versions of the ESG 2027 and the EAPJ 2027			
Revision of ECTS Users' Guide		First draft	Final draft				

EHEA Secretariat

BFUG number	BFUG XCV	BFUG XCVII	BFUG XCIX	BFUG CI	BFUG CIII	BFUG CIV	Comments
Drafting Committee		Roadmap for the Communique + selection of consultative member	Draft ToRs DC + priorities	Draft I	Draft III	Draft V (final)	
Selection of the new Ministerial Conference host (and Secretariat, if the case)				In between BFUG XCIX and BFUG CI - Call for organisers	Presentation of applications	Decision on hosting	
All working structures	Reporting (in writing)	Reporting (in writing)	Reporting (in writing)	Reporting (in writing)	Reporting (in writing) + Draft Final Reports	Reporting (in writing) + Final Reports	
Ministerial Conference	Tentative dates	Save-the-date	Invitation + Practical information note + Draft agenda (only timing)	Invitation + Draft agenda	Final agenda		

BFUG_PL_AL_95_5_2_Schedule of topics for BFUG meetings_11.02.2025

Feedback Summary - XCIII BFUG meeting
Budapest, 26th-27th of September 2024

Horia ONIȚA, Head of EHEA Secretariat

XCV BFUG meeting, Warsaw (Poland), 24th-25th of February 2025

Following the XCIII BFUG Meeting, hosted by Hungary in Budapest, between the 26th-27th of September 2024, a feedback form was distributed to participants to gather insights on the event's organisation and content.
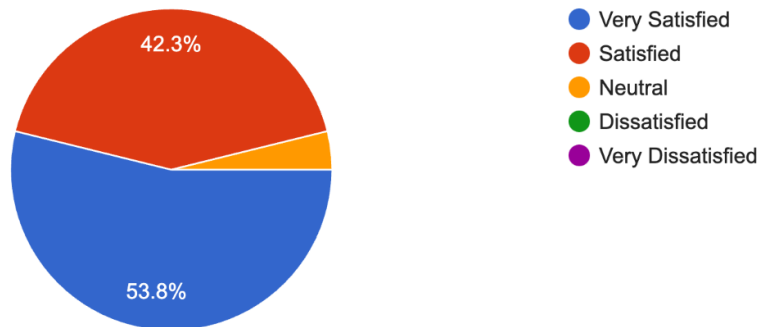
A total of **26 respondents** (36% of participants) provided their feedback, offering valuable input for future improvements.

1. Information provided in the Practical Information Note

1.1. Participant satisfaction

1. Information provided in the Practical Information Note
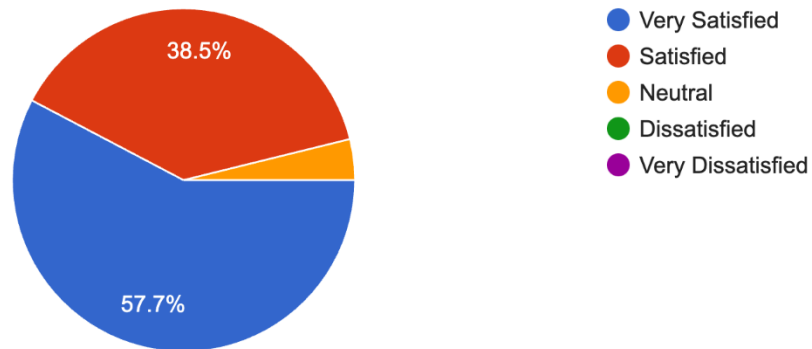
1.2. Main observations

- It was suggested that a wider range of accommodation options, both in terms of price and proximity to the venue, would have been beneficial.

- Participants highlighted the importance of communicating the meeting venue well in advance to facilitate better accommodation planning.

- It was noted that clearer guidance on transportation from the recommended hotels to the meeting venue would have been helpful.

2. The content and organisation of the BFUG documents

2.1. Participant satisfaction

How satisfied were you with the content and organisation of the BFUG documents provided before the meeting?

26 responses

2. The content and organisation of the BFUG documents

2.2. Main observations

- A recurring concern was the late distribution of documents, with some being shared only a few days before the meeting or even during the meeting days. Participants strongly recommended ensuring that all documents are finalised and made available well in advance.

- It was noted that some documents were replaced, updated, or supplemented shortly before the meeting. Participants highlighted the importance of avoiding last-minute changes and, where necessary, postponing discussions on incomplete items to a later meeting rather than submitting revised documents at short notice.

- Despite these particular concerns, participants acknowledged that the documents were generally provided in a timely manner and commended the overall effort of the Secretariat in managing documentation effectively.

3. The support provided by the EHEA Secretariat before the meeting

3.1. Participant satisfaction
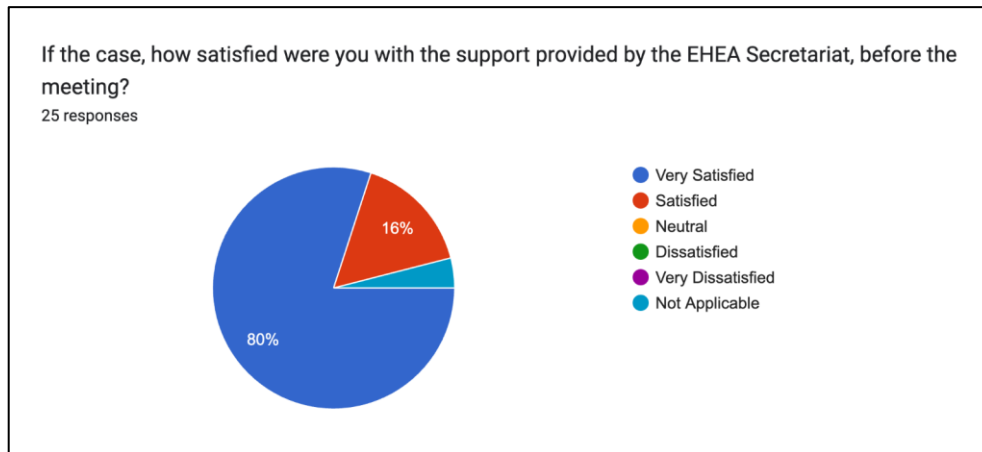
3.2. Main observations

- Participants provided highly positive feedback on the support offered by the EHEA Secretariat before the meeting.

4. The meals provided by the hosts

4.1. Participant satisfaction

How satisfied were you with the meals provided by the hosts during the meeting (coffee breaks, lunch)?

26 responses

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

42.3%

57.7%
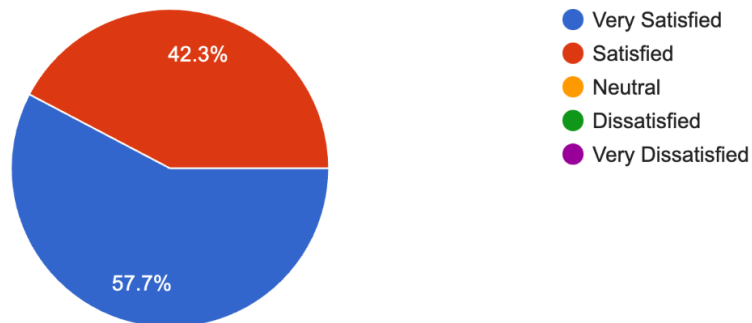
4. The meals provided by the hosts
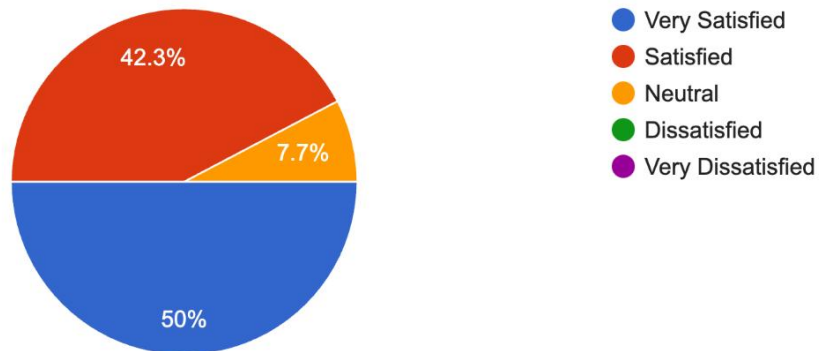
4.2. Main observations

- Participants provided positive feedback particularly regarding the availability and labelling of vegan options. It was noted that clearly indicating vegan dishes was highly appreciated and should be considered a standard requirement for all catering at future BFUG meetings. Additionally, participants valued the fact that vegan food was available, as this had not always been the case in previous meetings.

5. The social programme

5.1. Participant satisfaction

How satisfied were you with the social programme (informal dinner & Gala Dinner)?
26 responses

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
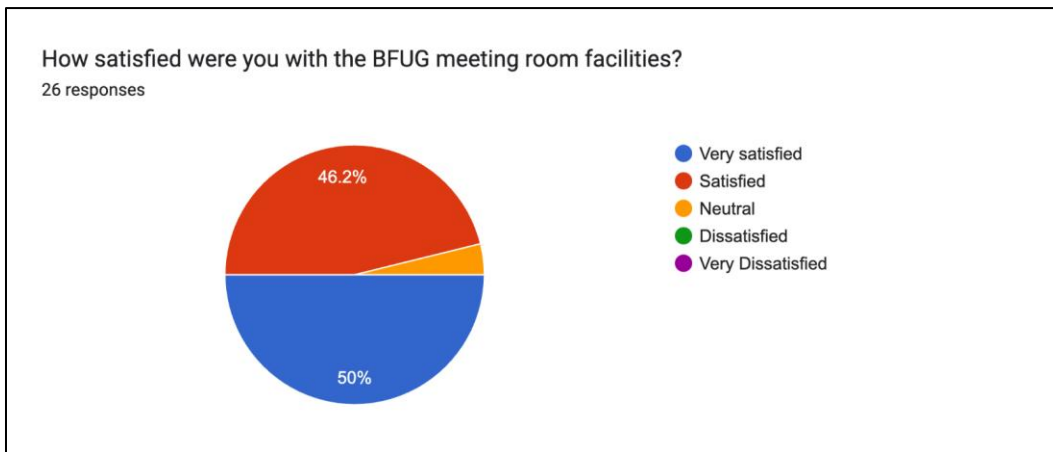- Very Dissatisfied

42.3%
7.7%
50%

5. The social programme

5.2. Main observations

- Participants highlighted the interesting visit, the excellent informal dinner, and the well-organised gala dinner. The wine tasting and string quartet were particularly appreciated, as was the guided tour of the National Museum.

- The vegan food options at the gala dinner were somewhat limited, though this was not seen as a major issue.

- The self-service format of the gala dinner led to participants eating at different times and paces, with a preference expressed for a more structured dining experience.

6. The BFUG meeting room facilities

6.1. Participant satisfaction

How satisfied were you with the BFUG meeting room facilities?
26 responses

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
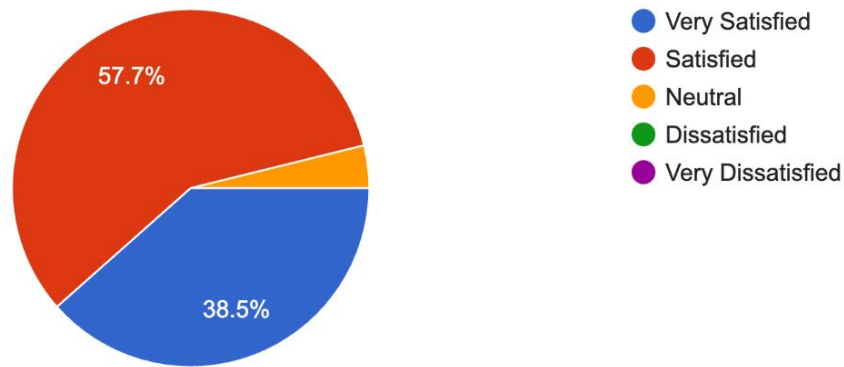- Very Dissatisfied

46.2%
50%

6.2. Main observations

• Some attendees found the overall acoustics slightly difficult.

7. The agenda of the meeting

7.1. Participant satisfaction

How satisfied were you with the agenda of the meeting?

26 responses

7. The agenda of the meeting
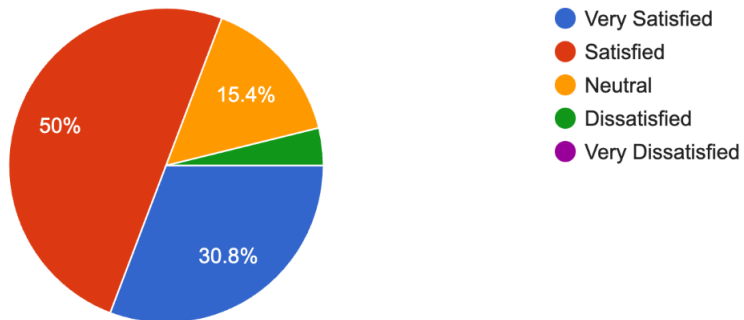
7.2. Main observations

- It was noted that more time should have been allocated for in-depth discussions on key topics such as the Terms of Reference (ToRs) and the European Degree.

- Some participants expressed a desire for more in-depth content discussions in future BFUG meetings.

- Some participants suggested that the European Degree as a thematic topic may not have been the most suitable focus for this BFUG meeting.

8. The organisation and content of the break-out sessions on the working structures

8.1. Participant satisfaction

How satisfied were you with the organisation and content of the break-out sessions on the working structures?

26 responses

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

50%

15.4%

30.8%

8. The organisation and content of the break-out sessions on the working structures

8.2. Main observations

- Time management was a challenge, with some sessions feeling rushed. It was suggested that a dedicated person be assigned to monitor time, while another could chair the discussion, to ensure better pacing.

- The number of sessions and group sizes may need adjustment to allow for more effective discussions. Smaller groups and a more realistic number of sessions for rotation were recommended.

- The logistics and organisation of room locations could be improved. Some participants had difficulty navigating between rooms, as the rooms were distant from each other and lacked clear signage. Additionally, it would have been helpful to have orientation questions provided in advance for better preparation.

- The time allocated for break-out sessions was considered insufficient by some, as participants could only attend two out of the planned three groups.

9. Formats for discussions suggested to be included on the BFUG meetings agenda in future meetings (1)

Participants suggested a variety of discussion formats for future BFUG meetings, with an emphasis on creating more interactive and engaging formats to stimulate dialogue:

- Pedagogical formats that change method from meeting to meeting were recommended to keep the discussions dynamic and creative. Participants expressed a desire for more innovative approaches but cautioned against overly complex or non-traditional formats that might detract from meaningful dialogue.

- Smaller groups were seen as effective for content discussions, as they encourage participation from all attendees, even those who are usually less vocal.

9. Formats for discussions suggested to be included on the BFUG meetings agenda in future meetings (2)

- Breakout sessions were particularly appreciated and should be expanded, but it was suggested that these be better organised to avoid interferences from multiple groups sharing the same space. Separate rooms for informal groups could improve the flow of discussions.

- Participants also highlighted the importance of providing space for open dialogue with stimulating questions that go beyond formal, procedural discussions. They expressed a need for room to explore fundamental questions about the direction of the Bologna Process.

- It was suggested that speakers from less engaged countries could be invited to encourage wider participation and increase the involvement of countries with historically lower engagement in the BFUG. The TF on the Future of Bologna could play a role in advising on such approaches, rather than leaving it to the host country to choose speakers.

10. General remarks

- The participants thanked Hungary and the organising team for hosting the event, as well as the Secretariat for their professional work.

- The participants observed that the meeting was well-organised, but noted that some countries were either absent or did not contribute during the tour de table on the implementation of the Tirana Communiqué.

- The participants observed a positive level of engagement from Romania and Moldova, particularly through the Secretariat and Vice Chair

11. General recommendations for future meetings

- For future meetings, it is recommended to ensure that accommodation suggestions include a broader range of options, are closer to key locations, and are complemented by clearer logistical details regarding transportation.

- For future meetings, it is recommended to continue ensuring clear labelling and the inclusion of diverse dietary options to accommodate all participants.

- For future meetings, it is recommended to continue offering engaging cultural and networking activities.

- For future meetings, it is recommended to consider sound system adjustments to enhance audibility for all participants, particularly in larger spaces.

11. General recommendations for future meetings

- For future meetings, it is recommended to ensure sufficient time for discussions on key issues and to carefully consider thematic topics to maximise engagement and relevance.

- For future meetings, it is recommended to improve logistical arrangements for break-out sessions, ensuring better time management, clearer room signposting, and more realistic session structures to maximise participation. Providing more detailed information in advance would also enhance the overall experience.

- For future meetings, it is advised to choose venues closer to the city center for greater convenience, as locations outside the city center may present logistical challenges for participants.

Useful links for BFUG representatives

- [Add/replace representatives in the BFUG working structures](#)
  - For BFUG representatives, please contact the Secretariat directly at secretariat@ehea.info

- [Add EHEA events on the website or promote an event on EHEA social media](#)

- EHEA Social media:
  - [Facebook](#)
  - [Instagram](#)
  - [LinkedIn](#)
  - [X](#)
  - [Subscription to the newsletter](#)

- [EHEA news](#)

- [Upcoming events 2024-2027](#)

- [Guidelines for newsletters](#)

- [EHEA & BFUG Rules of Procedure](#)

- [2024-2027 Work Programme](#)

Preliminary information about the Iași – Chișinău Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum in 2027

Introduction

According to the European Higher Education Area Rules of Procedure, *the Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making authority of the EHEA. It is composed of Ministers responsible for higher education of the State members of the EHEA or their representatives, and of representatives of the highest possible rank with competence in higher education policy of the European Commission and of the consultative members. Delegations representing countries/education systems, also include a leader of a higher education institution and a democratically elected student representative.* Alongside the national delegations and the delegations of consultative members, EHEA partners and other organisations are also invited to attend the Ministerial Conference.

The Iași-Chișinău Ministerial Conference will be the 13th Ministerial Conference organised within the framework of the Bologna Process, and the second Ministerial Conference to take place in two separate countries after the Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference in 2010.

Since 2009, alongside the Ministerial Conference the hosts hold a forum gathering international government representatives and organisations across the world to discuss common cooperation efforts and synergies between EHEA and other macro-regions and their countries. The forum, initially called Bologna Policy Forum, has been renamed Global Policy Forum starting with the Tirana Global Policy Forum in 2024. The Iași-Chișinău Global Policy Forum will be the 7th forum organised within the EHEA framework.

The 2027 Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum will be organised by the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova and Romania, with the support of the EHEA Secretariat. Pending approval, the conference would also be supported through the Erasmus+ grant of the EHEA Secretariat, offered by the European Commission.

For the Global Policy Forum, the event will be organised with the involvement of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue, in line with their Terms of Reference and previous succesful practices.

Tentative dates: 26 – 27 May 2027

Overall tentative planning

- 25th of May 2027: Social programme around Iași + Informal dinner provided by the Romanian authorities; formal arrival day in Iași, Romania for the rest of participants
- 26th of May 2027: Ministerial Conference in Iași, Romania followed by Gala Dinner provided by the Romanian authorities and cultural programme
- 27th of May 2027: transport from Iași to Chișinău provided by the Moldovan-Romanian hosts (early morning), Global Policy Forum and Gala Dinner provided by the Moldovan authorities and cultural programme
- 28th of May 2027: Post-Ministerial Conference social programme in the Republic of Moldova, formal departure day from Chișinău, Republic of Moldova

Venues

["AGORA" Events Centre Iași](#)

[Palace of the Republic Chișinău](#)

Preliminary practical information

Transportation from Iași to Chișinău will be provided by the Moldovan-Romanian hosts to all participants via bus (and private cars for ministers, TBD). The hosts aim to clear border formalities through diplomatic entry, thus estimating 135 min transportation time between Iași and Chișinău.

Further information about the cities can be found on the tourism websites of [Iași](#) and [Chișinău](#).

There is plenty of accommodation options for both Iași and Chișinău – information will be provided well in advance and reservations made for hotels in both cities.

Roadmap

Information regarding the next steps for planning the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum can be found in the [Schedule of topics for BFUG meetings](#) (hyperlink) and are listed below:

- BFUG XCVII meeting (December 2025, Denmark): Sending the save-the-dates to the national authorities
- BFUG XCIX meeting (Spring 2026, Cyprus): Sending the invitation and the draft agenda (only with timings)
- BFUG CI meeting (Autumn 2026, Ireland): Sending the Practical Information Note with the draft agenda
- BFUG CIII meeting (early Spring 2027, Lithuania): final agenda

Bologna Follow-Up Group Work Programme 2024-2027

I.   Introduction

For the implementation of the Tirana Communiqué, at the meeting in Budapest, the BFUG adopted the Work Programme for the 2024-2027 period, which includes the list of working structures, their contribution to the commitments of the Tirana Communiqué and the list of co-chairs. The co-chairs will prepare the Terms of Reference for their working structures, which will then be adopted by the BFUG in November 2024.

II.   Working structures established by the BFUG
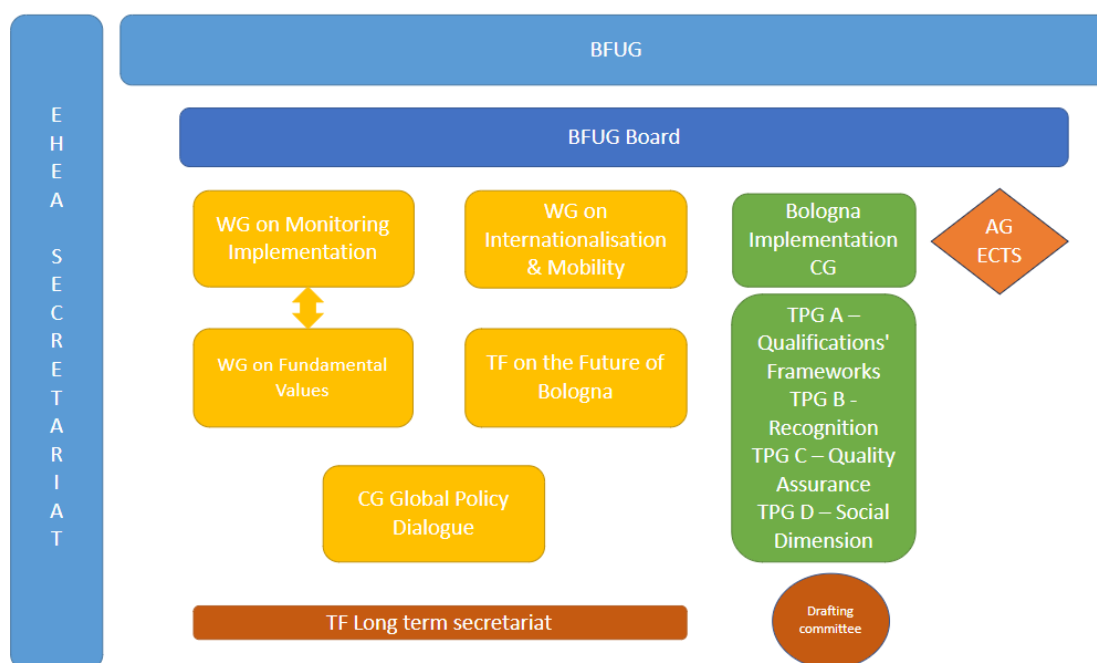
The Advisory Group on ECTS shall be composed by a small group of experts and it is chaired by the European Commission.

Nr.	Working Structure	Co-chairs	Tirana Communiqué	Outcomes/Comments
1.	**Working Group on Monitoring (implementation)**	*Austria Eurydice Malta*	'*We mandate the BFUG to ensure that policy commitments aiming at creating by 2030 an inclusive, innovative, and interconnected EHEA, mindful of the fundamental values, are properly monitored, including through a Bologna Process Implementation Report that assesses key developments.*' and '*We commit to measuring progress in the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA and ask the BFUG to report back on this in 2027.*'	The WG would produce the 2027 BPIR Monitoring report. A decision regarding the monitoring approach should be made based on the discussion initiated in the previous semester.
2.	**Task Force on Future of Bologna**	**Belgium – Flemish Community, Germany, Ireland, Ukraine**	'*We also ask the BFUG to submit to us in 2027 proposals for the main priorities for the next decade, in close cooperation with higher education institutions, staff and students.*'	The Task Force would ensure outreach towards stakeholders as established by the Communiqué. The main purpose of the group is to prepare and organise debates in the BFUG on themes relevant to the future of the Bologna Process, in order to ensure BFUG ownership and bringing back more content discussions within the BFUG.

BFUG_HU_IS_93_10_1_Work Programme 2024-2027_Adopted

Nr.	Working Structure	Co-chairs	Tirana Communiqué	Outcomes/Comments
				The TF could also work on preparing debates regarding other relevant topics after the consultation with the BFUG, such as the synergies with the European Education Area and European Research Area the commitment related to the future-proof development, dissemination and possible expansion of key commitments. The TF would have links with the BICG and other working structures.
3.	**Working Group on Fundamental Values**	**Romania Malta**	*'We welcome the work on creating a technical monitoring framework, and we ask the BFUG to report back to us at our 2027 Ministerial Conference.'*	Finalisation of the technical monitoring framework, through developing indicators to cover the dimensions included in the fundamental values statements, and finalising the first monitoring of based on the framework. Raising awareness, dissemination and support activities in what it concerns upholding the fundamental values at the national level would also be organised. The group should be linked with the WG on Monitoring.
4.	**Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility**	**Germany, Moldova, Netherlands, Ukraine**	*'We mandate the BFUG to prepare an action plan to stimulate mobility*	A WG on Mobility was included in the 2007-2015 Action Plan, which developed an

Nr.	Working Structure	Co-chairs	Tirana Communiqué	Outcomes/Comments
			and internationalisation of higher education and to support measures for achieving a greener, more inclusive, and more balanced mobility', 'We will support higher education institutions in their exploration of practices and benefits of blended mobility and virtual exchanges, and in fostering the internationalisation of the curricula. We commit to supporting transnational cooperation, including for joint programmes and joint degrees, through better implementation of the key commitments and by removing undue administrative and legal barriers' and 'We reaffirm our commitment to enabling all learners to acquire international and intercultural competencies, and we will reinforce our efforts to identify and remove barriers and promote physical mobility, also in order to achieve the*	Action plan on mobility in 2012. The headline would be how to attain the mobility target across EHEA and support internationalisation of higher education in general. The WG should have links with all working structures, collecting information on various elements that can impact access to mobility. Moreover, all working structures should have as one of the aims to outline how their work can foster mobility.

BFUG_HU_IS_93_10_1_Work Programme 2024-2027_Adopted

Nr.	Working Structure	Co-chairs	Tirana Communiqué	Outcomes/Comments
			benchmark of at least 20% of mobile students'	
5.	**CG on Global Policy Dialogue**	**Italy Moldova UNESCO**	*We ask the BFUG and its working structures to continue to develop and strengthen dialogue and collaboration with macro regions on various levels and with appropriate interlocutors.* and ' *This includes reciprocal referencing of qualifications frameworks and credit systems, ratification and implementation of the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, as well as the second generation regional recognition conventions, and alignment and mutual understanding of quality assurance principles'.* and from the Statement *'We invite all participants in the EHEA Global Policy Forum to continue to engage in global policy dialogue and to identify the themes where*	The CG GPD would continue the engagement with other parts of the world and prepare the statement for the Iaşi & Chişinău Bologna Policy Forum. The CG GPD can also take up other relevant topics after the consultation with the BFUG, such as, work on a better coordination with regional or interregional instruments dealing with HE policies.

BFUG_HU_IS_93_10_1_Work Programme 2024-2027_Adopted

Nr.	Working Structure	Co-chairs	Tirana Communiqué	Outcomes/Comments
			synergies can be found between regions, and with global organizations such as UNESCO and OECD, be it at the intergovernmental level, or in transnational exchange and collaboration between higher education institutions and organisations.'	
6.	**Bologna Implementation Coordination Group and the Thematic Peer Groups**	**BICG: Bulgaria, Finland, EUA** **TPG A: France, Georgia, Latvia,** **TPG B: France, Italy, Ukraine** **TPG C: Armenia, France, Romania** **TPG D: ESU, Latvia, Malta**	*'(acknowledging) the important contribution of the Thematic Peer Groups under the guidance of the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group in improving the situation. Therefore, we commit to ensuring that we have, or will devise, and will publish appropriate action plans to address any remaining implementation gaps (…). As the Bologna Process tools have developed throughout the last decade, we mandate the BFUG to work on their future-proof development, dissemination and possible expansion'* On Social Dimension:	The continuation of BICG and the three TPGs on QF (A), Recognition (B) and QA (C), plus an additional TPG on Social Dimension. The new TPG would work on promoting the Principles and Guidelines on Strengthening the Social Dimension of EHEA, also covering aspects related to student-centred learning. The BICG will work on creating a template for the action plan on implementing key commitments and promoting knowledge sharing activities.

BFUG_HU_IS_93_10_1_Work Programme 2024-2027_Adopted

Nr.	Working Structure	Co-chairs	Tirana Communiqué	Outcomes/Comments
			'We, together with stakeholders and communities, commit to tackling the socio-economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living and difficulty to access student housing, that have impacted access to higher education and student life as a whole. We will intensify our effortsto ensure the recognition of qualifications held by refugees and to remove barriers to their enrolment in higher education.'	
7.	**TF on long-term secretariat**	**Czech Republic EUA**	*We mandate the BFUG to continue working on the possibility of establishing a long-term, independent, internationally staffed Secretariat to create effective support for the BFUG, and to evaluate the feasibility and sustainability of the related proposals, models, and terms of reference in Spring 2026, to be presented for adoption and implementation at our 2027 Ministerial Conference*	Working based on the Roadmap developed by the Task Force on Rules and Regulations, with the possible support of the Secretariat in relation to assessing regulations and conditions, drafting procedures. The TF should be relatively small in terms of members for a more effective and concise process.
8.	**Drafting Committee for the Iași – Chișinău Communiqué**	**TBD later**		Prepare the Ministerial Communiqué, to be set up in January 2026.

BFUG_HU_IS_93_10_1_Work Programme 2024-2027_Adopted

Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	- Eurydice – David Crosier - Malta – Stefan Sant - Austria – Helga Posset
Composition	Albania, Austria (Co-chair), Cyprus, Education International – ETUCE, EQAR, EUA, Eurydice (Co-chair),Eurostudent, ESU, France, Germany, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malta (Co-Chair), Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Slovenia, Türkiye
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	"*We mandate the BFUG to ensure that policy commitments aiming at creating by 2030 an inclusive, innovative, and interconnected EHEA, mindful of the fundamental values, are properly monitored, including through a Bologna Process Implementation Report that assesses key developments.*"
Main goals	To guide the preparation of the Bologna Process Implementation Report for 2027; To identify sources of reliable, comparable data relevant for the EHEA that are feasible to be provided and analysed; To oversee: The development of a proposal on the focus of the report (to be discussed by the BFUG in its first meeting of 2025, and finalised by the BFUG in its second meeting of 2025); the development of data collection instruments (questionnaires) by the end of 2025; the collection of data from BFUG members in the first quarter of 2026 (two month process ending in March/April 2026); the cleaning of data (until end of June 2026); the drafting of the report by October/November 2026 the checking of the report with BFUG members (until February 2027) the selection of key results to propose to the Communiqué drafting team for consideration (by March 2027) the finalisation and publication of the report for the ministerial conference; the development of promotional material by the time of the ministerial conference To make further progress in improving a structured model for future monitoring of the EHEA; To ensure that accurate comparisons on all policy commitments can be made between countries and that implementation and other changes are transparent.

	Bologna Process Implementation Report 2027 Plans for future monitoring
Specific tasks	Oversee all stages of the production of the report: Identification of content required to measure policy commitments; Selection of a limited number of indicators to submit as a proposal for BFUG approval; Development of questionnaire; Data analysis Report drafting Planning for future monitoring
Meetings	One meeting for each 6 months period, ideally ahead of the BFUG Board meeting, and close to the BFUG meetings. Meetings will mostly take place online or in Brussels.
Liaison with other working structures	The working group will sustain strong coordination with all BFUG working structures. In particular, it will ensure close cooperation, through overlapping membership, with the working group on Fundamental Values and with the BICG. It will also work closely with the other working structures – both supporting and building on their work.
Contribution to enhancing mobility	By providing objective information on the implementation of all policy commitments, the working group will help effective actions to be taken to enhance mobility.
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	This may develop through the work period, but is not a particular objective of the working group.
Reporting	The BFUG will be informed at each meeting of developments in the working group. The BFUG will be asked to approve the overall conception of the report, and also the proposed content and indicators.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	The working group will be ready to disseminate information about the BPIR and also to provide information about previous reports wherever requested around the EHEA. Conferences, webinars, social media will all be used in Knowledge-sharing activities, and the information in the report will be openly available.
Tackling transversal topics	Transversal topics will be considered in the content development phase of the work.

Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Fundamental Values, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Working Group on Fundamental Values
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	• Malta – Rose Anne Cuschieri • Romania – Mihai Cezar Hâj
Composition	Austria, EUA, Council of Europe, Croatia, Education International – ETUCE, European Commission, ESU, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, United Kingdom
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*Fundamental values* *Higher education can only fully develop its missions when its fundamental values are respected. While they are now more threatened than they were a decade or even four years ago, we reaffirm our commitment to protect, promote, and uphold academic freedom, as defined in the Rome Communique. In addition, we commit to upholding, promoting, and protecting the following values:* *● We understand academic integrity as a set of behaviours and attitudes in the academic community internalising and furthering compliance with ethical and professional principles and standards in learning, teaching, research, governance, outreach, and any other tasks related to the missions of higher education.* *● We further understand institutional autonomy as the will and ability of higher education institutions to fulfil their missions without undue interference and to set and implement their own priorities and policies concerning organisation, finance, staffing and academic affairs.* *● Participation of students and staff in higher education governance encompasses their right to organise autonomously, in accordance with the principle of partnership and collegiality, without pressure or undue interference; to elect and be elected in open, free and fair elections; have their views represented and taken into account; initiate and participate in all debates and decision-making in all governing bodies; and, through their representative organisations, be duly involved in issues concerning the governance and further development of the relevant higher education institutions and system.* *● Public responsibility for higher education denotes a set of duties,*

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mainly exercised at the level of the national higher education system, which public authorities must fulfil as part of their overall responsibility for the education sector and society as a whole.
● *Public responsibility of higher education denotesthe obligations of the higher education community to the broader society of which the higher education community is a part.*

We adopt the statements on the fundamental values annexed to this Communiqué. While each value is essential, all six of them need to be implemented as a coherent whole. ***As a reliable monitoring of their implementation within all our education systems is required, we welcome the work on creating a technical monitoring framework, and we ask the BFUG to report back to us at our 2027 Ministerial Conference.***

Main goals	- Finalize the development of a comprehensive framework and indicators to further the monitoring and implementation of the fundamental values of the EHEA, based on the work done in the previous Fundamental Values Working Group and the supporting project. - Coordinate the first round of the implementation of the monitoring tool in accordance with the agreed framework and indicators and report back to the BFUG. - Coordinate the knowledge sharing, **peer exchange and support** and promotion of the fundamental values in order to raise awareness on the common understanding within the EHEA members
Outcomes	- Comprehensive framework and monitoring tool with indicators presented to the BFUG - 2nd BFUG 2025. - An implementation report based on the first round of monitoring, in accordance with the framework – 4 months before the Ministerial Conference. - Report of the Working Group on Fundamental Values - 4 months before the Ministerial Conference. The report will include details on the events and actions implemented regarding the knowledge sharing activities, as well as proposals for future steps on transfer of monitoring.
Specific tasks	- Revise and adopt the proposals on the framework and monitoring tool for fundamental values and propose and submit it to the BFUG - Coordinate the process of implementation for the first round of monitoring, in accordance with the framework. - Participate at the meetings of the various BFUG structures to ensure common understanding and approach regarding the

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	fundamental values
	• Organize knowledge sharing events.
	• contribute to the development of different outputs aimed at sharing the common understanding regarding the fundamental values.
Meetings	
	• 6 meetings (face-to-face), two per year
Liaison with other working structures	• A representative of the working group on Monitoring should be a member of the working group, preferably one of the co-chairs of the WG, to establish a link between the work done in the two groups. The WG on Monitoring and the WG on FV should liaise on the inclusion of the report on fundamental values in the BPIR. • Liaison with TPG on Quality Assurance, TPG on Social Dimension on the common topics. • Liaison with other topics as relevant, for example CG GPD on the international perspective and the TF on the Future of Bologna on future priorities on fundamental values
Contribution to enhancing mobility	• The work under this working group contributes indirectly to enhancing mobility
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	The work of this working group correlates with the following initiatives: • the work within the European Research Area on freedom of research • the work within the European Commission/ European Education Area on *"academic fundamental values"* • the work within the Council of Europe (CoE) on values (ETINED platform, academic freedom etc.) • **the work within the European Parliament on Academic Freedom.**
Reporting	• Regular progress report will be given to the BFUG. • The framework and monitoring tool should be validated by the BFUG. • A final report on the implementation of the framework and monitoring tool will bepresented to the BFUG. • Minutes of working group meetings will be made available **in a timely manner** by the Bologna Secretariat.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	• Organising events aimed at disseminating the common understanding of the fundamental values. • Organising peer learning events in connection with the WG on FV meetings. • Participate in other Bologna events to present the common

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	understanding of the fundamental values.
Tackling transversal topics	The work under this working group might tackle transversal topics such as: • Digitalisation & AI and their impact on fundamental values • learning and teaching

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Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility (WG I&M)
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	- David Akrami Flores – Germany (akrami@daad.de) - Rodica Crudu - Moldova (rodika.krudu@gmail.com) - Arthur Belle – Netherlands (p.belle@minocw.nl) - Maryna Mruha – Ukraine (maryna.mruha@mon.gov.ua)
Composition	Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium – Flemish Community, Belgium – French Community, BusinessEurope, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Education International – ETUCE, ENQA, European Commission, EUA, EURASHE, ESU, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Latvia, Republic of Moldova, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom – Scotland, United Kingdom, UNESCO
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*'**We reaffirm our commitment to enabling all learners to acquire international and intercultural competencies**, and we will reinforce our efforts to identify and remove barriers and promote physical mobility, also in order to achieve the benchmark of at least 20% of mobile students. We mandate the BFUG to **prepare an action plan to stimulate mobility and internationalisation** of higher education and to support measures for **achieving a greener, more inclusive, and more balanced mobility**'.* *'We will support higher education institutions in their exploration of practices and benefits of blended mobility and virtual exchanges, and in fostering the internationalisation of the curricula. We commit to supporting transnational cooperation, including for joint programmes and joint degrees, through better implementation of the key commitments and by removing undue administrative and legal barriers'*
Main goals	Develop an **EHEA action plan on Internationalisation and Mobility**, considering the experience of the 2012 action plan adopted at the Bucharest Ministerial Conference, that: ➢ Supports the EHEA members in developing and implementing internationalisation policies that enable all learners to acquire international and intercultural competencies. ➢ Fosters a discussion of EHEA mobility targets in light of greatly

	varying mobility numbers in different countries, between credit and degree mobility and different cycles, and identify the barriers to mobility as well as offering recommendations for the removal of these barriers. ➢ ➢ Provide concrete recommendations for member countries to develop or enhance policies that collectively strive for 1) more inclusive, 2) more balanced, and 3) greener mobility'. ➢ Includes a glossary of the key terms in the area of internationalisation and mobility, to ensure common understanding of terminology.
Outcomes	The WG will deliver an EHEA Action Plan for internationalisation and mobility, to be submitted for approval to the BFUG and adopted by the Ministerial Conference in 2027.
Specific tasks	➢ Draft an EHEA Action Plan on Internationalisation and Mobility. ➢ Facilitate an exchange of views on EHEA member countries' broad internationalisation strategies and priorities, such as internationalisation at home, staff mobility, regional and international strategies, and how EHEA member states support institutional (cross-border) efforts on internationalisation and mobility. ➢ Organise expert hearings and peer-learning activities on internationalisation and mobility strategies (also in context of transversal topics like inclusivity, sustainability, competitiveness, labour market relevance) and other relevant reports from different EHEA member states. ➢ Based on consultation with EHEA countries' delegates, academic experts and relevant stakeholder organisations, identify barriers to mobility and outline recommendations for their removal.

Meetings	➢ The work will be divided in two phases:
	   ○ Phase one: Identify all the relevant themes and topics, including barriers to and benefits of mobility, to be included in the action plan and to provide definitions for these themes in a glossary to promote common understanding.
	   ○ Phase two: develop the action plan itself.
	➢ Regular WG meetings once per semester; ideally in connection with peer-learning activities/expert hearings on the day before the actual WG meeting.
	➢ Additional drafting meetings for the EHEA action plan with a smaller drafting group shall be held twice per semester and start in the second half of 2025.
	➢ This draft will subsequently be discussed with the whole WG before a first complete draft version will be presented to the second BFUG of 2026.

Liaison with other working structures	Liaise with the BFUG working structures, most notably: • TPG A (on qualification frameworks and ECTS)

	• TPG B (regarding recognition of periods abroad); • TPG C (on promoting more flexible programs, the promotion of joint programmes and quality assurance of transnational education/crossborder QA); and • TPG D (to make internationalisation more inclusive). • CG GPD (on the international dimension of mobility, taking into account the international frameworks and initiatives)
Contribution to enhancing mobility	This WG is the main structure tasked with providing policy recommendations to enhance mobility, while making sure the EHEA members strive for 1) more inclusive, 2) more balanced, and 3) greener mobility.
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	The aims of this WG will be closely aligned to the EU initiative 'Europe on the Move' and the broader Erasmus+ funding for mobility opportunities across Europe. This WG will work closely with the European Commission to work towards the complementarity of the work, bearing in mind that the WG focuses on the entire EHEA and that students and staff from non-EEA countries face specific barriers (visa, tuition fees etc).
Reporting	Minutes of WG meetings will be made available by the EHEA Secretariat. Minute taking for the drafting sub-group is not foreseen, beyond the draft action plan itself. The BFUG will receive regular reports and updates which requires the presence of at least one of the Co-Chairs at the BFUG meetings. A final report will be presented for adoption to the BFUG and to the EHEA Ministerial Conference in 2027. The EHEA action plan for mobility and internationalisation as the central output of the working group shall be subject to approval by the BFUG. A first draft version shall be presented to the BFUG by summer/autumn 2026 to be discussed at the second BFUG meeting in 2026, with a finalized version being approved preferably in the first, latest in the second BFUG meeting of 2027, i.e. before the EHEA Ministerial Conference.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	The WG will promote its work during the working period through dedicated dissemination activities. Once adopted, key outputs of the WG, such as the action plan may be presented to the public through an (online) event.
Tackling transversal topics	The group will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different internationalisation strategies. This includes, on the one hand, exploring different types of mobility and the specific objectives associated with each form, and on the other, considering aspects like internationalization at home as an emerging approach to bridge distances in an inclusive and holistic way. This comprehensive perspective will focus on development of internationalisation strategies in the context of issues such as inclusivity, sustainability and competitiveness.

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Terms of Reference for the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Coordination Group on the Global Policy Dialogue
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	• Italy – Elisa Petrucci • Republic of Moldova – Nina Putuntean • UNESCO
Composition	Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, EUA, Education International – ETUCE, ENQA, EURASHE, European Commission, ESU, France, Germany, Holy See, Italy (Co-chair), Kazakhstan. Republic of Moldova (Co-chair), Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, UNESCO (Co-chair)
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*We ask the BFUG and its working structures to continue to develop and strengthen dialogue and collaboration with macro regions on various levels and with appropriate interlocutors.* *This includes reciprocal referencing of qualifications frameworks and credit systems, ratification and implementation of the UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, as well as the second-generation regional recognition conventions, and alignment and mutual understanding of quality assurance principles.* *We will support them [the HEIs] in strengthening their contribution to society and their local communities, responding to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the green transition in the area of higher education, to the ongoing digitalisation and the combination of physical and online learning and teaching. We will also ensure synergies with the European Education Area (EEA) and the European Research Area (ERA).*
Main goals	Goals to be achieved by the working structure in relation to the Tirana commitments: • Identify the themes where synergies can be found between regions, and with global organizations, be it at the intergovernmental level, or in transnational exchange and collaboration between higher education institutions and organisations. • Ensure dialogue, enhance cooperation and transparency and consolidate trust between EHEA and macro-regions, their countries and organisations, with a focus on similar regional organisations in other macro-regions; • Improve relationship with countries which are interested in a

	- closer cooperation with EHEA - Drafting the 2027 Global Policy Forum Statement; - Supporting the organisation of the 2027 Global Policy Forum, including identifying and proposing partners to invite to the Global Policy Forum, and organising other events, where possible and appropriate - Support the alignment of tools for recognition and mutual understanding of quality assurance principles and ethical principles and values of international academic cooperation. - Raise awareness on the UNESCO recognition conventions, their tools and instruments, and their potential for creating synergies among regions. - Contribute to the international fora fostering quality education for all (e.g. the World Higher Education Conference III road-map implementation and other regional and global initiatives), and in that way contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, notably SDG 4.3.
Outcomes	The main expected outcomes are: - Draft of the Global Policy Forum Statement 2027. - Contribute to defining the agenda for the Global Policy Forum 2027. - Increased participation of international partners in the 2027 Global Policy Forum. - Enhanced coordination with interregional instruments and projects dealing with HE policies - Strengthened interregional cooperation between EHEA and other macro-regions - Topic specific recommendations from the open meetings with stakeholders
Specific tasks	Tasks that the CG GPD will implement: The group will map a list of stakeholders at regional level, including stakeholders with a specific remit (e.g. recognition, quality assurance, internationalisation) and define means to engage with them in the dialogue with the EHEA. The identified stakeholders will be invited at further CG GPD meetings, based on the agreed calendar. Identified topics of interest will be addressed using various methodologies to share information, exchange practices, and engage discussion within smaller groups. Representatives of other BFUG working structures will be invited to CG GPD meetings, based on the topic of discussion and as relevant. Enhance cooperation with higher education institutions within and beyond EHEA
Meetings	There will be at least two CG GPD meetings per year (one meeting/6

months).

On a rotation basis, one CG GPD meeting should include only members of the group, while the next should include stakeholders and focus on debating one or more selected topics. Each year there should be a maximum of three topics discussed, from issues of common interest such as key commitments, microcredentials, use of learning outcomes, quality assurance, lifelong learning, internationalisation, right to education/social dimension, article VII of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, values and guiding principles, digitalisation and AI implications, crosscut by major challenges as student population decline, fast-changing market demand, social differences and rising costs of studying

Liaison with other working structures	Cooperation is foreseen, with the TPGs working on the key commitments (A, B, C), the Working Group on Internationalisation and Mobility, the Task Force on the Future of Bologna and any other BFUG working structure as appropriate.
Contribution to enhancing mobility	Through enhanced global cooperation, EHEA member states improve their knowledge and enhance their trust in relation of other HE systems, thus increasing international cooperation and mobility. Common work on technical tools in the area of key commitments increases comparability and compatibility of higher education systems, enabling learners to study cross-border and institutions/faculties to expand exchanges and collaboration.
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	Synergy with the EU initiatives (Europe on the Move, Global Gateway, Skills and Talent Mobility Package, Higher Education Package), UNESCO's Campus Africa, The Global Convention on Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education Work Plans and other relevant interregional initiatives, ASEAN Roadmap 2025 ENLACES initiative.
Reporting	The minutes are provided after each CG GPD meeting by the EHEA Secretariat. The CG GPD will report at each BFUG Board and BFUG meeting on the progress of their work. The first draft of the Global Policy Forum Statement is submitted one year before the Ministerial Conference.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	Main outcomes and results will be made available to the public on the EHEA website and shared with interested stakeholders.
Tackling transversal topics	Digitalisation & AI could be tackled within discussions on recognition, QA etc. This includes digital credentialling, interoperability, data architecture and others. The CG GPD, with the support of the Secretariat, aims to observe developments in other world regions and to exchange with stakeholders on potential synergies in this field. Contributing to SDG 4.3, including advocacy and monitoring of progress

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Terms of Reference for the Task Force on the Future of Bologna, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Task Force on the Future of Bologna (TF FoB)
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	• Belgium - Flemish Community: Liesbeth Hens • Germany: Lea Kröger/ Andrea Herdegen • Ireland: Orla Lynch/Stephanie Thompson • Ukraine: Maryna Mruga
Composition	Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium – Flemish Community, EUA, Croatia, ETUCE, EURASHE, ESU, France, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom – Scotland
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*'We also ask the BFUG to submit to us in 2027 proposals for the main priorities for the next decade, in close cooperation with higher education institutions, staff and students.'* *As the Bologna Process tools have developed throughout the last decade, we mandate the BFUG to work on their future-proof development, dissemination and possible expansion.*
Main goals	To take up the mandate of the Tirana communique by : 1. Preparing and organising debates in the BFUG on topics relevant to the future of the Bologna Process. 2. Setting up the debates so that the topics can be openly explored and result in clear conclusions that can be translated into actions by BFUG. This will enable the EHEA and the Bologna process to evolve its commitments, methodologies and tools to remain relevant and well prepared for the future. 3. Develop a Report to the BFUG with the main findings of the task force and recommendations on the way forward, both on content and methods of the Bologna process. The debates will: • Focus on a small number of future oriented priority topics for the EHEA, keeping in mind possible synergies with the EEA and the ERA; • explore the relevance and further development of the suite of existing tools and the potential for new tools To take up the mandate of the Tirana communique to: - Respond to ongoing change, due to societal, economic, geopolitical, environmental and technological developments in close cooperation

		with higher education institutions, staff and students - Align with the changes that are already taking place and will continue in higher education and research. This includes changes within higher education, as well as in the broader context of a changing society and a changing and more flexible education system.

Outcomes		The TF will focus on enabling and facilitating debates in the BFUG so that:
		
		- Each debate will result in the recording of a conclusion by BFUG.
		- As the BFUG debate series continues, a series of conclusions by the BFUG will grow iteratively.
		- At the end these iterative conclusions will be drawn together into a Report, advice and inputs for the next communique, setting out:
		
		    - a focussed set of relevant topics for the BFUG for the next decade, as an outcome of these discussions and debates in the BFUG and throughout its working structures, to be approved by the BFUG latest at the first BFUG meeting of 2027.
		
		    - an outline of the potential synergies with the European Education Area and European Research Area
		
		    - a conclusion on the relevance and further development of the suite of existing tools and methodologies and the potential for new tools
		
		- A reflection by the TF on the process that was facilitated for the BFUG, will be submitted to the BFUG latest by the first BFUG meeting of 2027.

Specific tasks		1. Identify a schedule of topics and priorities for debate drawing on: - the topics listed throughout the Tirana communique (LLL – shorter programmes etc.; AI and digitalisation; intensifying the international connectedness of higher education in a world that is facing new challenges; climate change, …) - suggestions for topics from working structures, stakeholders and the BICG - the topic of synergy with the European Education Area and European Research Area - the topic of enhancing and updating the Bologna tools and methodologies (in close collaboration with the BICG) 2. Bring these topics forward for debate by BFUG in an ongoing and structured manner. This might mean extending the duration of BFUG meetings if necessary to give more time for debate and

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	discussion; organising a seminar back-to-back with a BFUG meeting; and/or organising a webinar before a BFUG meeting.
	3. Support the BFUG debates by proposing innovative methodologies to ensure effective dialogue and clear and actionable conclusions. These might include: - providing a briefing paper on future topics for debate; - using future-friendly practices/work methodologies such as scenario building for the future; - inviting in experts/speakers on future topics who can engage with and provide insights to the BFUG and, potentially, the other working groups. 4. Subject to further discussion: To test and strengthen the evidence base for the topics by conducting a brief preparatory survey prior to a BFUG where the outcomes of the survey would be discussed and/or conducting an evidence-based study/meta study, investigating potential outcomes, successes and challenges for the Bologna process,
Meetings	Meetings of the TF: one or two meetings per semester, one prior to the BFUG meeting and, if needed, one after the BFUG meeting. BFUG: a working session (ideally 2h) in all BFUG meetings in the working period. The TF Future of Bologna will investigate to possibility of working in close collaboration with BFUG working structures and/or BFUG members, to organise collaboratively joint meetings or events that include the theme of the future of Bologna. In order to do its tasks, the TF will provide the BFUG with an annual work plan.
Liaison with other working structures	The TF has by nature a close cooperation with all other working structures of the BFUG and the BFUG itself. Possible liaisons exist with all working structures focussing on content. The TF will reach out to co-chairs and the Board to bring priority themes and new methodologies into their work programmes and to feedback on their relevance and effectiveness. This includes working with the team working on the potential installation of a long-term secretariat to explore if this has the potential to improve working methods, coherence and cooperation in BFUG, task division, etc… The BICG had been highlighted as a key group with which to cooperate and ensure regular communication and links.
Contribution to enhancing mobility	By bringing topics focussed on the future, improving synergies and enhancing tools and methodologies, the TF can contribute to

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	ensuring that the work of BFUG aimed at enhancing mobility in the EHEA is relevant and more future-proofed.
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	The focus of this TF is supporting the BFUG discussions. Where possible and useful we will seek connection with other activities organised by Erasmus+ projects and other initiatives of BFUG or TF members.
Reporting	A thematically focussed working session in all BFUG meetings in the working period. In general, we would opt for a two hour time slot, but the exact timings will be discussed at the board meeting. The TF will propose topics, external experts and methods for the session. The BFUG co-chairs and vice chair will agree and confirm the final programme and invitations.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	In first order the TF will focus on the BFUG and its working structures and will work with and through these structures to disseminate and enhance knowledge sharing with stakeholders.
Tackling transversal topics	The TF will enhance the focus of BFUG on future-proofing the topics that are relevant including fundamental values, AI, climate change, LLL, competitiveness, international cooperation, synergies with European Education Area and European Research Area and enhancing and updating the Bologna tools and methodologies.

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Terms of Reference for the Task Force on establishing a long-term Secretariat, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Task Force on establishing a long-term Secretariat
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	Czech Republic – Michal Karpíšek EUA – Michael Gaebel
Composition	The BFUG should ensure that the TF has a manageable size (approximately 12 participants, including the co-chairs) and diverse and representative participation, in terms of geography and systems. Participants ● should be ready to contribute proactively, regularly and constructively to the work, including drafting and revising texts etc. ● should not exclude any constructively critical voices, as long as they respect the decision by Ministers in the Tirana Communiqué. The TF's task is not to decide whether a Long-term Secretariat should be established, but to prepare tangible and feasible solutions in consideration of governance, organisation and management, finance, legal forms. The ultimate decision on the Secretariat is for the BFUG respectively the Ministers. ● Parties who have an interest in hosting the Secretariat are welcome to join the TF. As the TF will operate in openness and fairness, and all decisions will be made by the BFUG, respectively the Ministers, a keen interest in the issue should not be seen as a conflict of interest, but on the contrary, would help to develop concrete and feasible ideas and approaches, and recognise challenges at an early stage. Representatives of such parties should not co-chair the TF and would be exempted from any activity related to the evaluation and preselection of proposals for hosts. ● The party which the BFUG selects as a host for the Secretariat, if not yet part of the TF, would have to join it, in order to contribute proactively to the development of the approach. The composition of the TF is: Czech Republic, EUA, EQAR, European Commission, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Romania, San Marino, Türkiye.
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*In view of the long-term character of the EHEA, we consider that firmer structural arrangements are now necessary to ensure its consistent, stable development.* *We, therefore:*

	• *adopt the "Rules of Procedure for the EHEA"₅and invite the BFUG to adopt revised Rules of procedure of for its own work in due course;* • *mandate the BFUG to continue working on the possibility of establishing a long-term, independent, internationally staffed Secretariat to create effective support for the BFUG, and to evaluate the feasibility and sustainability of the related proposals, models, and terms of reference in Spring 2026, to be presented for adoption and implementation at our 2027 Ministerial Conference;* • *agree to undertake an assessment of the chosen arrangement after two work periods.*
Goals and outcomes	The TF builds on the results and outcomes of the Task Force on the Rules of Procedure to prepare the establishment of a Long-term Secretariat, in particular on the Revised concept note: Longterm EHEA Secretariat (BFUG Brussels 19-20 February 2024) and the document proposed as an Annex to the Communiqué: Long-term EHEA Secretariat. Principles and Roadmap (BFUG Brussels 9-10 April 2024). It supports and facilitates the process of the introduction of the Long-term Secretariat. It further develops the concept, interacts with potential hosts of the Secretariat, and provides the BFUG with relevant information for its decisions. In its work, the Task Force will follow the Principles for a long-term EHEA Secretariat and the Roadmap, which have been presented at the BFUG Budapest meeting 26-27 September 2024) and are annexed to the present Terms of Reference.
Specific tasks	1. Develop further the proposals for the establishment of a long-term, independent, and internationally staffed Secretariat for the EHEA, in particular regarding governance and funding. 2. Prepare a call for proposals for hosting countries/organisations, to be endorsed by the BFUG, and disseminated by the Secretariat. 3. Organise the evaluation of applications, including the assessment of the regulations and conditions of applicant countries/organisations. 4. Provide a reasoned proposal for the arrangements and terms of reference for the Long-term Secretariat, with a proposal for the hosting country/organisation, to the BFUG. 5. Prepare discussion and decision-making process at the BFUG, for a decision on the Long-term Secretariat (tentatively spring 2026). 6. In case it is decided to establish a Long-term Secretariat, following the indications of the BFUG, propose its draft statutes by autumn 2026, for discussion and endorsement by the BFUG (tentatively autumn 2026). 7. Advice the BFUG on the further preparation of the new Secretariat, including the job description for the head of Secretariat (tentatively autumn 2026). 8. To the extent required as a consequence of the decision to establish a Long-term Secretariat, propose amendments to

	the Rules of Procedures for the EHEA and/or the Rules of Procedure for the BFUG (to be adopted by Ministers, respectively the BFUG)
Meetings	The TF should organize its work so as to meet the deadlines specified above, and in accordance with the meeting schedule of the BFUG and its Board. The number of physical meetings may be limited to 2-3 per year, organised also in conjunction with BFUG meetings, with an additional 6-8 online meetings of shorter duration. It may be necessary that representatives of the TF travel to countries offering to host the secretariat in order to discuss and better understand the conditions and circumstances.
Liaison with other working structures	The TF would liaise with the Co-Chairs of other Working Groups as required.
Contribution to enhancing mobility	/
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	/
Reporting	The TF should report to the BFUG and its Board in accordance with the schedule of their meetings. The reports should focus on the progress of and proposals for the specific tasks outlined above.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	/
Tackling transversal topics	/

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Long-term EHEA Secretariat: Principles and Indicative planning schedule
A.   Principles for a Long-term EHEA Secretariat

In order to provide stable and ongoing professional support to the European Higher Education Area's working structures the ministers ask the BFUG to make necessary arrangements for establishing a long- term Secretariat for the EHEA, including the exploration its legal form and its location.

In the implementation of this task the BFUG will need to respect the following principles and conditions.

1.   **Independence and Accountability**
The Secretariat should operate independently from the country and/or organisation (with)in which it is hosted. Its legal, financial and organisational arrangements should ensure its independence, minimise the risk of undue influence.
It should operate under the authority of and be fully accountable to the BFUG including its governing structure arrangements, reporting and appointment of its staffing.

2.   **Sustainability**
The chosen arrangements, especially the funding model, must be sustainable, with a clear perspective on how the Secretariat can function for a longer term. Its main source of funding should be contributions by the EHEA members. Any potential in-kind contributions should not imply any influence on the Secretariat operations and agenda.

3.   **Staff**
The Secretariat must be able to recruit and contract a sufficient number of staff, with suitable profiles and competences, from different EHEA countries. The employment rules of the country in which the Secretariat is based should allow for this, under flexible and fair contracts.
In addition to its own staff, the Secretariat should be able to accept secondments from EHEA members and consultative members, according to clear rules approved by the BFUG, ensuring its independence. This would also regard the secondment of a liaison officer from the host country of the following ministerial conference, who will work under the authority of the Head of the Secretariat.

4.   **Location**
Regulations of the country where the Secretariat will be located must ensure the rule of law, allow its operation without undue influence of the national or local authorities and easy funding from different other EHEA countries.

5.   **Non-Profit Principle**
The Secretariat would operate on a non-profit basis, with any surpluses reinvested into its budget. It may accumulate a reserve, which however should not exceed one annual budget. Otherwise, the fees for EHEA members should be reduced.

B. Roadmap

The Roadmap can be further developed and adjusted by the Task Force, in consideration also of the BFUG schedule.

Date	What	Who
Sep 2024	establish a dedicated BFUG working group for the period 2024 – 2027 to oversee implementation	BFUG
spring 2025	launch a call for proposals for host of the Secretariat, incorporating the principles above	BFUG Input WG
June/July 2025	deadline for expressions of interest	
summer/autumn 2025	evaluate proposals and propose shortlist for the BFUG review proposals for location and shortlist no more than 3	WG
Oct/Nov 2025	address the BFUG's questions with the shortlisted countries / organisations, further review of proposals for the BFUG decision	WG & BFUG
Nov 2025 – Mar 2026	Specification of legal, financial, organisational details respecting the relevant regulations and circumstances including the funding model. Plan for the Head of the Secretariat recruitment	Host candidates & WG
spring 2026	Selection of the potential Secretariat host / location GO / NO GO DECISION Alternatively, a call for a "rotating secretariat" linked to the host of the next ministerial conference 2030	BFUG Input WG
Nov 2025 – autumn 2026	Drafting Statutes, review of EHEA Rules of procedure, identification of potential necessary changes. Capacity specifications, resources	Host & WG
autumn 2026	Approval of the statutes of the new legal entity and selection of the Head of Secretariat	BFUG
autumn 2026 – spring 2027	Founding the new legal entity in the chosen location / other relevant steps	BFUG, WG, Host accordingly
first half of 2027	Recruitment and training of further staff Organisational preparation	Head of the Secretariat
spring 2027	Official launch of the EHEA secretariat During the Ministerial conference	Ministerial Meeting
1 July 2027	EHEA Secretariat full operation Take over of the agenda of the previous secretariat	Secretariat

Terms of Reference for the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group, 2024-2027

Name of the working structure	Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)
Work period	2024-2027
Co-chairs	- Finland: Maija Innola - Bulgaria: Ivana Radonova - EUA: Maria Kelo
Composition	The Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG) is a small coordination group composed of representatives nominated by members and consultative members of the BFUG and the co-chairs of each of the Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs). A representative of the WG on Monitoring is invited to participate in the group as an observer. The group is composed of the following members: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, EUA, European Commission, ESU, Finland, France, Georgia, Italy and the TPG co-chairs (with usually only one co-chair of each TPG attending the meeting of the BICG). In principle, the BICG co-chairs should not be chairs of a Thematic Peer Group. The BICG should represent the diversity of the EHEA and ensure a balance of expertise across all key commitments. To ensure continuity and diversity, there should be a maximum turnover of two thirds of the BICG members from one work-period to the other.
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*"The 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report confirms and illustrates the still incomplete and uneven implementation of these key commitments, but also the important contribution of the Thematic Peer Groups under the guidance of the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group in improving the situation. Therefore, we commit to ensuring that we have, or will devise, and will publish appropriate action plans to address any remaining implementation gaps, and to promoting knowledge-sharing activities related to the EHEA."* *"The adoption of the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA in the 2020 Rome Communique was an important step in this direction, but more is needed to ensure their implementation by 2030. We commit to measuring progress in their implementation and ask the BFUG to*

Main goals	The purpose of the BICG is to facilitate a coordinated implementation of the four identified topics: the three key commitments (ECTS and QFs; recognition; and quality assurance) as well as of social dimension of higher education. To achieve that, the BICG coordinates the work of the TPGs, and facilitates an exchange of experience and best practice between the TPGs. The BICG follows the peer support activities and reports to the BFUG and the BFUG Board on overall progress and any necessary revision of the peer support approach or methodology. The activities should build upon the work and the results/achievements of the BICG in the period 2021 to 2024 and the outcomes of and recommendations for the work of the TPGs presented in the BICG Report 2024.
Outcomes	The BICG will deliver reports to the BFUG and the BFUG Board at least once a year. It will also provide input for the BFUG discussions about implementation. The BICG will deliver a draft template for national action plans for discussions, feedback and adoption by the BFUG. The draft will be provided by 5th November 2024 and consultation with the BFUG will be completed in written procedure by 15th November 2024. The BICG will deliver a draft template for national action plans for discussions, feedback and adoption of the template by the BFUG. The TPG action plans should be completed by 15 January 2025 and the National action plans are submitted to the EHEA Secretariat by each member state by early 2025, within a specific deadline agreed by the BFUG.
Specific tasks	- Coordinate the work of the TPGs; - Follow-up peer support activities by keeping an overview of the composition and activities of the different groups; - Seek to improve the Peer Support Approach for the implementation of the Key Commitments and of social dimension, including possible adjustments; - Identify synergies in the work of the Thematic Peer Groups and ensure consistence and coherence of outcomes - Give the BFUG regular updates and an overview on the progress and effectiveness of the Peer Support Approach, based on the activities of the TPGs; - Prepare recommendations for further actions to improve the implementation of the topics of the TPGs for consideration

	by the BFUG; • Prepare a template, for approval by the BFUG, for the national action plans regarding implementation of the Tirana commitments, with focus on the four TPG topics. • Ensure synergies between the national plans and the activities of the TPGs and their working plans.
Meetings	Two meetings per year will be held, ideally three weeks prior to the BFUG Board meetings. Meetings can be physical or online, taking into account the availability of the BICG members. Physical meetings can be one or one and a half day and could also be held in combination with other meetings (BFUG or TPG).
Liaison with other working structures	In addition to the TPGs and the BFUG and the Board, the BICG will specifically liaise and search synergies with the following groups: - WG on Monitoring - AG on Future of the Bologna Process - WG on Mobility and internationalisation
Contribution to enhancing mobility	The work of the BICG will have an indirect but very important contribution to enhancing mobility by supporting the correct and thorough implementation of reform agendas that are enablers of mobility.
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	The key commitments and the social dimension have strong connections to EU policies within the EEA, and their implementation will be an important precondition for the fruitful achievement of the EEA objectives. Global Dialogue has traditionally focused strongly on a number of the key commitments, as issues related to recognition, quality assurance and balanced mobility flows are high on the regional agendas across the Globe.
Reporting	Minimum of yearly reporting to the BFUG and final reporting containing reflections on the success of the methodology of peer support for the implementation purposes of the four thematic areas, with particular attention to the TPG D on Social Dimension as the newest TPG.
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	The task of the BICG is to coordinate a comprehensive system of peer support activities divided into the four TPGs. It is not thus a direct task for the BICG to disseminate information into the wider academic community.
Tackling transversal topics	The work of the BICG will take into consideration and feed back into the discussions on transversal topics such as digitalisation & AI and learning and teaching.

Additional remarks on TPGs	**Additional remarks on the Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs)**
	The objective of the TPGs is to provide a forum to support countries in working together to implement the Key Commitments and reforms related to the social dimension of higher education. The TPGs should continue using the Peer Support Approach and build on the work accomplished during the previous work period.
	Each TPG (with the exception of the TPG D on social dimension, which is to start its work only in this working period) should follow up and update its overall Action Plan to reflect countries' progress and developments. The BICG provides feedback to the Action Plans of the TPGs and the TPG regularly report their activities to the BICG. Each participating country should prepare, update and follow their own priorities coordinated with the TPG's Action Plan and objectives, in line with the National Action Plan mandated by the Tirana Communiqué.
	The countries and organisations should nominate representatives of authorities and stakeholders with relevant responsibility and expertise in the topic for the duration of the entire work period. Country representatives in the different TPGs need to communicate to and collaborate with their BFUG representatives at national level to ensure consistency and impact.
	The co-chairs of the TPGs should be appointed by the BFUG and are responsible for planning, coordinating and reporting on the activities of the TPGs to the BICG.
	There should be up to three co-chairs per TPG, respecting also a principle that one country representative should not co-chair more than one TPG or the BICG.
	The TPGs' co-chairs:
	TPG A: France, Georgia, Latvia
	TPG B: France, Italy, Ukraine
	TPG C: Armenia, France, Romania
	TPG D: ESU, Latvia, Malta

Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group on the ECTS Users' Guide Revision

Name of the working structure	Advisory Group on the ECTS Users' Guide Revision
Work period	February 2025 until the first BFUG meeting of 2026
Co-chairs	European Commission
Composition	National experts appointed by the European Commission: • max. 12 – to be confirmed after invitations *(invitees see annex)* Stakeholder representatives/non-voting BFUG members: • EUA • EURASHE • ESU • ENQA • EQAR • EI-ETUCE Commission services/experts: • DG EAC • DG EMPL • Cedefop (tbc) Senior advisers involved in previous revision: • Ann Katherine Isaacs • Robert Wagenaar
Reference to the Tirana Communiqué	*To support the implementation of the ECTS, including learning outcomes, we invite the BFUG to review the ECTS Users' Guide 2015 by 2027, to strengthen its key features and adapt it to current developments, including micro credentials.*
Main goals	Propose a revised ECTS Users' Guide for adoption by the 2027 Ministerial meeting
Outcomes	Revised ECTS Users' Guide – for consideration at the first BFUG of 2026
Specific tasks	• Identify areas that need revision in light of EHEA developments • Provide input to the design of research on the use of ECTS by higher education institutions • Consider the findings of the research • Conduct wider consultations of stakeholders as appropriate • Review draft versions of the revised Users' Guide • Propose a draft revised Users' Guide to the BFUG
Meetings	Up to 6 meetings, 3 on-site in Brussels and 3 online
Liaison with other working structures	Coordination with ESG revision

Contribution to enhancing mobility	ECTS is a main transparency tool, keeping the Users' Guide up-to-date thus contributes to a smooth mobility experience and supports transnational cooperation. The research on the use of ECTS will yield insights into the current obstacles and barriers experienced in practice, including with a view to seamless recognition of study periods abroad. The revision will aim, among others, to address these obstacles.
Correlation with initiatives outside the Bologna Process	Erasmus+ Programme European Education Area
Reporting	- Draft ToR presented at 1st BFUG Board of 2025 - ToR submitted to BFUG electronically by end of January 2025 - Research results presented at 2nd BFUG of 2025 - Draft revised Users' Guide submitted to 1st BFUG of 2026
Dissemination and enhancing knowledge sharing	Once the draft revised Guide has been validated by the BFUG, dissemination activities could commence to inform the academic community of the forthcoming changes and improvements.
Tackling transversal topics	- Micro-credentials - Recognition - Transnational cooperation - Digitalisation

Annex: List of Invited National Experts

The following experts will be invited to join the group. All individuals and countries are currently <mark>to be confirmed</mark>.

- Frederik De Decker, Ghent University, BE (Fl.)
- José Ravenstein, National E+ Agency, NL
- Raimonda Markeviciene, Vilnius University, LT
- Ronny Heintze, AQAS (QA agency), DE
- Ana Tecilazić, Algebra University, HR
- Jonna Korhonen, Ministry of Education, FI
- Chiara Finocchietti, CIMEA (ENIC-NARIC), IT
- Jakub Brdulak, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PL
- Peter Ondreička, Ministry of Education, SK
- Ukraine (person tbc)
- Denmark (person tbc)
- Ireland (person tbc)

Terms of Reference_AG on ECTS Users' Guide

Monitoring the Fundamental Values of Higher Education in the EHEA:
Technical Policy Framework of Indicators

1. Introduction

This document was prepared by the co-chairs of the Fundamental Values Working Group for the 24-25 February 2025 BFUG Meeting to be held in Poland. It presents the framework of indicators and a **practical tool for monitoring** the fundamental values of higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The design process of the monitoring framework involved several key stages. Initially, a comprehensive inventory of existing monitoring tools was constructed and analysed in order to assess their applicability to the EHEA context. This phase included extensive desk research, consultations with a specialized higher education experts from Europe and from other continents and with a broad spectrum of European stakeholders. It led to the conclusion that while existing tools provide valuable information in their own contexts, they cannot be readily used for EHEA's specific needs. In essence, these existing tools monitor something different than the six fundamental values of the EHEA as outlined in the respective statements adopted by the ministers between 2020 and 2024. Next, a monitoring framework with EHEA adapted indicators was developed, using once again broad stakeholder consultations. The framework was piloted and in four EHEA systems selected in consultation with the BFUG. The purpose of the pilot was not to assess the four systems and thus no individual data about them were made public. The framework of indicators was finalized taking into the lessons from this pilot and it was operationalized into a practical monitoring tool that specifies what exactly is to be monitored and how. This included the extraction of specific dimensions for each value, strictly based on the EHEA statements on the fundamental values, and specifying precise monitoring elements for these. The monitoring tool was developed with precise attention to the statements, without trying to question, correct or modify them, explicitly or implicitly. The tool's feasibility was also tested, and necessary methodological adjustments were made based on feedback from the pilot phase, ensuring that it is well-suited and applied strictly for its intended purpose, which, as requested by the BFUG and the minsters, is monitoring the protection and promotion of the fundamental academic values as jointly defined in the Tirana Communiqué (2024).

The monitoring framework and tool were developed through continuous, iterative and extensive consultations with all categories of higher education stakeholders from the EHEA, under the supervision of an EHEA-wide Working Group on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education appointed by and reporting to the Bologna Follow Up Group. This work was supported by the project New Building Blocks of the Bologna Process: Fundamental Values (NewFAV), with funding from the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Programme.

The three key concepts used within the document are to be understood as follows:

- **The monitoring framework** is the conceptual structure that presents and clarifies the main components or parameters of the monitoring tool, such as indicators, what exactly they monitor and how, what type of data will be collected and how, etc.

- **The monitoring tool** is the actual instrument that is used for data collection, processing, and reporting for the purpose of monitoring. That is at its core, in this case, a moderately complex questionnaire.

- **The monitoring mechanism** consists of the monitoring tool and the organizational arrangements for its development and utilization within the EHEA governance structures.

The monitoring of the fundamental values of higher education in the EHEA follows strictly the tradition of the Bologna Process monitoring efforts (Bologna implementations reports), both in terms of methodology and governance. In this context, the key role of the BFUG remains the same as in the other monitoring exercises.

2.   General approach towards monitoring (the monitoring framework)

The design of the monitoring framework closely followed the Bologna Process tradition of monitoring the implementation of **commitments** made by its members. Accordingly, what is proposed to be monitored is not as much the six values *per se* (in general, values are notoriously elusive to capture), but first and foremost the level of implementation **of the commitments made about them**, for which there is already valuable long-standing technical expertise in other policy areas in the EHEA (see Bologna Process Implementation reports).

2.1 Categories of fundamental values: freedoms and obligations

The six EHEA fundamental values of higher education, as expressed in the Tirana statement, are not identical with regard to their normative remit. Some of them demarcate primarily rights or freedoms, while the others are primarily about obligations and duties. Both are important in higher education, and it must be explicitly acknowledged that EHEA fundamental values include obligations as well, not just rights and freedoms. This distinction/grouping is very important conceptually, ethically, and even more so methodologically for the purpose of monitoring. It matters whether one is monitoring the exercise of rights or freedoms (looking to see if there are any undue limitations or infringements on these rights/freedoms and if enabling conditions are in place to support the exercise of those rights/freedoms), or the fulfilments of duties and obligations (looking at whether these duties are indeed fulfilled in practice). Accordingly, the proposed monitoring framework contains partly different *de facto* indicators for values that are primarily rights or freedoms (infringements and threats), as opposed to those that are primarily duties and obligations (fulfilment of duties and obligations).

The monitoring framework considers this interrelated cluster of values, each of them taken individually but also considering their interrelations.

Figure 1 (below) shows the core elements of the monitoring framework, including the proposed indicators depending on the two categories of fundamental values explained above.

The indicators proposed are explained below and they are grouped in two categories:

- *De jure* indicators are the same for both categories of values: Protection, Promotion and Outlook.

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- *De facto* indicators are partly different for the two categories: Infringements, Threats and Positive Developments for the rights values; and Fulfilment, Threats and Positive Developments for the duties values.

Figure 1. Monitoring Framework for Fundamental Academic Values

VALUES Rights/Freedoms		TYPE OF MONITORING and INDICATORS	
- Academic freedom - Institutional autonomy - Participation of students and staff in university governance		*De jure*	
		Protection	Outlook
		Promotion	
		De facto	
		Infringements	
		Threats	
		Positive developments	

VALUES Duties/Obligations		TYPE OF MONITORING and INDICATORS	
- Academic integrity - Public responsibility *for* higher education - Public responsibility *of* higher education		*De jure*	
		Protection	Outlook
		Promotion	
		De facto	
		Fulfilment	
		Threats	
		Positive developments	

2.2 *De jure* and *de facto* monitoring

In line with the tradition of monitoring values, or fundamental values of higher education, this monitoring framework distinguishes between *de jure* and *de facto* indicators. *De jure* indicators are generated looking directly at the commitments made by the ministers, which were explicitly expressed in a series of ministerial communiqués, from Paris 2018 to Tirana 20204: to **protect** the fundamental values (adopt and implement legislation in each system reflecting the fundamental values as jointly defined) and **promote** the fundamental values (through policies and other non-legislative means). In addition to these two *de jure* indicators (**protection** and **promotion**), a third de one is proposed: **outlook**, as explained immediately below.

The situation on the ground in the EHEA Member Countries will be monitored in a *de facto* section as well. Information in this section will be gathered for each value from existing reports (such as the Academic Freedom Index, Autonomy Scorecard, European Student Union surveys and reports, etc.) and new information will be collected specifically from higher education stakeholders in each system in a rigorous but simple manner, regarding the infringement and fulfilment of values, threats to both exercising freedoms and fulfilling duties, and also – importantly - positive developments. The purpose of this latter feature of the monitoring

framework (positive developments) is to identify positive examples that can be used for peer learning and policy transfer between EHEA higher education systems.

2.3 *De jure* indicators: Protection, promotion and outlook

Protection as an indicator serves to monitor the implementation of the commitment to adopt and implement supportive legislation in each EHEA system reflecting the jointly adopted statements for the respective values. It is proposed to monitor in this way the extent to which such legislation exists for each value and also the extent to which existing legislation is in line with the jointly adopted definitions for each value.

Promotion as an indicator serves to monitor the implementation of the commitment to adopt and implement supportive guidelines and mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) in each EHEA system regarding these values: do such guidelines and polices exist? It is also proposed to monitor the extent to which any existing guidelines and mechanisms are in line with the joint conceptual references adopted for each value.

To monitor protection and promotion, the well-established, traditional Bologna Process "traffic light" system will be used, as detailed in *Annex 1* for each value.

It is important to acknowledge that the explicit list of EHEA fundamental values is relatively new, as it was adopted initially only in in 2018. Also, the conceptual references for these values are, at least to some extent, also new. For example, it was for the first time at the 2024 Tirana Ministerial Conference that a shared conceptual reference was adopted for all the EHEA values, except academic freedom which was jointly defined at the 2020 Rome Ministerial Conference. For these reasons, it cannot be reasonably expected that EHEA higher education systems already have all the EHEA values already reflected in national legislation and policy as they were jointly defined only recently. Hence, a third indicator for the framework is proposed: *Outlook*. This indicator will reflect existing plans to modify legislation and adopt new policies that intend to further support, or undermine, the fundamental values as jointly defined. The degree to which these plans have been put in practice will be assessed once again in the next monitoring cycle, checking back on the outlook in this way. This indicator (Outlook) is meant to monitor not only the situation at a given time in a given system, but also the direction of planned and documented developments with regard to protection and promotion of the fundamental values (positive, negative, unchanged, or mixed). In this way, monitoring the outlook will help with initiating peer-learning activities and policy dialogue between EHEA members and across relevant higher education stakeholders when new positive initiatives are considered and initiated, or draw attention to planned developments that would diverge from the commitments to protect and promote these values.

2.4 Quantitative and qualitative elements

The framework includes both quantitative and qualitative elements. The *de jure* part of the framework will use quantitative elements based on the Bologna traffic light system (detailed for each indicator and value in *Annex 1*), as well as qualitative narrative reporting documenting the

findings and discussing them. The *de facto* part of the monitoring will include exclusively narrative sections discussing the findings regarding infringements of freedoms/rights, fulfilment of duties/obligations, and threats and positive developments regarding all fundamental values.

Figure 2, below, illustrates the envisioned traffic light coding for one value (academic freedom) as well as hypothetical presentation of findings (this map is not based on actual data, it is randomly generated, only for illustration).

Figure 2: Colour-coding and hypothetical map for <u>protection of academic freedom</u> in the EHEA (not based on actual data, it is randomly generated, only for illustration)
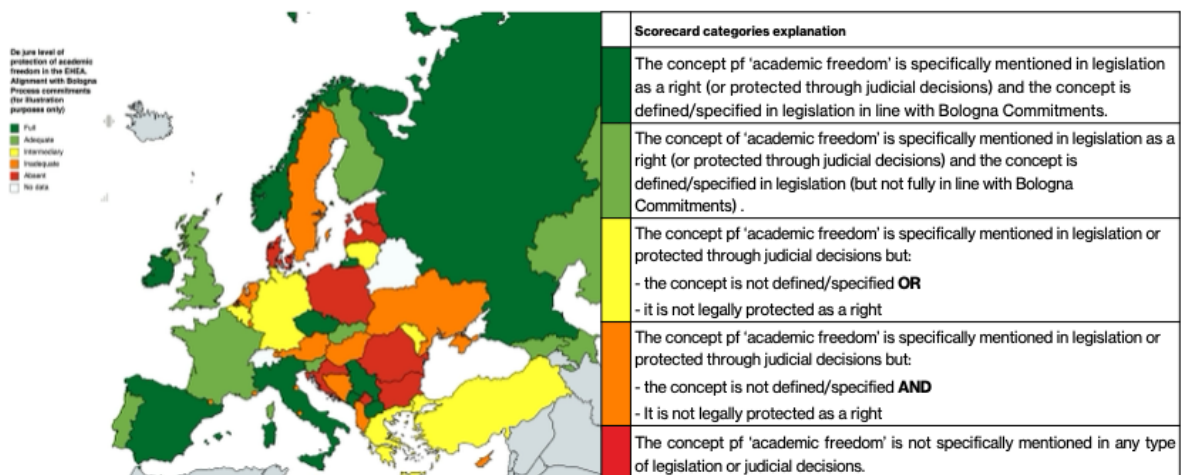
The monitoring of the fundamental values in the EHEA is not a rigid quantitative measuring exercise. Rather, the monitoring framework and the monitoring tool are designed, as requested by the EHEA ministers, to help enhance the protection and promotion of fundamental values and "foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, higher education institutions and organisations, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these are honoured and implemented in our systems" (EHEA, 2020a). It is in part for this reason that both quantitative and qualitative elements are proposed to be used.

3. Monitoring Tool for the Fundamental Values of Higher Education in the EHEA

The monitoring tool for assessing the fundamental values of higher education within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a comprehensive but simple instrument designed to help evaluate, protect, and promote these values. Figure 3 below illustrates the combination of data collection techniques and sources used within the tool to collect reliable and valid data for both *de jure* and *de facto* indicators of the monitoring framework (see Figure 1).

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Figure 3: Data collection techniques and data sources used within the monitoring tool for the Fundamental Values of Higher Education in the EHEA

- Public authorities ➔.
  Self-reporting; provide system level information

- System/National operators ➔ *Manage the questionnaire/data collection; coordinate communicatioin with all respondents in the respective syestem.*

Data from other reports/evaluations, or monitoring exercises

Promotion. Protection.

Promotion. Protection. Outlook *De facto*

Promotion. Protection. Outlook *De facto*

De facto

- National stakeholders - (*student unions, trade unions, HEIs, academics*)

- Open platform ➔ Open for shor period for collecting input about the facto indicators only

3.1 Respondents and data collection

Data will be collected using this tool from several categories of respondents:

- **Public authorities from the respective system**. One or several respondents will be delegated by the ministry to check/fill out only the *de jure* section of the questionnaire, except for outlook. This will give a chance to public authorities to present their own perspective and report directly on how they have fulfilled the commitments assumed in order to protect and promote the fundamental values of higher education. Public authorities will not be required to answer the items regarding outlook or *de facto* situation.

- **Representatives of 4 categories of higher education stakeholders.** The operator, in coordination with the project team and the BFUG will identify four individual respondents from the system, representing each of the following categories of stakeholders: national/system-wide student union, staff union, academic staff, and university leadership (*e.g.,* rector). These respondents will check/fill out both *de jure* section of the questionnaire, including outlook, and *de facto* section.

- **Open platform respondents**. An online section of the tool will be created and will remain open for two weeks at the end of the data collection phase. Any members of the academic communities from that system (students or staff) and any higher education

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professional working in the respective system (such as in professional associations, quality assurance agencies, etc.) will have the possibility to fill out the *de facto* section of the survey using this platform.

Each group of respondents will receive the EHEA statements for each fundamental value as separate files, for their reference, together with the questionnaire and detailed guidelines for responding.

3.2 *System operators / National operators*

A questionnaire will be used for data collection from each higher education system. In addition, existing other reports will be identified that provide useful data for the purpose of monitoring.

The questionnaire will be administered by a system operator, selected by the monitoring project team in coordination with BFUG. A professional online survey software will be used.

Systems operators are not experts on fundamental academic values, although they are expected to be knowledgeable in matters of higher education policy. Their role will not be to provide information or interpret it but ensure that information is collected rigorously from all respondent categories and crosschecked. For most items in the questionnaire, not only 'yes' or 'no' answers are required but respondents are also asked to provide evidence for their answers (links to laws, regulations, policy papers, other reports, etc., as detailed in *Annex 1*). It will be the task of the operators to factually check that such evidence is provided and to check the answers against this evidence.

To help minimize the time effort in the case of two categories of respondents (public authorities and higher education stakeholders), the operators will pre-fill the *de jure* section of the questionnaire for the respective systems, except for outlook. The respondents will be required to confirm or correct and complete the answers provided/pre-filled by the national operators. However, respondents will also be given the option to answer a blank questionnaire, with no pre-fill, should they wish so.

To ensure smooth and consistent data collection, all operators will receive extensive training prior to the administration of the questionnaire. Training will be conducted online by the project team. Operators will receive an honorarium for their work. Instructions for the operators (one per system) will be distributed. These instructions and training will be based on the detailed presentation of the monitoring mechanism and monitoring tool presented and the experience and knowledge gathered in the piloting phase of the monitoring tool on four EHEA higher education systems.

3.3 The online section of the tool (the open platform)

For the 2027 monitoring report on the fundamental values, a simple online platform for monitoring is proposed to be developed within the Erasmus+ funded project, ensuring adequate protection of the data collected. Based on a BFUG decision it can be hosted/promoted on the EHEA website or separately. After 2027, the database can be transferred to be used in future monitoring exercises or, if preferred, another database can be developed or used (as the level of complexity of the online section of the tool - open platform - is low).

3.4 The questionnaire

In order to monitor all fundamental values, the EHEA statements on the fundamental values have been analyzed in order to extract the exact dimensions/subdimensions of each value and the commitments regarding them. Figure 4 illustrates the process of identifying the subdimensions for a fundamental value. As already indicated above, the statements are taken as given and it is not the intention of the monitoring framework to improve, complete, correct or amend them in any way, by adding new dimensions, deleting exiting dimensions or interpreting them in a manner that departs from the text of the statements as adopted by the ministers. The statements are in fact clear and eminently usable for the purpose of monitoring as they are.

Figure 4 – The process of identifying the subdimensions for institutional autonomy – organizational autonomy

For each dimension – indicators were considered considering the monitoring framework elements (de jure – protection/promotion). For this the existing EURYDICE questionnaire on fundamental values was used or new questions were generated using the EURYDICE model.

Figure 5 – Questionnaire development based on the identified dimensions for each fundamental value.
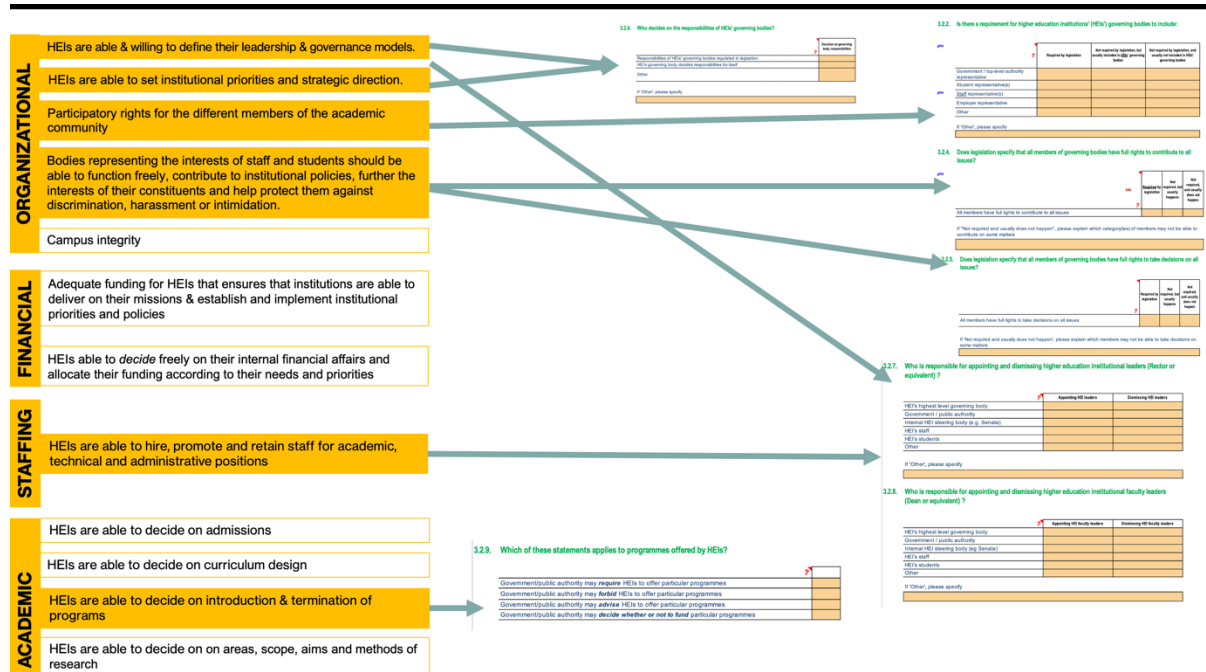
Dimensions of the fundamental values

Listed below are all the dimensions and subdimensions of the six fundamental values from the Ministerial Communiques and their annexes. The dimensions and subdimensions of each fundamental value are accompanied by a reference quote from the ministerial communiqué.

3.4.1   Academic freedom

- **The main dimension** that are monitored from the facto/the jure perspective are:
    1. **freedom to research**
    2. **freedom to teach**
    3. **freedom to learn**
    4. **freedom to disseminate knowledge (intramurally and extramurally)**

"Academic freedom designates the freedom of the academic community - including academic staff and students – in respect of research, teaching and learning and, more broadly, the dissemination of research and teaching outcomes both within and outside the higher education sector. In essence the concept ensures that the academic community may engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in society without fear of reprisal."

- **freedom to research**
    "Academic freedom must be framed by rigorous scientific and professional standards, respect for the rights of others, ethical conduct and the awareness of the impact of research on humans and their environment. It is crucial in order to advance the standards of academic disciplines and fields of enquiry. As such, academic freedom protects not only individual scholarship and expression but also the free functioning of academic institutions in democratic societies. Institutional autonomy is constitutive for academic

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freedom. Academic freedom designates the freedom of the academic community - including academic staff and students - in respect of research, teaching and learning and, more broadly, the dissemination of research and teaching outcomes both within and outside the higher education sector. In essence the concept ensures that the academic community may engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in society without fear of reprisal... The freedom to research includes the right, consistent with professional standards of the respective discipline, to determine: what shall (or shall not) be researched; how it shall be researched; who shall research, with whom and for what purpose research shall be pursued; the methods by which, and avenues through which, research findings shall be disseminated. These questions cannot be addressed in a vacuum. Determining which research programmes or disciplines are offered at any given institution is a complex question involving public authorities and institutions in difficult, strategic choices. Research requires financing – which may come from both public and private sources – and in many cases also requires careful consideration of ethical issues."

- **freedom to teach**

   "The freedom to teach can only be realised concretely in combination with public and social responsibility and institutional autonomy. Public authorities have the responsibility to ensure that relevant higher education programmes are offered to citizens, while autonomous higher education institutions assume a large responsibility for research underpinning programmes, and for how programmes are taught. Academic staff also exercise a strong responsibility in setting the curriculum and programme components, and developing the teaching methods employed."

- **freedom to learn**

   "Values are inter-connected, and the freedom to teach also raises the question of who is to be taught and is thus intimately linked to the freedom to learn. In turn these values relate to equitable access, with a range of issues on criteria and conditions for access to higher education needing to be addressed through societal dialogue and administrative procedures."

- **freedom to disseminate knowledge (intramurally and extramurally)**

   "... the dissemination of research and teaching outcomes both within and outside the higher education sector. In essence the concept ensures that the academic community may engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in society without fear of reprisal. ... The freedom to research includes the right, consistent with professional standards of the respective discipline, to determine: ...the methods by which, and avenues through which, research findings shall be disseminated."

3.4.2   Institutional autonomy

The main dimension that are monitored from the facto/the jure perspective are:
1. Organizational autonomy
2. Financial autonomy
3. Staffing autonomy
4. Academic autonomy

The subdimensions are presented below:

A. ORGANIZATIONAL AUTONOMY

- **HEIs are able & willing to define their leadership & governance models.**
- **HEIs are able to set institutional priorities and strategic direction.**
- **Participatory rights for the different members of the academic community**
- **Bodies representing the interests of staff and students should be able to function freely, contribute to institutional policies, further the interests of their constituents and help protect them against discrimination, harassment or intimidation.**
- **Campus integrity**
  "Higher education institutions need to be able and willing to define their leadership and governance models. This organisational autonomy also entails the autonomy to set an institution's priorities and strategic direction. It should ensure participatory rights for the different members of the academic community. Bodies representing the interests of staff and students should be able to function freely, contribute to institutional policies, further the interests of their constituents and help protect them against discrimination, harassment or intimidation. Public as well as institutional regulations and policy must ensure campus integrity and prevent the use of force and reprisals against academic staff and students, which would constitute a violation of the fundamental values of the European Higher Education Area."

B. FINANCIAL AUTONOMY

- **Adequate funding for HEIs that ensures that institutions are able to deliver on their missions & establish and implement institutional priorities and policies**
- **HEIs able to *decide* freely on their internal financial affairs and allocate their funding according to their needs and priorities**
  "Higher education institutions must be funded adequately to deliver on their missions and should decide freely on their internal financial affairs and allocate their funding according to their needs and priorities. They should be able to exercise their financial autonomy independently from external actors – in compliance with general rules for transparency and financial accountability. Regardless of their role in funding an institution, public authorities as well as private funders and donors should provide such funding within a framework that ensures that institutions are able to establish and implement institutional priorities and policies. In such a setting, neither additional funds granted on a competitive basis and/or earmarked for pre-defined purposes nor legal regulation of tuition fees shall be considered an infringement of an institution's financial autonomy. Within a framework of public responsibility, adequate and sustainable public funding remains the main precondition to guarantee institutional autonomy. "

C. STAFFING AUTONOMY

- **HEIs are able to hire, promote and retain staff for academic, technical and administrative positions -** *"Higher education institutions should be able to hire, promote and retain staff for academic, technical and administrative positions. In exercising their staffing autonomy, higher education institutions should ensure fairness, transparency and non-discrimination. The policies and practice of higher education institutions as well as public authorities should respect and uphold the legal rights and academic freedom of their staff. "*

D. ACADEMIC AUTONOMY
- **HEIs are able to decide on admissions**
- **HEIs are able to decide on curriculum design**
- **HEIs are able to decide on introduction & termination of programs**
- **HEIs are able to decide on on areas, scope, aims and methods of research**

    "Higher education institutions must enjoy academic autonomy in order to ensure that the individual members of the academic community can exercise their academic freedom. As part of their academic autonomy, higher education institutions must be able to decide e.g. on admissions, curriculum design and the introduction and termination of programmes. Academic autonomy also includes the capacity to decide on areas, scope, aims and methods of research in accordance with the law, academic standards and good research practice, as well as the values of academic integrity."

3.4.3   Student and staff participation in governance of higher education

- **regulation on participation for all forms and levels of governance -** *"Regardless of the various governance models throughout the EHEA, student and staff participation in higher education governance should be applied to all systems and institutions within the EHEA, whether public or private, for profit or not-for-profit, and at all levels of governance – transnational, European, national, regional, institutional, and sub-institutional"*

- **clear and transparent regulations, provisions and procedures on student and staff participation.**

- **creation of an environment conducive to purposeful and mutually beneficial relations between stakeholders.**

    "At all levels and regardless of specific governance arrangements, higher education leaders have a responsibility to create an environment conducive to purposeful and mutually beneficial relations between stakeholders. The dialogue between all relevant stakeholders should be rooted in clear and transparent regulations, provisions and procedures and be based on mutual trust, recognition and cooperation."

- **guarantee of inclusion of student and staff in decision-making**

    "The freedom of students and staff to express their views on their institution's policies and priorities as well as the policies of public authorities for the higher education system and the institutions that constitute it, without fear of reprisal, and that both higher education institutions and systems have a responsibility to listen to the critical voices and take them into account is an inseparable element of academic freedom"

- **guarantee of stable material learning and working conditions**
    "Student and staff participation in higher education governance is strongly connected to their material conditions, and higher education can thrive only once public authorities as well as higher education institutions provide them with stable learning and working conditions"

- **clear and transparent regulations, provisions and procedures on student and staff participation**

"At the system and transnational levels, democratic higher education governance requires public authorities to commit to its principles and practice, adopt the required provisions in the pertinent laws, and otherwise respect autonomy and participation"

- **guarantee of inclusion of student and staff in decision-making**
"While at the level of higher education systems, several kinds of decision may ultimately fall within the competence of elected public representatives in parliament or by public authorities whose mandate emanates from elected public representatives, these should consult with the democratically elected and representative student and staff organisations. In contexts where policies are developed outside of frameworks with legislative or other governance responsibilities, such as the EHEA, duly elected student and staff representatives should be part of all policy discussions, following the good practice example of the Bologna Follow-Up Group"

- **guarantee of inclusion of student and staff in decision-making**
"In all contexts, duly elected student and staff representatives should be consulted on all issues put before the governing bodies. These may include but are not limited to the freedom to learn, the organisation and content of education, curriculum design and quality assurance, equitable access to higher education, strategic objectives and governance designs, financial matters, academic staff recruitment and retention, secure employment conditions, freedom from threats, retaliation, dismissal, or other sanctions in relation to the content of their research, teaching or stated professional views"

- **inclusion of respect to participation as a criteria for recognition of HE**
"participation and cooperation are essential to fulfilling the main missions of higher education and to ensuring the long-term success of our shared goals and commitments in the EHEA. It should be taken into account when recognising higher education institutions as a part of any given national education system and be included in the quality assurance criteria"

- **promotion of engagement in the life of the institution, including through participation in student and staff elections**
"The elections of student and staff representatives at all levels of higher education governance should be organised freely and autonomously, be representative and adhere to democratic principles to be legitimate. Institutions as well as student and staff organisations should seek to stimulate participation in student and staff elections as well as encourage participation of students and staff and engage in the life of the institution with a view to enhancing its democratic legitimacy and representativity."

- **financial and other resources support for inclusion of student and staff in decision-making**
"Higher education institutions and systems should provide support, including financial and other resources, for sustainable representation of students and staff and ensuring the independence of representatives and their organisations".

3.4.4 Academic integrity

- **Existence of ai regulations, standards and guidelines**

- **Existence of legal provisions for monitoring bodies**

  "Public authorities, higher education institutions and the academic community share the responsibility for providing framework conditions that foster academic integrity. This involves establishing transparent regulations, standards and guidelines to be implemented at the level of higher education institutions and providing for independent bodies to monitor the implementation. The frameworks, the measures and the associated sanctions should be proportionate to the intended aim and any violations committed."

- **Existence of QA procedures including academic integrity policies (including any of the following components: review by internal and external bodies, in line with EQF, compliant to ESG)**

  "To ensure appropriate and fit for purpose processes at institutional and programme level, the reference to the academic integrity policies in learning and teaching, research, in administrative procedures and in institutional governance should be included in quality assurance procedures and be reviewed by the appropriate internal and external bodies in line with European and national frameworks, including the European Standards and Guidelines on Quality Assurance (ESGs)."

- **Existence of regularly updated legal provisions on integrity with regard to digital technologies**

  "Special attention needs to be paid to ensure academic integrity in the context of emerging digital technologies, such as the use of artificial intelligence in education, as well as in the handling of data. Public authorities together with the academic community should adopt recommendations on good educational practice, therein creating and periodically reviewing frameworks and guidelines to ensure they keep pace with developments and, when necessary, setting standards and limits for its use."

- **International cooperation activities within established frameworks**

  "Public authorities should establish adequate frameworks and also cooperate at international level, such as within the framework of the Council of Europe, in order to counter and as far as possible eliminate diploma mills, contract cheating practices and other forms of organised misconduct and corruption including in the administrative processes and institutional governance of the academic institutions."

- **Adequate funding and administrative frameworks**

  "Public authorities should ensure that all organisational, cultural, legislative, financial and other measures promote a healthy working environment and error culture, while avoiding regulatory loopholes that allow impunity for academic misconduct. This includes ensuring adequate and sustainable funding for higher education and creating administrative frameworks that promote collaboration over competition and quality over quantity in academic outputs."

- **Requirement for HEIs to develop codes of ethics**

  "Institutions should develop Codes of Ethics describing issues of integrity and transparency in easily understandable language. These Codes of Ethics should be co-created with students, academic and administrative staff and should describe the ethical principles, types of

individual and organised misconduct, be it in teaching, learning, research or administration, and the appropriate and differentiated measures to take, including sanctions. The Codes of Ethics should also identify the university bodies responsible for support and guidance in case of violations. To ensure consistency between academic and legal measures, the cases of misconduct which lie outside of the remit of academic sanctions should be described. Higher education institutions should actively promote awareness of the Codes of Ethics and other relevant standards among target groups. To this end, Higher education institutions are responsible for providing staff with relevant training."

- **Requirement for HEIs to do training and guidance on academic integrity**
  "Higher education institutions should empower the academic community through proper training, adequate guidance and support for their academic community to develop their understanding of academic integrity and the skills and competences required to apply it."

3.4.5   Public responsibility for higher education

- **Public authorities' duty to further all major purposes of higher education through supportive legal and regulatory provisions regarding:**
  - **preparation for the labor market**
  - **preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies**
  - **personal development**
  - **the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base.**
    "Public authorities should further all major purposes of higher education: preparation for the labour market, preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies, personal development, and the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base"

- **Public authorities' duty to ensure that the frameworks within which higher education is conducted are put in place and function adequately, respectively:**
  - **qualifications framework**
  - **frameworks for quality assurance**
  - **recognition of foreign qualifications**
  - **information on higher education provision**
  - **funding frameworks**
  - **frameworks for the social dimension of higher education**

"... assume exclusive responsibility to ensure that the frameworks within which higher education is conducted are put in place and function adequately, including the legal framework, the qualifications framework of the higher education system, frameworks for quality assurance, the recognition of foreign qualifications, information on higher education provision, the funding frameworks, and the frameworks for the social dimension of higher education. ... Public authorities should assume leading responsibility for ensuring that all qualified candidates enjoy effective equal opportunities to undertake and complete higher education, irrespective of their background. ... Public authorities, at their respective levels, have the primary responsibility for putting in place supportive regulatory frameworks that enable

higher education institutions to effectively pursue their educational, research and outreach missions. Public responsibility may be exercised through legislation and other regulations but also through other means such as policies or funding. … They should assume a substantial responsibility for financing and ensuring provision of higher education. All higher education within an education system should be provided and funded within the framework established by the competent public authorities, regardless of whether the provision and funding are public or private."

- **Public authorities' duty to *ensure that consultation takes place regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks.***
  "Public authorities should exercise this responsibility in consultation with the higher education community and other stakeholders. They should specifically ensure that legal and regulatory frameworks foster and enable institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and self- governance by the higher education community. "

- **Public authorities consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks from:**
  o **the higher education sector**
  o **internal university constituencies**
  o **relevant external stakeholders**

  "Public authorities should consult and seek input from the higher education sector, internal university constituencies, and relevant external stakeholders regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks."

3.4.6   Public responsibility of higher education

The main dimensions (responsibilities of the academic communities), as extracted from the respective statement (excepts below, next to each responsibility) are:

The academic communities have the following responsibilities:

- **To pursue truth through research and the production of knowledge as a public good** – *"..pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good."*

- **To ensure quality of teaching, learning and research** – *"…uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines. "*

- **To pursue transparency regarding work in higher education and in the dissemination of results** – *"continuously inform broader society of its work and results".*

- **To proactively engage with social problems** – *"…engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions."*

- **To promote democracy** – *"…foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency."*

- **To prepare active citizens** – *"…equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking".*

- **To ensure equity** – *"…offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success."*

- **To proactively engage with modern challenges** - *Contribute to "addressing major challenges of modern societies, (e.g., the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer."*

- **To engage in and with the public sphere** – *"…engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies be developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking."*

- **To improve opportunities** and serve society as a whole– *"…help improve opportunities for all members of society."*

4. **Project team: who will conduct the monitoring? (monitoring mechanism)**
4.1 **General setting**

For the 2027 monitoring report on fundamental values, the monitoring report <u>is proposed</u> to be carried out through an Erasmus+ funded project led by the co-chairs of the WG on Fundamental Values, under the supervision of the Fundamental Values Working Group and the BFUG.

After the 2027, dependent on the decision of the BFUG, the monitoring of fundamental values can be carried out by a variety of organisations. The options identified so far are the following:

- **Eurydice**. Eurydice has the professional expertise and the experience to conduct this type of monitoring using the tool developed and presented in this report. However, the scope of monitoring (all EHEA systems, six values) might exceed the staff resources of Eurydice. The option provided by Eurydice before the 2024 Ministerial Conference was to alternate between a comprehensive monitoring report for the Ministerial Conference with a thematic monitoring report that could be a report on the fundamental values.

- **An independent research or consulting organisation.** For reasons of independence, transparency, and financial efficiency, the monitoring could be tendered, and an independent research or consulting organisation be selected to undertake it, using the tool as already developed. Eurydice could act as a coordinating agency, alone or in coordination with the BFUG or a small group delegated by the BFUG to act as a supervisory body.

- **A consortium of independent research or consulting organisations.** This would work in the same way, except that there will be not one, but a consortium of organisations selected and entrusted to undertake the monitoring, using the tool as developed.

4.2 Project team role

In any version, a small project team will be constituted to manage the monitoring. This team's responsibilities will include the selection, training and coordination of the national system operators, to administer the tool, analyse the collected data, draft the report, collect feedback and finalize the report.

The monitoring tool for assessing the fundamental values of higher education within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a comprehensive instrument designed to evaluate, protect, and promote these core values.

4.3 The role of BFUG members

The BFUG (Bologna Follow-Up Group) will provide guidance throughout the monitoring process of fundamental values within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as in the other Bologna monitoring efforts. The Working Group on Fundamental Values, responsible for leading the monitoring process of the fundamental values in close cooperation with the Monitoring Working Group will report its findings and progress at each BFUG meeting, facilitating a continuous exchange of feedback and ensuring that any issues that may arise will be promptly addressed. This will allow the BFUG to offer strategic advice, support the implementation of best practices, and maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the monitoring framework.

For the 2027 report, the working group on Fundamental Values will coordinate the process as the co-chairs of the Working Group are proposed to lead the project. Each step of the implementation process, as it was done in the 2020-2024 mandate, will be discussed during the fundamental values working group meetings, including the list of selected national operators.

At the end of the process the BFUG can validate, acknowledge or not the final report and report to the 2027 Ministerial Conference.

The Questionnaire: questions for each fundamental value and technical instructions for answering; coding instructions; and explanation of how questions were generated

I. Academic freedom

A1. Protection – colour overview[1]

Protection - colour code	Explanation
Full	1. The concept of 'academic freedom' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation or is protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. The concept is specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement, including **ALL dimensions** of academic freedom: - freedom to research - freedom to teach - freedom to learn - freedom to disseminate knowledge (intramurally and extramurally)
Adequate	The concept of 'academic freedom' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation or is protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the EHEA definition but includes only **3 out of the 4 dimensions** of academic freedom: - freedom to research - freedom to teach - freedom to learn - freedom to disseminate knowledge (intramurally and extramurally)
Intermediary	1. The concept of 'academic freedom' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation or is protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the EHEA definition but includes only **2 out of the 4 dimensions** of academic freedom: - freedom to research - freedom to teach - freedom to learn - freedom to disseminate knowledge (intramurally and extramurally)
Inadequate	1. The concept of 'academic freedom' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation or protected through legislative or judicial decisions) **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the EHEA definition but includes only 1 **out of the 4 dimensions** of academic freedom: - freedom to research - freedom to teach - freedom to learn - freedom to disseminate knowledge (intramurally and extramurally)

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[1] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

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Absent	The concept of 'academic freedom' is **not specifically mentioned** in any type of legislation or judicial decisions, **OR** the definition in legislation does not align with any of the 4 dimensions specified in the EHEA definition.

A2. Protection - questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q1.1. Is academic freedom legally protected in your higher education system? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, in constitution ❑ Yes, in law ❑ Yes, in judicial decisions ❑ No **Q1.2.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.1]* **If yes**, please indicate the definitions and references/links to the sources for these definitions.	Q1.1-2. If the answer is 'Yes' to **any** of three options (constitution, law, judicial decisions) AND the source is provided, **the concept of academic freedom is considered explicitly mentioned**. If the answer is 'No', *de jure* protection of academic freedom is seen as '**absent**' (red colour). If the answer is 'Yes' to any of the three options, but **no source** is provided or identified by the operator, **the answer is considered incomplete**. It will be the responsibility of the operator to check and complete the answer after receiving answers from all categories of respondents. The operator will also assess if system-level legal provisions are in line with the EHEA definition, comparing the legal sources motioned in the answers and the EHEA statement with the definition.
Q1.3. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.1]* **If the concept of academic freedom mentioned is defined in different legal instruments in the respective system, are these definitions consistent?** ◯ Yes, they are fully or mostly consistent. ◯ No, there is a contradiction between constitution and laws. **Q1.4.** *[shown to those who selected 'No' for Q1.3]* **If there are contradictions or inconsistencies,** please explain.	Q1.3. If the answer is 'Yes', proceed to Q1.5. If the answer is 'No', an explanation is to be provided narratively in Q1.4. If the answer is 'No' and no explanation is provided in Q1.4, **the answer is considered incomplete**. It will be the responsibility of the operator to clarify and complete the information while taking note of the type of answer received from public authorities.
Q1.5. What dimensions of academic freedom are legally protected in your system? ❑ Freedom to research ❑ Freedom to teach ❑ Freedom to learn ❑ Freedom of knowledge dissemination (Intramural) ❑ Freedom of knowledge dissemination (Extramural) ❑ None of the above ❑ Cannot answer **Q1.6.** *[To be answered only by those who selected 'Freedom to research', 'Freedom to teach',*	Q1.5. For '**full protection**', all 4 dimensions are covered. For '**adequate protection**'- 3 dimensions. For '**intermediary protection**'- 2 dimensions. For '**inadequate protection**' – 1 dimension. If the answer is 'None of the above', *de jure* protection of academic freedom is seen as '**absent**'. If the answer to Q1.5 is 'Cannot answer', the indicator is considered incomplete, **the category and colour-code are not assigned for this indicator** (it remains blank). Q1.6. is supplementary to Q1.5. If not all 3 groups (tenured, non-tenured staff and students) are selected OR 'Unspecified in the

'Freedom of knowledge dissemination (Intramural)' or *'Freedom of knowledge dissemination (Extramural)'* for Q1.5] **To what groups do these protections apply?** ❑ Tenured staff (permanent contract) ❑ Non-tenured staff (fixed term contract) ❑ Students ❑ Unspecified in the legislation	legislation' is selected, **'full protection'** from Q5 **should be demoted to 'adequate'**.

B1. Protection outlook - colour overview [2]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to increase** protection of academic freedom: - in upcoming legislation (generically) - in upcoming judicial decisions - by defining the concept of academic freedom better in upcoming legislation
Unchanged	There are **no** documented **plans to increase OR decrease** protection of academic freedom.
Negative	There are documented **plans to diminish** existing protection of academic freedom: - in upcoming legislation - in upcoming judicial decisions

B2. Protection outlook - questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q1.7. Are there plans currently to change the legal protection of academic freedom (e.g. in upcoming legislation or judicial decisions)? ❑ Yes, increase legal protection ❑ Yes, decrease legal protection ❑ No, neither increase nor decrease legal protection ❑ Cannot answer **Q1.8.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.7]* **If yes, please explain what upcoming legislation/judicial decisions are planned.** As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.) and a short list of all known examples.	**Q1.7-8.** If 'Yes, increase legal protection' is selected, protection outlook is **'positive'**. If 'Yes, decrease legal protection' is selected, protection outlook is **'negative'**. If 'No, neither increase nor decrease', protection outlook is **'unchanged'**. If the answer to Q1.7 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or identified by the operator in Q1.8, the indicator is considered incomplete, **the category and colour-code are not assigned to the indicator 'protection outlook'.** It will be the duty of the operator to check and finalize, if possible, while noting the initial responses of the stakeholders.

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[2] This block of questions is only for the higher education stakeholders respondents.

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C1. Promotion colour overview[3]

Promotion – colour coding	Explanation
Very significant	System-level authorities have developed: 1. Guidelines to support the exercise of academic freedom **AND** 2. Mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to support the exercise of academic freedom **AND** 3. Requirements for an external body (*i.e.,* from outside the HEIs) to evaluate how academic freedom is ensured in HEIs.
Significant	System-level authorities have developed **2 out of the 3 sets of initiatives listed immediately above.**
Intermediary	System-level authorities have developed 1 **out of the 3 sets of initiatives listed above.**
Absent	System-level authorities have **NOT** developed any guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/ funding) to support the exercise of academic freedom **AND** there are **NO** requirements for an external body to evaluate how the exercise of academic freedom is ensured in HEIs.
Negative	System-level authorities have developed (non-legal) guidelines/mechanisms that **weaken** the protection of academic freedom.

C2. Promotion - questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q1.9. Are there non-legal system-level guidelines to support the exercise of academic freedom? 　○ Yes 　○ No 　○ Cannot answer **Q1.10.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.9]* **If yes**, please indicate the sources and list briefly all known examples.	Q1.9-10. If the answer is 'Yes' AND sources are provided, **system-level guidelines count towards the promotion score (yellow to dark green).** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source** is provided or identified by the operator, **the dimension is considered incomplete,** and no colour is assigned (this box remains blank).
Q1.11. Are there non-legal system-level mechanisms and policies available to support the exercise of academic freedom? Please tick all that apply. 　❑ Yes, specific initiatives 　❑ Yes, policies 　❑ Yes, dedicated funding 　❑ No 　❑ Cannot answer	Q1.11-12. If the answer is 'Yes' AND sources are provided, **system-level mechanisms count towards the promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source or explanation** is provided or identified by the operator, **the dimension is considered incomplete.**

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[3] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

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Q1.12. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.11]* **If yes, please list specific initiatives/policies/funding that are available**. As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary or government documents, news reports, etc.)	
Q1.13. Are there requirements for an external body to evaluate how academic freedom is ensured in HEIs? ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer **Q1.14.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.13]* **If yes, please indicate briefly the body and specify the requirements.**	Q1.13-14. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **requirements for external body count towards the promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source or explanation** is provided or identified by the operator, **the dimension is considered incomplete.**

D1. Promotion outlook - colour overview[4]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to promote** academic freedom by: 1. Developing new guidelines to support the exercise of academic freedom **OR** 2. Developing new mechanisms (initiatives/policies/regulations) to support the exercise of academic freedom **OR** 3. Requiring an external body to evaluate how the exercise of academic freedom is ensured in HEIs.
Unchanged	There are **no plans to increase OR decrease** promotion of academic freedom.
Negative	There are **plans to diminish** existing promotion of academic freedom.

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[4] This block of questions is for stakeholders respondents.

D2. Promotion outlook - questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q1.15. Are there plans to change the system-level guidelines, mechanisms or procedures related to academic freedom? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, to develop new guidelines to support promotion of academic freedom ❑ Yes, to develop new mechanisms (initiatives/ policies/ regulations) to support promotion of academic freedom ❑ Yes, to require an external body to evaluate how the exercise of academic freedom is ensured in HEIs ❑ Yes, to make changes that will result in diminishing promotion ❑ No changes planned ❑ Cannot answer **Q1.16.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.15]* **If yes,** please specify briefly what changes are expected.	**Q1.15-16.** If 'Yes, develop new guidelines' OR 'Yes, develop new mechanisms' OR 'Yes, require an external body to evaluate' is selected, protection outlook is '**positive**'. If 'Yes, make changes diminishing promotion' is selected, protection outlook is '**negative**'. If 'No changes planned', protection outlook is '**unchanged**'. If the answer to Q1.15 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or identified by the operator in Q1.16, the indicator is considered incomplete, **the category and colour-code are not assigned to the indicator 'promotion outlook'**.

E. De facto[5] - questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q1.17. Are there positive developments at the system level that support academic freedom in practice? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q1.18.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.17]* **If yes**, please provide a short inventory of positive developments. Give all known examples since 2020 *[or another date, depending on the time of the monitoring]*.	*De facto* responses are not colour-coded. They will be summarized by the operator and presented as bullet point lists of key developments, infringements, and threats.
Q1.19. In your system, are there infringements that limit the exercise of academic freedom in practice? Infringements of academic freedom are defined as any actions that break or violate the legal provisions for the protection of academic freedom in your system or the provisions of the EHEA statement on academic freedom (provided with this questionnaire). Infringements of academic freedom can be, or result from, actions of state or non-state actors, political or non-political organizations, from outside or inside the university (such as students, staff, university administrators or their organizations). ○ Yes	

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[5] This block of questions is for stakeholders and open platform respondents.

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○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q1.20.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.19]* **If yes**, provide an inventory of infringements. Give all known examples since 2020. *[or another date, depending on the time of the monitoring].*	
Q1.21. In your system, are there threats that might limit the exercise of academic freedom in practice? Threats to academic freedom are any actions that may lead to but have not yet resulted in infringements of academic freedom. ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q1.22.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q1.21]* **If yes**, provide an inventory of threats. Give all known examples since 2020. *[or another date, depending on the time of the monitoring].*	

II. Institutional autonomy

A1. Protection - colour overview[6]

Protection - colour coding	Explanation
Full	1. The concept of 'institutional autonomy' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation or is protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **ALL 4 dimensions** of institutional autonomy: - Organizational autonomy - Financial autonomy - Staffing autonomy - Academic autonomy
Adequate	1. The concept of 'institutional autonomy' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation, or is protected through legislative or judicial decisions) **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **3 of 4 dimensions** of institutional autonomy.
Intermediary	1. The concept of 'institutional autonomy' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation, or is protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **2 of 4 dimensions** of institutional autonomy.
Inadequate	1. The concept of 'institutional autonomy' is **specifically mentioned** in legislation as a right or protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. The concept is defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **1 of 4 dimensions** of institutional autonomy.
Absent	The concept of 'institutional autonomy' is **not specifically mentioned** in any type of legislation or judicial decisions **OR** the definition in legislation does not align with any of 4 dimensions defined in the respective EHEA statement.

A2. Protection – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q2.1. Is institutional autonomy legally protected in your higher education system? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, in constitution ❑ Yes, in law ❑ Yes, in judicial decisions ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer	Q2.1-2. If the answer is 'Yes' to **any** of three options (constitution, law, judicial decisions) AND the source is provided, **the concept of institutional autonomy is considered explicitly mentioned**. If the answer is 'No', de jure protection of institutional autonomy is seen as '**absent**'.

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[6] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

Q2.2. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.1]* **If yes**, please indicate the definitions and references/links to the sources for these definitions.	If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes' to any of the three options, but **no source** is provided or identified by the operator, **the answer is considered incomplete, no colour is assigned** (remains blank).
Q2.3. What dimensions of institutional autonomy are legally protected? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Organizational autonomy ❑ Financial autonomy ❑ Staffing autonomy ❑ Academic autonomy ❑ Not specified ❑ Cannot answer **Q2.4. What types of higher education institutions are entitled to institutional autonomy by virtue of the existing legislation in your system?** Please, tick all that apply. ❑ Public institutions ❑ Private for-profit institutions ❑ Private not-for-profit institutions ❑ Not specified	Q2.3. For '**full protection**', all 4 dimensions are covered. For '**adequate protection**'- 3 dimensions are covered. For '**intermediary protection**'- 2 dimensions are covered. For '**inadequate protection**' – 1 dimension is covered. If the answer is 'None of the above', *de jure* protection of institutional autonomy is considered '**absent**'. If the answer to Q2.3 is 'Not specified', the indicator is considered incomplete, **no colour is assigned** (remains blank).

B1. Protection outlook - colour overview[7]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are **plans to increase** protection of institutional autonomy EITHER: - In upcoming legislation (generically) **OR** - in upcoming judicial decisions **OR** - by defining the concept in upcoming legislation
Unchanged	There are **no plans to increase OR decrease** protection of institutional autonomy.
Negative	There are **plans to diminish** the existing protection of institutional autonomy EITH - in upcoming legislation OR - in upcoming judicial decisions

[7] This block of questions is for stakeholders respondents.

B2. Protection outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q2.5. Are there plans currently to change the legal protection of institutional autonomy (e.g. in upcoming legislation or judicial decisions)? ❑ Yes, increase legal protection ❑ Yes, decrease legal protection ❑ No, neither increase nor decrease legal protection ❑ Cannot answer **Q2.6.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.5]* **If yes, please explain what upcoming legislation/judicial decisions are planned.** As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.) and a short list of all known examples.	Q2.5-6 If 'Yes, increase legal protection' is selected, protection outlook is **'positive'.** If 'Yes, decrease legal protection' is selected, protection outlook is **'negative'.** If 'No, neither increase nor decrease', protection outlook is **'unchanged'.** If the answer to Q2.5 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or identified by the operator in Q2.6, the indicator is considered incomplete, **and no colour is assigned to the indicator 'protection outlook'** (remain blank).

C1. Promotion - colour overview[8]

Promotion - colour coding	Explanation
Very significant	System-level authorities have developed: 1. Guidelines to support the exercise of institutional autonomy **AND** 2. Mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to support the exercise of institutional autonomy **AND** 3. Requirements for an external body to evaluate how the exercise of institutional autonomy is ensured in HEIs.
Significant	System-level authorities have developed **2 out of the 3 sets of initiatives listed immediately above.**
Intermediary	System-level authorities have developed **1 out of the 3 sets of initiatives listed above.**
Absent	System-level authorities have **NOT** developed any guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to support the exercise of institutional autonomy **AND** there are **NO** requirements for an external body to evaluate how the exercise of institutional autonomy is ensured in HEIs.
Negative	System-level authorities have developed guidelines/mechanisms that **weaken** institutional autonomy.

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[8] This block of questions is for public authorities and HE stakeholders respondents.

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C2. Promotion – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q2.7. Are there HE system-level guidelines to support the exercise of institutional autonomy? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q2.8**. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.7]* **If yes**, please indicate the sources and shortlist all known examples.	Q2.7-8. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **system-level guidelines count towards the promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source** is provided or identified by the operator, **the dimension is considered incomplete (no colour assigned).**
Q2.9. Are there HE system-level mechanisms (not legal or regulatory) available to support the exercise of institutional autonomy? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, specific initiatives ❑ Yes, policies ❑ Yes, funding ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer **Q2.10.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.9]* **If yes, please explain what specific initiatives/policies/funding are available**. As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary or governmental documents, news reports, etc.) and a list with all known examples.	Q2.9-10. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **system-level mechanisms count towards the promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source or explanation** is provided or identified by the operator, **the dimension is considered incomplete (no colour assigned).**
Q2.11. Are there requirements for an external body to evaluate how the exercise of institutional autonomy is ensured in HEIs? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q2.12.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.11]* **If yes, please indicate the body and specify the requirements.**	Q2.11-12. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **requirements for external body count towards the promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source or explanation** is provided or identified by the operator, **the dimension is considered incomplete (no colour assigned).**

D1. Promotion outlook - colour overview[9]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are **plans to promote** institutional autonomy by: 1. Developing new guidelines to support the exercise of institutional autonomy **OR** 2. Developing new mechanisms/initiatives/policies/regulations to support the exercise of institutional autonomy **OR** 3. Requiring an external body to evaluate how institutional autonomy is ensured in HEIs.
Unchanged	There are **no plans to increase OR decrease** promotion of institutional autonomy.
Negative	There are **plans to diminish** the existing promotion of institutional autonomy.

D2. Promotion outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q2.13. Are there plans to change the existing system-level guidelines, mechanisms or procedures regarding institutional autonomy? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, develop new guidelines to better promote institutional autonomy ❑ Yes, develop new mechanisms (initiatives/ policies/ regulations) to better promote institutional autonomy ❑ Yes, require an external body to evaluate how institutional autonomy is ensured in HEIs ❑ Yes, make changes diminishing support for autonomy ❑ No changes planned ❑ Cannot answer **Q2.14.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.13]* **If yes,** please explain what guidelines and mechanisms are planned to be introduced. As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.	**Q2.13-14** If 'Yes, develop new guidelines' OR 'Yes, develop new mechanisms' OR 'Yes, require an external body to evaluate' is selected, promotion outlook is **'positive'.** If 'Yes, make changes diminishing promotion' is selected, promotion outlook is **'negative'.** If 'No changes planned', promotion outlook is **'unchanged'.** If the answer to Q2.13 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or identified by the operator in Q2.14, the indicator is considered incomplete, **the category and colour-code are not assigned to the indicator 'promotion outlook'.**

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[9] This block of questions is for stakeholders respondents.

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Questions	Instructions for coding
Q2.15. Are there positive developments at the system level that support institutional autonomy in practice? ⭕ Yes ⭕ No ⭕ Cannot answer **Q2.16.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.15]* **If yes**, please provide a short inventory of positive developments. Give all known examples since 2020 *[or another date specified by the project team, depending on when the monitoring is undertaken].*	*De facto responses are not coded, they are summarized by the operator and presented as bullet point lists of key development, infringement, and threats.*
Q2.17. Are there infringements at the system level that limit the exercise of institutional autonomy in practice? Infringements of institutional autonomy are defined as any actions that break or violate the legal provisions for the protection of institutional autonomy in your system or the provisions of the EHEA statement on institutional autonomy. Infringements of institutional autonomy can be, or result from, actions of state or non-state actors, political or non-political organizations, from outside or inside the university (such as students, staff, university administrators or their organizations). ⭕ Yes ⭕ No ⭕ Cannot answer **Q2.18.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.17]* **If yes**, provide an inventory of infringements. Give all known examples since 2020 *[or another date, depending on the time of the monitoring].*	
Q2.19. Are there threats at the system level that might limit the exercise of institutional autonomy in practice? Threats to institutional autonomy are any actions that may lead to but have not yet resulted in infringements of institutional autonomy. ⭕ Yes ⭕ No ⭕ Cannot answer **Q2.20.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q2.19].* **If yes**, provide an inventory of threats. Give all known examples since 2020 *[or another date, depending on the time of the monitoring].*	

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¹⁰ This block of questions is filled in by HE stakeholders and open platform respondents.

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III. Student and staff participation in governance of higher education

A1. Protection - colour overview[11]

Protection - colour coding	Explanation
Full	1. The concepts of 'student participation' **AND** 'staff participation' are **explicitly mentioned** in legislation or they are protected through legislative or judicial decisions) **AND** 2. The concepts are defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **ALL the rights** that guarantee inclusion of students **AND** staff in decision-making and decision-taking regarding HEIs : - self-organise autonomously without undue interference - elect and be elected to the relevant governing bodies - have their views represented and taken into account - initiate debates and table proposals in all governing bodies and participate in discussion of and decision on them - be heard and have a vote on internal organisation and administration - be consulted on further development of the relevant HEI through their representative organisations (unions). **AND** 3) System-level guarantees are provided to ensure stable learning conditions for students **AND** stable working conditions for academic staff **AND** 4) Regulations regarding the recognition of HEIs include the requirement for HEIs to respect the right of students **AND** staff to participate in governance as a condition for recognition.
Adequate	1. The concepts of 'student participation' **AND** 'staff participation' are **explicitly mentioned** in legislation, or they are protected through legislative or judicial decisions **AND** 2. These concepts are defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **4 or 5 of the 6 rights listed immediately above,** which guarantee inclusion of students **AND** staff in decision-making and decision-taking. 3) System-level guarantees are provided, ensuring stable learning conditions for students **OR** stable working conditions for academic staff 4) The regulations regarding recognition of HEIs include the requirement to respect the participation of students **OR** staff in governance as a condition for recognition.

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[11] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

Intermediary	1. The concepts of 'student participation' **AND** 'staff participation' are **explicitly mentioned** in legislation as a right, or they are protected through legislative or judicial decisions) **AND**

2. The concepts are defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **2 or 3 of the 6 rights listed above,** which guarantee inclusion of students **AND** staff in decision-making and decision-taking regarding HEIs,

3) System-level guarantees are provided to ensure stable learning conditions for students **OR** stable working conditions for academic staff

4) The regulations regarding recognition of HEIs include the requirement to respect the participation of students **OR** staff in governance as a condition for recognition. |
| **Inadequate** | 1. The concepts of 'student participation' **AND** 'staff participation' are **explicitly mentioned** in legislation as a right, or they are protected through legislative or judicial decisions) **AND**

2. The concepts are defined/specified in legislation in line with the respective EHEA statement to include **only 1 of 6 rights** listed above, which guarantee inclusion of students **AND** staff in decision-making and decision-taking regarding HEIs.

3) System-level guarantees are provided to ensure stable learning conditions for students **AND** stable working conditions for academic staff

4) The regulations regarding recognition of HEIs include the requirement to respect the participation of students OR staff in governance as a condition for recognition. |
| **Absent** | The concepts of 'student participation' and 'staff participation in HEI governance' are not specifically mentioned in any type of legislation or judicial decisions and there are no provisions to protect them **OR** the definition of student and staff participation in legislation does not align with the dimensions detailed in the respective EHEA statement. |

A2. Protection – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q3.1. Is the concept of student participation in higher education governance explicitly mentioned in legislation in your higher education system? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, in constitution. ❑ Yes, in law. ❑ Yes, in judicial decisions. ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer	Q3.1 If the answer is 'Yes' to **any** of three options (constitution, law, judicial decisions) AND the source is provided in Q3.2, **the concept of 'student participation' is considered explicitly mentioned**.

If the answer is 'No', *de jure* protection of student participation is seen as '**absent**'.

If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes' to any of the three options, but **no** |

Q3.2. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.1]*
If yes, please indicate the definitions and references/links to the official sources for these definitions.

Q3.3. Is the concept of staff participation in higher education governance explicitly mentioned in legislation? (Please, tick all that apply)
- ❑ Yes, in constitution.
- ❑ Yes, in law.
- ❑ Yes, in judicial decisions
- ❑ No
- ❑ Cannot answer

Q3.4. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.3]*
If yes, please indicate the definitions and references/links to the sources for these definitions.

Q3.5. Do regulations or procedures for HEIs to ensure participation of students and staff in HEI governance apply to private institutions?
- ❍ Yes, everything is the same
- ❍ No, there are no regulations or procedures about student and staff participation for private institutions
- ❍ Yes, but there are separate regulations and procedures for private institutions
- ❍ Cannot answer

Q3.6. Is there a difference between the regulations or for HEIs to ensure participation of students and staff in HEI governance in for-profit and not-for-profit institutions?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ Cannot answer

Q3.7. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.6]*
If yes, please specify briefly and give reference/ link to the source.

Q3.8. In accordance with the statement for this value, EHEA members committed to adopt and enforce regulations and procedures regarding student and staff participation at all levels of governance. Please, mark in the following table all cases for which such regulations and procedures exist.

	Students	Staff	Cannot answer
Transnational/European governance			
National governance			

source is provided or identified by the operator, **the answer is considered incomplete**.

Q3.3. If the answer is 'Yes' to **any** of three options (constitution, law, judicial decisions) AND the source is provided in Q3.5, **the concept of staff participation is considered explicitly mentioned**.

If the answer is 'No', *de jure* protection of student participation is seen as **'absent'**.

If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes' to any of the three options, but **no source** is provided or identified by the operator, **the answer is considered incomplete**.

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Regional (sub-national) governance			
Institutional governance			
Departmental governance			

Q3.9. Please mark in the table below the rights of students and staff that are legally protected in your higher education system

	Students	Staff	Cannot answer
Right to self-organise autonomously without undue interference			
Right to elect and be elected to the relevant governing bodies			
Right to have their views represented and taken into account			
Right to initiate debates and table proposals in all governing bodies and participate in discussion of and decision on them			
Right to be heard and have a vote on internal organisation and administration			
Right to be consulted on further development of the relevant HEI through their representative organisations (unions).			

Q3.10. For any right marked as legally protected, please provide reference/link to the source.

Q3.11. If rights are guaranteed to staff, do they apply to the following types of staff? Please tick all that apply.
- ❑ Tenured staff (permanent contract)
- ❑ Non-tenured staff (fixed term contract)
- ❑ Full-time staff
- ❑ Part-time staff
- ❑ The rights are guaranteed without specification of staff types
- ❑ Different rights are guaranteed to different types of staff

Q3.9-10. For '**full protection**', all 6 rights should be covered in legislation for students AND staff (apart from requirements to other dimensions).

For '**adequate protection**'- 4-5 rights should be covered in legislation for students AND staff (apart from requirements to other dimensions).

For '**intermediary protection**'- 2-3 rights should be covered in legislation for students OR staff (apart from requirements to other dimensions).

For '**inadequate protection**' –1 right should be covered in legislation for students OR staff (apart from requirements to other dimensions).

If 'Cannot answer' is chosen or **no evidence** is provided or identified by the operator in Q3.10., **the answer is considered incomplete**.

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❑ Cannot answer	
Q3.12. Are stable learning conditions for students guaranteed in your higher education system? ❑ Yes, they are legally guaranteed ❑ Yes, there are non-legal guidelines/policies/funding for this ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer **Q3.13.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.12]* **If yes**, please briefly introduce how 'stable' is defined and give reference/ link to the source. **Q3.14. Are stable working conditions for academic staff guaranteed in your higher education system?** ❑ Yes, legally guaranteed ❑ Yes, there are guidelines/policies/initiatives/ funding for this ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer **Q3.15.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.14]* **If yes**, please briefly introduce how 'stable' is defined and give reference/ link to the source.	Q3.12-15 **For assessment of protection**, the option 'Yes, they are legally guaranteed' is to be checked in Q3.12. and Q3.14. To qualify for compliance, both answers must be supported by evidence. If 'Cannot answer' is chosen or **no evidence** is provided or identified by the operator for Q3.12, and Q3.14., **the answer is considered incomplete**.
Q3.16. Do national rules for the recognition of HEIs include recommendations regarding the participation of students and staff in governance? ❑ Yes, there are recommendations for participation of students and staff ❑ Yes, but only for staff ❑ Yes, but only for students ❑ No, there are no recommendations on participation of either students or staff in the national rules on recognition of HEIs ❑ Cannot answer **Q3.17.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.16]* **If yes**, please provide reference/ link to the source.	Q3.16-17. For '**full protection**', recommendations must be in place for students AND staff. For '**adequate protection**'- recommendations must be in place for students OR staff. For '**intermediary protection**' or '**inadequate protection**' – recommendations in the rules for recognition of HEIs are optional. If 'Cannot answer' is chosen or **no evidence** is provided or identified by the operator, **the answer is considered incomplete**.

B1. Protection outlook - colour overview[12]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to increase** protection of student OR staff participation in HE governance in EITHER: - upcoming legislation generically **OR** - upcoming judicial decisions **OR** - by defining the concept in upcoming legislation
Unchanged	There are **no** documented **plans to increase OR decrease** protection of student OR staff participation in HE governance.
Negative	There are documented **plans to diminish** existing protection of student OR staff participation in HE governance: - in upcoming legislation - in upcoming judicial decisions

B2. Protection outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q3.18. Are there plans currently to change the legal protection of student or staff participation in HEI governance (e.g. in upcoming legislation or judicial decisions)? ❑ Yes, increase legal protection for student participation in governance ❑ Yes, increase legal protection for staff participation in governance ❑ Yes, decrease legal protection for student participation in governance ❑ Yes, decrease legal protection for staff participation in governance ❑ No, neither increase nor decrease legal protection ❑ Cannot answer **Q3.19.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.18]* **If yes, please explain what upcoming legislation/judicial decisions are planned.** As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.) and a short list of all known examples.	**Q3.18-19.** If 'Yes, increase legal protection' for either students or staff is selected, protection outlook is **'positive'**. If 'Yes, decrease legal protection' is selected for either students or staff, protection outlook is **'negative'.** If 'No, neither increase nor decrease', protection outlook is **'unchanged'** If 'Yes, increase legal protection' is selected for some respondents and 'Yes, decrease legal protection' by another, the system operator will check and clarify. If both are true, this will be coded as both 'positive' and 'negative' (half-half of the respective system on the map) If the answer to Q3.18. is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or identified by the operator n Q3.19, the indicator is considered incomplete, **and no colour is assigned.**

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[12] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders respondents.

C1. Promotion - colour overview[13]

Promotion - colour coding	Explanation
Very significant	System-level authorities have developed: 1. **Guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding)** to promote the **inclusion** of students AND staff **in decision-making and decision-taking** regarding HEIs and support **all 6** of their rights as defined in respective EHEA statement: - self-organise autonomously without undue interference - elect and be elected to the relevant governing bodies - have their views represented and taken into account - initiate debates and table proposals in all governing bodies and participate in discussion of and decision on them - be heard and have a vote on internal organisation and administration - be consulted on further development of the relevant HEI through their representative organisations (unions). 2. **Guidelines and mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding)** for promoting **stable learning conditions** for students **AND working conditions** for academic staff
Significant	System-level authorities have developed: 1. Guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to promote inclusion of students **AND** staff in decision-making and decision-taking regarding HEIs and support **3 to 5 out** of the 6 rights listed immediately above. 2. Guidelines and mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) for promoting stable learning conditions for students **AND** working conditions for academic staff
Intermediary	System-level authorities have developed: 1. Guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to promote inclusion of students **OR** staff in decision-making and decision-taking regarding HEIs and support **only 1 or 2 of** the 6 rights listed above. 2. Guidelines and mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) for promoting stable learning conditions for students **OR** working conditions for academic staff
Absent	System-level authorities have **NOT** developed any guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to support the exercise of student and staff participation in governance **AND** to promote stable learning conditions for students and working conditions for academic staff.
Negative	System-level authorities have developed guidelines/mechanisms that **weaken** the exercise of student and staff participation in HE governance.

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[13] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

C2. Promotion – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q3.20. Are there HE system-level guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to support the participation of students and staff in HEI governance? Please tick all that apply.	Q3.20-21 (dimension 2 under this indicator, see table immediately above)

	For students	For staff	Cannot answer
Right to self-organise autonomously without undue interference			
Right to elect and be elected to the relevant governing bodies			
Right to have their views represented and taken into account			
Right to initiate debates and table proposals in all governing bodies and participate in discussion of and decision on them			
Right to be heard and have a vote on internal organisation and administration			
Right to be consulted on further development of the relevant HEI through their representative organisations (unions).			

For '**very significant promotion**', all 6 rights should be promoted for students AND staff.

For '**significant promotion**'- 3 to 5 rights should be promoted for students AND staff.

For '**intermediary promotion**'- 1 or 2 rights should be promoted for students OR staff.

Not a single right promoted for students AND staff qualifies as '**absent promotion**'.

If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or **no evidence** is provided or identified by the operator in Q3.21 to support the answers, **dimension 1 is considered incomplete.**

Q3.21. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.20]* For any right marked as supported by guidelines, policies or funding, please provide reference/link to the source.

Q3.22. Are there any guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) promoting stable learning conditions for students in the given national context?
- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Cannot answer

Q3.23 *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.22]* **If yes,** please explain what guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) are in place.

Q3.24. Are there any system-level guidelines, policies or initiatives promoting stable working conditions for the staff?
- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Cannot answer

Q3.22.-25. (dimension 2 under this indicator, see table above with colour coding instructions)

For '**very significant promotion**' and '**significant promotion**', the respective numbers of measures promoting stable conditions for students (Q3.22.) AND staff (Q3.24.) should be in place.

For '**intermediary promotion**'- measures promoting stable conditions for students (Q3.22) OR staff (Q3.24) should be in place.

Q3.25 [shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.24] **If yes,** please explain what guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) are in place.	The answer 'No' in Q3.22 and Q3.24 qualifies as '**absent promotion**'.
	If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or no evidence are provided to support the answers from Q3.22 and Q3.22, **the dimension 2 is considered incomplete**.
	The score for this indicator results from combining the scores for dimensions 1 and 2, as explained in the colour-coding table above.

D1. Promotion outlook – colour overview[14]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to promote** participation of students and staff in HE governance by: 1. Developing new guidelines to support the participation of students and staff **OR** 2. Developing new mechanisms (initiatives/policies/regulations) to support the participation of students and staff
Unchanged	There are **no documented plans to increase OR decrease** promotion of participa[...] of students and staff.
Negative	There are documented **plans to diminish** existing promotion of participation of stu[...] and staff.

D2. Promotion outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q3.26. Are there plans to change system-level mechanisms promoting student and/or staff participation in HE governance? Please tick all that apply.<table><tr><td></td><td>For students</td><td>For staff</td><td>Cannot answer</td></tr><tr><td>Yes, to develop guidelines/policies/ funding **supporting** participation</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	**Q3.26-27** If 'Yes, to develop guidelines supporting participation' is selected for either students or staff is, promotion outlook is '**positive'.** If 'Yes, to adopt policies that would diminish participation' is selected, protection outlook is '**negative'.** If 'No changes planned', protection outlook is 'unchanged'

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[14] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders respondents.

				If 'Yes, to develop guidelines supporting participation' is selected by some respondents, and 'Yes, to adopt policies that would diminish participation' by others, the operator will check and finalize. If both are true, both colours will be included in the respective box (half-half).

Yes, to adopt policies that would **diminish** participation			
No changes planned			

Q3.27. [shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.26]
If yes, please explain what guidelines and mechanisms are planned to be introduced. As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.

If the answer to Q3.26 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or identified by the operator in Q3.27, the indicator is considered incomplete, **the category and colour-code are not assigned to the and no colour is assigned.**

E. De facto[15] - questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q3.28. Are there positive developments in your higher education system that support participation of students and staff in HE governance in practice? ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer **Q3.29.** [shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.28] **If yes**, please provide a short inventory of positive developments that you find relevant. Give all known examples since 2020 [or another date specified by the project team depending on when the monitoring is undertaken].	*De facto* responses are not coded, they are summarized by the operator and presented as bullet point lists of key developments, infringements, and threats.
Q3.30. Are there infringements in your higher education system with regard to participation of students and staff in HE governance in practice? Infringements of the right to participation of students and staff in HE governance are defined as any actions that break or violate the legal provisions for the protection of participation of students and staff in governance in your system or the provisions of the respective EHEA fundamental value statement. Infringements of participation of students and staff in HEI governance can be, or result from, actions of state or non-state actors, political or non-political organizations, from outside or inside the university (such as students, staff, university administrators or their organizations). ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer **Q3.31.** [shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.28] **If yes**, provide an inventory of infringements. Give all known examples since 2020 [or another date specified by the project team depending on when the monitoring is undertaken].	

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[15] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders and respondents on the open platform.

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| Q3.32. Are there threats at the system level with regard to participation of students and staff in HE governance? Threats to participation of students and staff in HE governance are any actions that may lead to but have not yet resulted in infringements of the right to participation of students and staff in HE governance. ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer

Q3.33 *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q3.30]* **If yes**, provide an inventory of threats. Give all known examples since 2020 [*or another date specified by the project team depending on when the monitoring is undertake*n].	

IV.   Academic integrity

A1. Protection - colour overview[16]

Protection - colour coding	Explanation
Full	The concept of academic integrity defined in line with the respective EHEA statement is **explicitly mentioned** in legislation **AND all of the following** are in place: 1) System-level regulations, standards and guidelines on academic integrity, including: - provisions for independent bodies mandated to monitor the implementation of the regulations, standards and guidelines regarding academic integrity - specific provisions regarding integrity in activities making use of digital technologies - participation in international cooperation frameworks dedicated to ensuring academic integrity/implementation of the provisions of such frameworks in the respective system 2) System-level requirements that academic integrity policies in learning and teaching, research, in administrative procedures and in institutional governance be included in the quality assurance procedures at programme and institutional level, and be reviewed by the appropriate internal and external bodies in line with European and national frameworks. 3) System-level provisions requiring HEIs to adopt Code of Ethics describing issues of integrity and clarifying how to address them in all cases. 4) System-level provisions requiring that all organisational, cultural, legislative, financial and other measures promote a healthy working environment and error culture, while avoiding regulatory loopholes that allow impunity for academic misconduct.
Adequate	The concept of academic integrity is explicitly mentioned in legislation or protected through judicial decisions but only 3 out of 4 specific provisions (above) formulated in line with the respective EHEA statement are in place.

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[16] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

Intermediary	The concept of academic integrity is explicitly mentioned in legislation or protected through judicial decisions but only 2 out of 4 specific provisions (above) formulated in line with the respective EHEA statement are in place.
Inadequate	The concept of academic integrity is explicitly mentioned in legislation or protected through judicial decisions but only 1 out of 4 specific provisions (above) formulated in line with the respective EHEA statement is in place.
Absent	The concept of academic integrity is NOT specifically mentioned in any type of legislation or judicial decisions, and there are NO legal provisions regarding academic integrity formulated in line with the EHEA statement on this fundamental value.

A2. Protection – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q4.1. Is academic integrity legally protected in your higher education system? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, in constitution ❑ Yes, in law ❑ Yes, in judicial decisions ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer **Q4.2.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.1]* **If yes**, please indicate the definitions and references/links to the sources for these definitions.	Q4.1-2. If the answer is 'Yes' to **any** of three options (constitution, law, judicial decisions) AND the source is provided in Q4.2, **the concept of academic integrity is considered explicitly mentioned**. If the answer is 'No', de jure protection of academic integrity is seen as '**absent**'. If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes' to any of the three options, but **no source** is provided or identified by the operator, **the answer is considered incomplete**.
Q4.3. What dimensions of academic integrity are covered by the existing legal regulations? Please, tick all that apply ❑ Existence of external bodies mandated to evaluate the implication of the standards and regulations regarding academic integrity ❑ Provisions regarding academic integrity when using digital technologies ❑ Requirements to participate in international cooperation frameworks for integrity ❑ Requirements for QA procedures (for learning, teaching, admin procedures, and institutional governance) to include academic integrity provisions, and for these provisions to be reviewed by	Q4.3 For '**full protection**', all 4 dimensions are covered. For '**adequate protection**'- 3. For '**intermediary protection**'- 2. For '**inadequate protection**' – 1. If the answer is 'None of the above', de jure protection of

the appropriate internal and external bodies in line with European and national frameworks. ❑ Requirements for HEIs to adopt Code of Ethics ❑ Provisions requiring that organisational, cultural, legislative, financial and other measures (including training) promote a healthy working environment and error culture, while avoiding regulatory loopholes that allow impunity for academic misconduct. ❑ None of the above Cannot answer **Q4.4.** *[shown together with Q4.3]* **For all dimensions covered by existing regulations**, please provide links/references to the sources.	academic integrity is seen as '**absent**'. If the answer to Q4.3 is 'Cannot answer' or Q4,4 provides no evidence, the indicator is considered incomplete, **the category and colour-code are not assigned to the indicator 'protection'.**

B1. Protection outlook - colour overview[17]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to increase** protection of academic integrity EITHER: - in upcoming legislation generally or as a right **OR** - in upcoming judicial decisions **OR** - by defining the concept in upcoming legislation
Unchanged	There are **no documented plans to increase OR decrease** protection of academic inte
Negative	There are documented **plans to diminish** the existing protection of academic integrity: - in upcoming legislation - in upcoming judicial decisions

B2. Protection outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q4.5. Are there plans currently to change the legal protection of academic integrity (e.g. in upcoming legislation or judicial decisions)? ❑ Yes, increase legal protection ❑ Yes, decrease legal protection ❑ No, neither increase nor decrease legal protection ❑ Cannot answer **Q4.6.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.5]* **If yes, please explain what upcoming legislation/judicial decisions are planned.** As much	Q4.5-6 If 'Yes, increase legal protection' is selected, protection outlook is '**positive**'. If 'Yes, decrease legal protection' is selected, protection outlook is '**negative**'. If 'No, neither increase nor decrease', protection outlook is '**unchanged**' If the answer to Q4.12 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided or are identified by the operator in

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[17] This block of questions is filled in by the HE stakeholders respondents.

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as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.) and a short list of all known examples.	Q4.13, the indicator is considered incomplete, **and no colour is assigned.**

C1. Promotion - colour overview[18]

Promotion -colour coding	Explanation
Very significant	System-level authorities have developed: 1. Guidelines to support the exercise of academic integrity **AND** 2. Mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to promote academic integrity **AND** 3. Specifically, QA procedures to evaluate how academic integrity is ensured in HEIs.
Significant	System-level authorities have developed **2 out of the 3 sets of initiatives** listed immediately above.
Intermediary	System-level authorities have developed only 1 **out of the 3 sets of initiatives** listed immediately above.
Absent	System-level authorities have **NOT** developed any guidelines or mechanisms (initiatives/policies/funding) to support the exercise of academic integrity **AND** there are **NO** QA procedures to evaluate how academic integrity is ensured in HEIs.
Negative	System-level authorities have developed guidelines/mechanisms that **weaken** academic integrity.

C2. Promotion – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q4.7. Are there system-level guidelines to support the exercise of academic integrity? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q4.8.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.8]* **If yes**, please indicate the sources and a short list of all known examples.	Q4.7-8. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **system-level guidelines count towards promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source** is provided, **the dimension is considered incomplete.**
Q4.9. Are there system-level mechanisms (not legal or regulatory) available to support the exercise of academic integrity? (tick all that apply) ❑ Yes, specific initiatives ❑ Yes, policies	Q4.9-10. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **system-level mechanisms count towards promotion score.**

[18] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

❑ Yes, funding ❑ No ❑ Cannot answer **Q4.10** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.9]* **If yes, please explain what specific initiatives/policies/funding are available**. As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.) and a list of all known examples.	If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source or explanation** is provided, **the dimension is considered incomplete.**
Q4.11. Are there QA procedures developed to evaluate how academic integrity is ensured in HEIs? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q4.12** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.18]* **If yes, please specify the body and the requirements**	Q4.11-12. If the answer is 'Yes' AND the source is provided, **requirements for external body count towards promotion score.** If the answer is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no source or explanation** is provided, **the dimension is considered incomplete.**
	The combined scores for three dimensions give the final promotion score: 'Yes' to Q4.7, 4.9, 4.11 supported by evidence is coded as **'Very significant'** promotion. 'Yes' to 2 of 3 questions is coded as **'Significant'** promotion. 'Yes' to 1 of 3 questions is coded as **'Intermediary'** promotion. If any of the dimensions is incomplete, **no colour is assigned** (indicator remains blank).

D1. Promotion outlook - colour overview[19]

Protection outlook – colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to promote** academic integrity by: 1. Developing new guidelines to support the exercise of academic integrity **OR**

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[19] This block of questions is filled in by the HE stakeholders.

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	2. Developing new mechanisms (initiatives/policies/regulations) to support the exercise of academic integrity **OR** 3. Developing QA procedures to evaluate how the exercise of academic integrity is ensured in HEIs.
Unchanged	There are **no plans to increase OR decrease** promotion of academic integrity.
Negative	There are **plans to diminish** existing promotion of academic integrity.

D2. Promotion outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q4.13. Are there plans to change the system level guidelines, mechanisms or procedures related to academic integrity? ❑ Yes, to develop new guidelines to support promotion of academic integrity ❑ Yes, to develop new mechanisms (initiatives/ policies/regulations) to support promotion of academic integrity ❑ Yes, to develop QA procedures to evaluate how academic integrity is ensured in HEIs ❑ Yes, to make changes diminishing promotion ❑ No changes planned ❑ Cannot answer **Q4.14.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.13]* **If yes,** please explain what guidelines, mechanisms and procedures are planned to be introduced. As much as possible, provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.	**Q4.12-13** If 'Yes, to develop new guidelines' OR 'Yes, to develop new mechanisms' OR 'Yes, develop QA procedures' is selected, promotion outlook is '**positive**'. If 'Yes, to make changes diminishing promotion' is selected, promotion outlook is '**negative**'. If 'No changes planned', promotion outlook is '**unchanged**'. If the answer to Q4.12 is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q4.13, the indicator is considered incomplete. If both 'Yes' and 'No' answers are provided and supported by evidence, the operator will check, and if both are true, both colours will be assigned (half-half in the respective box).

E. De facto[20] – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q4.14. Are there positive developments at the system level with regard to the protection, promotion or practice of academic integrity? ○ Yes ○ No ○ Cannot answer **Q4.15** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.14]*	*De facto* responses are not coded, summarized by the operator and presented as bullet point lists of key developments,

[20] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders and open platform respondents.

	infringements, and threats.
If yes, please provide a short inventory of positive developments that you find relevant. Give all known examples since 2020. *[or another period indicated by the project team depending on when monitoring takes place]*	
Q4.16. Do public authorities from your system, the higher education communities and their members fulfil their obligations as detailed in the respective EHEA statement about academic integrity? ◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ Cannot answer **Q4.16** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.25]* **If yes**, please explain briefly.	
Q4.17. Are there threats at the system level that might limit the exercise of academic integrity in practice? Threats to academic integrity are any actions that may lead to but have not yet resulted in limitations to the fulfilment of the obligations for any stakeholders detailed in the academic integrity EHEA statement. ◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ Cannot answer **Q4.18** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q4.17]* **If yes**, provide an inventory of threats. Give all known examples since 2020. *[or another period indicated by the project team depending on when monitoring takes place]*	

V. Public responsibility for higher education

A1. Protection - colour overview[21]

Protection - colour coding	Explanation
Full	1. Explicit legal provisions or judicial decisions exist meant to further ALL of the following **4** major purposes of higher education: - preparation for the labour market - preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies - personal development - the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base.

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[21] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

	AND
	2. Explicit legal provisions or judicial decisions exist meant to ensure that ALL of the following frameworks within which higher education is conducted are put in place and function adequately: - qualifications framework of the higher education system - frameworks for quality assurance - recognition of foreign qualifications - information on higher education provision - funding frameworks - the frameworks for the social dimension of higher education. **AND** 3. Explicit legal provisions or judicial decisions exist requiring public authorities to consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of frameworks from the following **3** types of stakeholders: - the higher education sector - internal university constituencies - relevant external stakeholders.
Adequate	2 out of the 3 sets of legal provisions/judicial decisions detailed immediately above exist.
Intermediary	1 out of the 3 sets of legal provisions/judicial decisions detailed above exist.
Inadequate	None of the 3 sets of legal provisions/jurisprudence detailed above exist.
Absent	The concept of responsibility for higher education or its dimensions outlined in the respective EHEA statement are not explicitly mentioned in any type of legislation or judicial decisions.

A2. Protection – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q5.1. Have public authorities adopted legislation and regulations that support achieving the purposes of higher education as detailed in the EHEA definition of public responsibility for higher education? Please tick all that apply. 		Yes	No	Cannot answer
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preparation for the labour market			
preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies			
personal development			
the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base					**Q5.1** is considered answered positively only if ALL its 5 items are answered positively. **Q5.3** is considered answered positively only if ALL its 6 items are answered positively. **Q5.5** is considered answered positively only if ALL its 3 items are answered positively. For **Q5.1**, Q5.3 and **Q5.5**, if the answer is Yes but **no sources** are

Q5.2. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources

Q5.3. Have public authorities adopted legislation and regulations to ensure that the necessary frameworks within which higher education is conducted are put in place and function adequately, as detailed in the EHEA definition of public responsibility for higher education?
Please tick all that apply.

provided or identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete and will remain blank.

	Yes	No	Cannot answer
qualifications framework of the higher education system			
frameworks for quality assurance			
recognition of foreign qualifications			
information on higher education provision			
funding frameworks			
frameworks for the social dimension of higher education			

Q5.4. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources

Q5.5. Have public authorities adopted legislation and regulations requiring to consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of the frameworks for higher education from the following types of stakeholders? Please tick all that apply.

	Yes	No	Cannot answer
the higher education sector			
internal university constituencies			
relevant external stakeholders			

Q5.6. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources.

B1. Protection outlook – colour overview[22]

Protection outlook colour coding	Explanation

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[22] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders.

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Positive	There are **documented** plans to **adopt new legislation and regulations to create or improve any of the following**: 1. Legal provisions to further all major purposes of higher education: - preparation for the labour market - preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies - personal development - the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base. OR 2. Legal provisions regarding the frameworks within which higher education is conducted: - qualifications framework of the higher education system - frameworks for quality assurance - recognition of foreign qualifications - information on higher education provision - funding frameworks - the frameworks for the social dimension of higher education. **OR improve how:** 3. Public authorities consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks from the higher education sector, internal university constituencies and relevant external stakeholders
Unchanged	There are **no documented plans to increase OR decrease** protection of public responsibility for higher education.
Negative	There are **documented plans to diminish** existing protection of responsibility for higher education.

B2. Protection outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q5.7. Are there plans to adopt new legislation or regulations regarding the major purposes of higher education (preparation for the labour market, preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies, personal development, development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base)? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, to support to better pursuing any of them. ❑ Yes, to make any of them more difficult to pursue. ❑ No changes planned ❑ Cannot answer	**Q5.7-8** If 'Yes, to better pursue any of them' is selected, protection outlook is **'positive'.** If 'Yes, to make any of them more difficult to pursue' is selected, protection outlook is **'negative'.** If 'No changes planned', protection outlook is **'unchanged'** If the answer to is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q5.8 or none can be identified by the operator, the

Q5.8. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.7]* **If yes,** please provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.

Q5.9. Are there plans to make changes in the legislation and regulations regarding the frameworks within which higher education is conducted as detailed in the EHEA definition of public responsibility for higher education (frameworks for quality assurance; recognition of foreign qualifications; information on higher education provision; funding frameworks; the frameworks for the social dimension of higher education)? Please tick all that apply.
- ❑ Yes, there are plans to improve any of these frameworks.
- ❑ Yes, there are plans to weaken any of these frameworks.
- ❑ No plans for changes

Q5.10. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.9]* **If yes,** please provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.

Q.5.11. Are there plans to make changes in the legislation or regulations regarding the obligation of public authorities to consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks from the higher education sector, internal university constituencies and relevant external stakeholders?
- ❑ Yes, there are plans to strengthen or make clearer this obligation.
- ❑ Yes, there are plans to weaken this obligation.
- ❑ No plans for changes

Q5.12. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.11]* **If yes,** please provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.

indicator is considered incomplete, and no colour is assigned (remains blank).

If "Yes" is selected to both first two options, the operator will check and finalize. If both alternatives are documented, both colours will be assigned (half-half in this box/for this indicator).

Q5.9-10

If 'Yes, there are plans to improve any of these frameworks' is selected, protection outlook for these questions is '**positive**'.

If 'Yes, there are plans to weaken any of these frameworks' is selected, protection outlook is '**negative**'.

If 'No changes planned', protection outlook is '**unchanged**'

If the answer to is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q5.10 or none can be identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete, and no colour is assigned (remains blank).

If "Yes" is selected to both first two options in Q5.9, the operator will check and finalize. If both alternatives are documented, both colours will be assigned (half-half in this box/for this indicator).

Q5.11-12

If 'Yes, there are plans to strengthen or make clearer this obligation' is selected, protection outlook is '**positive**'.

If 'Yes, there are plans to weaken this obligation' is selected, protection outlook is '**negative**'.

If 'No changes planned', protection outlook for these questions is '**unchanged**'.

If the answer to is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q5.112 or none can be identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete, and no colour is assigned (remains blank).

	If "Yes" is selected to both first two options in Q5.11, the operator will check and finalize. If both alternatives are documented, both colours will be assigned (half-half in this box/for this indicator).
	If outlook is positive in any of the questions Q 7, 9, and 11, the overall coding for this indicator is "positive".
	If outlook is negative in any of the questions Q 7, 9, and 11, the overall coding for this indicator is "negative".
	If both are present ("positive" and "negative" elements of outlook) for at least one of these questions, both colours will be assigned for this indicator (half-half in this box)

C1. Promotion – colour overview[23]

Promotion – colour coding	Explanation
Very significant	1. Policies and other initiatives exist intended to further the major purposes of higher education: - preparation for the labour market - preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies - personal development - the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base. AND 2. Policies and other initiatives exist to ensure that the frameworks within which higher education is conducted function adequately: - qualifications framework of the higher education system

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[23] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

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	- frameworks for quality assurance - recognition of foreign qualifications - information on higher education provision - funding frameworks - the frameworks for the social dimension of higher education. **AND** 3. Policies and other initiatives exist to ensure that public authorities consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of frameworks from the following **3** types of stakeholders: - the higher education sector - internal university constituencies -relevant external stakeholders.
Significant	2 out of the 3 sets of policies and initiatives listed immediately above are present
Intermediary	1 out of the 3 sets of policies and initiatives listed above is present
Absent	System-level authorities have not developed any of the 3 sets of policies and initiatives listed here
Negative	System-level authorities have developed policies and initiatives that **weaken** responsibility for higher education.

C2. Promotion – questions and instructions overview

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q 5.13. Have public authorities adopted policies and non-legal initiatives to support achieving the major purposes of higher education? Please tick all that apply. 		Yes	No	Cannot answer
---	---	---	---
preparation for the labour market			
preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies			
personal development			
the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base			| **Q5.14. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations**, please provide links/references to the sources	**Q5.13** is considered answered positively only if ALL its items are answered positively. **Q5.15** is considered answered positively only if ALL its items are answered positively. **Q5.17** is considered answered positively only if ALL its items are answered positively.

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Q5.15. Have public authorities adopted policies and non-legal initiatives to ensure that the necessary frameworks within which higher education is conducted function adequately? Please tick all that apply.

	Yes	No	Cannot answer
qualifications framework of the higher education system			
frameworks for quality assurance			
recognition of foreign qualifications			
information on higher education provision			
funding frameworks			
frameworks for the social dimension of higher education			

Q5.16. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources

Q5.17. Have public authorities adopted policies and non-legal initiatives to ensure that public authorities consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of the frameworks for higher education from the following **3** types of stakeholders? Please tick all that apply.

	Yes	No	Cannot answer
the higher education sector			
internal university constituencies			
relevant external stakeholders			

Q5.18. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources

The final score is assigned by combining the scores for each of these questions as per the coding explanations in the table immediately above.

For **Q5.13**, **Q5.15** and **Q5.17**, if the answer is yes but **no sources** are provided or identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete and will remain blank

D1. Promotion outlook – colour overview[24]

Protection outlook - colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are documented **plans to adopt new policies** and other initiatives to: 1. Further the major purposes of higher education **OR** 2. Ensure that the frameworks within which higher education is conducted function adequately **OR** 3. Enhance consultation and seeking input regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks from the higher education sector, internal university constituencies and relevant external stakeholders
Unchanged	There are **no plans to make any changes** with regard to the existing policies and other initiatives in 1 to 3 immediately above**.**
Negative	There are documented **plans to adopt new policies** and other initiatives to: 1. Prevent pursuing any of the major purposes of higher education **OR**

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[24] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders.

     	2. Weaken the frameworks within which higher education is conducted function adequately **OR** 3. Reduce the obligation of public authority to consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks from the higher education sector, internal university constituencies and relevant external stakeholders.

D2. Promotion outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q5.19. Are there plans to make changes with regard to the policies and other (non-legal) initiatives concerning the major purposes of higher education (preparation for the labour market; preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies; personal development; the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base)? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, to adopt new policies and initiatives to support better pursuing any of these purposes. ❑ Yes, to adopt new policies and initiatives that would make any of them more difficult to pursue. ❑ No changes planned ❑ Cannot answer **Q5.20.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.19]* **If yes,** please provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples. **Q5.21. Are there plans to make changes with regard to policies and non-legal initiatives regarding the frameworks within which higher education is conducted** (frameworks for quality assurance; recognition of foreign qualifications; information on higher education provision; funding frameworks; the frameworks for the social dimension of higher education.)**?** Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, to adopt new policies and non-legal initiatives to improve any of these frameworks. ❑ Yes, to adopt policy and non-legal initiatives to weaken any of these frameworks. ❑ No plans for changes **Q5.22.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.21]* **If yes,** please provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.	**Q5.19-20** If 'Yes, adopt new policies and initiatives to support better pursuing any of them' is selected, this counts towards '**positive**' promotion outlook**.** If 'Yes, adopt new policies and initiatives meant to make any of them more difficult to pursue them' is selected, this counts towards '**negative**' promotion outlook**.** If 'No changes planned', promotion outlook is '**unchanged**' If the answer to is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q5.20 or none can be identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete, and no colour is assigned (remains blank). If 'Yes' is selected to both first two options in Q5.19, the operator will check and finalize. If both alternatives are documented, both colours will be assigned (half-half in this box/for this indicator). **Q5.21-22** If 'Yes, adopt new policies and non-legal initiatives to improve any of these frameworks' is selected, this counts towards '**positive**' promotion outlook. If 'Yes, adopt policy and non-legal initiatives to weaken any of these frameworks' is selected, this counts towards '**negative**' promotion outlook**.** If 'No changes planned', protection outlook is '**unchanged**' If the answer to is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q5.22 or none can be identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete, and no colour is assigned (remains blank).

Q.5.23. Are there plans to make changes with regard to policies and non-legal initiatives regarding the obligation of public authorities to consult and seek input regarding the configuration and substance of these frameworks from the higher education sector, internal university constituencies and relevant external stakeholders? Please tick all that apply. ❑ Yes, adopt policies or other initiatives to strengthen or make clearer this obligation. ❑ Yes, adopt policies or other initiatives to weaken this obligation. ❑ No plans for changes **Q5.24.** *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.23]* **f yes,** please provide sources (e.g. parliamentary debates, news, draft legislation, etc.). Give all known examples.	If "Yes" is selected to both first two options in Q5.21, the operator will check and finalize. If both alternatives are documented, both colours will be assigned (half-half in this box/for this indicator). **Q5.23-24** If 'Yes, there are plans to strengthen or make clearer this obligation' is selected, this counts towards **'positive'** protection outlook**.** If 'Yes, there are plans to weaken this obligation' is selected, this counts towards **'negative'** protection outlook**.** If 'No changes planned', protection outlook for these questions is **'unchanged'.** If the answer to is 'Cannot answer' or 'Yes', but **no sources or examples** are provided in Q5.24 or none can be identified by the operator, the indicator is considered incomplete, and no colour is assigned (remains blank). If "Yes" is selected to both first two options in Q5.23, the operator will check and finalize. If both alternatives are documented, both colours will be assigned (half-half in this box/for this indicator). If outlook is positive in any of the questions Q5.19, 5.21, and 5.23, the overall coding for this indicator is 'positive'. If outlook is negative in any of the questions Q5.7, 5.9, and 5.11, the overall coding for this indicator is 'negative'. If both are present ('positive' and 'negative' elements of outlook) for at least one of these questions, both colours will be assigned for this indicator (half-half in this box)

E. De facto²⁵ – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Do public authorities fulfil their obligations under the principle of public responsibility for higher education as detailed in the respective EHEA value? More precisely:	*De facto* responses are not coded, they are summarized by the operator and

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²⁵ This block of questions is for HE stakeholders and open platform respondents.

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	presented as bullet point lists of key developments, fulfilments of obligations, and threats.
Q5.25. To what extent are the legal frameworks adopted to further all major purposes of higher education, where they exist, implemented in practice? Please provide short narrative answers for: – preparation for the labour market – preparation for life as active citizens of democratic societies – personal development – the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base. **Q5.26. To what extent are implemented in practice the existing legal and regulatory provisions adopted to ensure that the frameworks within which higher education is conducted are put in place and function adequately?** Please provide short narrative answers for: – qualifications framework of the higher education system – frameworks for quality assurance – recognition of foreign qualifications – information on higher education provision – funding frameworks – frameworks for the social dimension of higher education **Q5.27. Do public authorities consult and seek input in the configuration of the frameworks within which higher education is conducted?** Please provide short narrative answers for: – The higher education sector – Internal university constituencies – Relevant external stakeholders	

Q5.28. Are there positive developments in practice with regard to the exercise of public responsibility for higher education?
    ○ Yes
    ○ No
    ○ Cannot answer
 	
Q5.29. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.28]*
If yes, please provide a short inventory of positive developments that you find relevant. Give all known examples since 2020. [*or another period depending on when monitoring is undertaken*]	

Q5.30. Are there threats at the system level that might limit the effective exercise of responsibility for higher education in practice?
Threats to responsibility for higher education are any actions that may lead to but have not yet resulted in limitations to the effective exercise of the responsibility for higher education.
    ○ Yes
    ○ No
    ○ Cannot answer
 	
Q5.31. *[shown to those who selected 'Yes' for Q5.30]*
If yes, provide an inventory of threats. Give all known examples since 2020. [*or another period depending on when monitoring is undertaken*]	

BFUG_PL_AL_95_6.1_2_Technical Policy Framework of Indicators_FV

VI.   Public responsibility of higher education

A1. Protection – colour overview[26]

Protection – colour code	Explanation
Full	**System-level legislation and regulations exist that require and support higher education communities to undertake ALL of the following:** a. pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good b. uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines. c. systematically inform broader society of its work and results d. engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions e. foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency. f. equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking. g. offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success h. Contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies, (*e.g.,* the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer. i. engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies be developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking j. j. help improve opportunities for all members of society
Adequate	6 to 9 out of the 10 sets of legal and regulatory provisions listed immediately above exist
Intermediary	3 to 5 out of the 10 sets of legal and regulatory provisions listed immediately above exist
Inadequate	1 or 2 out of the 10 sets of legal and regulatory provisions listed immediately above exist
Absent	The concept of 'responsibility of higher education' and its specific dimensions listed above are NOT explicitly mentioned in any type of legislation or judicial decisions

A2. Protection – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding

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[26] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

Q. 6.1 Have system-level authorities adopted legislation and regulations **that require and support higher education communities to fulfil the following functions?** Please, tick all that apply.	Yes	No	Cannot answer
pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good			
uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines.			
systematically inform broader society of its work and results			
engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions			
foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency.			
equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking.			
offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success			
contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies, (*e.g.,* the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer			
engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies be developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking			
help improve opportunities for all members of society			

Q. 6.2. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources.

Q6.1-2

10 'Yes' answers to Q6.1 are coded as '**full**'.

6-9 'Yes' answers are coded as '**adequate**'.

3-5 'Yes' answers are coded as '**intermediary**'.

1-2 'Yes' answers are coded as 'inadequate'.

If only 'No" answers are selected, this will be coded as '**absent**'.

'Yes' answers only count if backed by evidence provided by respondents and checked by the operator. If no evidence is provided or identified by the operator, they will count as '**Cannot answer**'.

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B1. Protection outlook – colour overview[27]

Protection outlook -colour coding	Explanation
Positive	There are plans to **adopt new, better or more supportive legislation and regulations in any of the following areas listed under the responsibility of higher education in the respective EHEA statement:** a. pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good b. uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines. c. systematically inform broader society of its work and results d. engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions e. foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency. f. equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking. g. offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success h. contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies, (*e.g.,* the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer. i. engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies are developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking j. help improve opportunities for all members of society.
Unchanged	There are no plans to change the existing legislations regarding any of these areas.
Negative	There are plans to discontinue existing supportive legislation and regulations in any area listed under the responsibility of higher education in the respective EHEA statement OR to adopt less supportive legislation.

B2. Protection outlook – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q.6.3. Are there <u>plans to change</u> legislation and regulations <u>that require and support higher education communities to fulfil the following functions</u>? Please tick all that apply.	If 'Yes, to strengthen this obligation" answers are selected to Q.6.3., they

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[27] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders.

	Yes, to strengthen this obligation	Yes, to decrease or erase this obligation	No	Cannot answer
pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good				
uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines.				
systematically inform broader society of its work and results				
engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions				
foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency.				
equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking.				
offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success				
contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies (*e.g.*, the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal				

will count towards a positive protection outlook. If any such answer is not backed by evidence provided by respondents and checked by the operator, they will count as 'Cannot answer'.

If 'Yes, to decrease or erase this obligation' answers are selected, they will count towards a negative protection outlook. If any such answer is not backed by evidence provided by respondents and checked by the operator, they will count as 'Cannot answer'.

If answers are a combination of positive and negative outlook elements, both colours will be used in this box (half-half)

outreach and innovation and technology transfer				
engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies are developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking				
help improve opportunities for all members of society				

Q. 6.4. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources. List all known examples.

C1. Promotion – colour overview[28]

Promotion – colour coding	Explanation
Very significan	System-level policy and other initiatives exist that support the fulfilment of all the obligations of higher education communities as outlined in the respective EHEA statement: a. pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good b. uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines. c. systematically inform broader society of its work and results d. engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions e. foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency. f. equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking. g. offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success h. Contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies, (e.g., the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through

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[28] Questions in this block are for public authorities and higher education stakeholders respondents.

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(green)	research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer.
	i. engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies are developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking
	j. help improve opportunities for all members of society.
Significant	System-level policy and other initiatives exist that support the fulfilment of any 6 to 9 out of the 10 obligations of higher education communities listed immediately above.
Intermediary	System-level policy and other initiatives exist that support the fulfilment of any 3 to 5 out of the 10 obligations of higher education communities listed immediately above.
Inadequate	System-level policy and other initiatives exist that support the fulfilment of any 1 or 2 out of the 10 obligations of higher education communities listed immediately above.
Negative	System-level policy and initiatives, non-legal guidelines and mechanisms exist that **weaken** the obligations defined under the public responsibility of higher education in the respective EHEA statement.

C2. Promotion – questions and instructions for coding

Questions				Instructions for coding
Q. 6.5. Have system-level authorities adopted policies and other initiatives <u>that support the fulfilment of the obligations of higher education communities</u> outlined in the EHEA definition of public responsibly of higher education? Please tick all that applies.				10 'Yes' answers to Q.6.5 are coded as '**full**'.
	Yes	**No**	**Cannot answer**	6-9 'Yes' answers are coded as '**adequate**'.
pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good				3-5 'Yes' answers are coded as '**intermediary**'.
uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines.				1-2 'Yes' answers are coded as '**inadequate**'.
systematically inform broader society of its work and results				If only 'No' answers are selected, this will be coded as '**absent**'.
engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions				'Yes' answers only count as 'Yes' if backed by evidence provided by respondents and checked by the operator.
foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency.				If no evidence is

equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking.				provided or identified by the operator, they will count as '**cannot answer**'.
offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success				
contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies (*e.g.,* the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer				
engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies are developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking				
help improve opportunities for all members of society				
Q. 6.6. For all dimensions covered by existing policies and initiatives, please provide links/references to the sources				

D1. Promotion outlook – colour overview[29]

Protection outlook -colour coding	Explanation
Positive	**Documented plans exist for new policies and other initiatives** to better support higher education communities in the fulfilment of their public responsibilities in any of the 10 areas (a. to j., above).
Unchanged	**There are no plans to change existing policies and initiatives** in any of the 10 areas in any direction (such as more supportive or less supportive new policies).
Negative	**There are documented plans to adopt new policies and initiatives** that will affect negatively the fulfilment of the public responsibility of higher education in any of the ten areas.

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q.6.7. Are there <u>plans to change</u> or adopt new policies and initiatives or amend existing policies and initiatives <u>regarding the public obligations of higher education communities as defined in the respective EHEA statement?</u> Please tick all that apply.	If 'Yes, to better support the fulfilment of this obligation' answers are selected to Q.6.7., they

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[29] This block of questions is for the HE stakeholders.

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	Yes, to better support the fulfilment of this obligation	Yes, affecting negatively the fulfilment of this obligation	No	Cannot answer	will count towards a positive promotion outlook. If any such answer is not backed by evidence provided by respondents and checked by the operator, they will count as '**Cannot answer**'.
pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good					
uphold and develop the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines.					If 'Yes, affecting negatively the fulfilment of this obligation' answers are selected, they will count towards a negative promotion outlook. If any such answer is not backed by evidence provided by respondents and checked by the operator, they will count as '**Cannot answer**'.
systematically inform broader society of its work and results					
engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies; participate in designing solutions					
foster and disseminate, and be guided by a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics; design and pursue policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency.					If answers are a combination of positive and negative outlook elements, both colours will be used in this box (half-half)
equip graduates with general, specialized and ethical knowledge, understanding, support them in developing the ability to act and to decide what action to take and what action to refrain from taking.					
offer access to higher education to qualified candidates without regard to their economic, social, ethnic, or other background and provide support in order to enable those admitted to complete their studies with success					
contribute to addressing major challenges of modern societies, (*e.g.,* the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together) through research, learning and teaching, societal					

outreach and innovation and technology transfer				
engage in and with the public sphere, including in public debate, to ensure that our societies be developed and governed on the basis of factual knowledge as well as critical and constructive thinking				
help improve opportunities for all members of society				

Q. 6.8. For all dimensions covered by existing regulations, please provide links/references to the sources. List all known examples.

E. De facto[30] – questions and instructions for coding

Questions	Instructions for coding
Q. 6.9. Do higher education communities from your system and their members fulfil their obligations under the principle of public responsibility for higher education as detailed in the respective EHEA value? ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer **Q.6.10. If Yes or No, please explain briefly, keeping in mind the 10 areas detailed in the statement.**	*De facto* responses are not coded, they are summarized by the operator and presented as bullet point lists of key developments, fulfilments of obligations, and threats.
Q.6.10 Are there any positive developments with regard to the fulfilment of the obligations of academic communities under the principle of the public responsibility of higher education as defined in the respective EHEA statement? ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer **Q. 6.11. If yes**, please provide a short inventory of positive developments that you find relevant. Give all known examples since 2020. [*or another period depending on when monitoring is undertaken*]	
Q.6.12. Are there any identifiable threats at the system level that might limit the effective exercise of the public responsibility of higher education in practice? Threats to the responsibility of higher education are any actions that may lead to but have not yet resulted in limitations to the effective exercise of these obligations. ❍ Yes ❍ No ❍ Cannot answer	

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[30] This block of questions is for HE stakeholders and open platform respondents.

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| Q.6.13. If yes, provide an inventory of threats. Give all known examples since 2020. [*or another period depending on when monitoring is undertaken*] | |

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The 2027 Bologna Process Implementation Report

Introduction

This paper outlines a proposal for the 2027 Bologna Process Implementation Report. It is the outcome of a reflection that has been taking place since early 2024, initially within the previous WG on Monitoring and the BFUG, and now taken forward by the newly established Working Group on Monitoring.

This reflection has been essential to address the challenges that can be anticipated for future reporting, and is primarily based on the challenges experienced during the production of the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report.

The document is structured in four sections. The first section recalls challenges related to the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report. The second section outlines outcomes of discussions that have already taken place. The third section outlines the process of developing the proposal and the basis on which it has been developed, while the final fourth section sets out a first skeleton proposal.

1. Challenges related to the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report

Within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), each Ministerial Communiqué establishes new policy commitments that are added to those already existing. Those that are already existing generally remain important, as to date none can be declared as having been fully implemented across all countries according to the criteria agreed to assess implementation. While it is essential not to lose sight of different commitments, it is equally important to recognise that not every commitment can be monitored within a single monitoring report.

The Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) has already agreed that it is not feasible to monitor an expanding agenda of policy commitments during each round of the monitoring process. The BFUG has also acknowledged difficulties related to the production of the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report, both for BFUG data providers and for the data collectors. The key difficulties regarding the 2024 report can be summarised as follows:

- The scope of the reporting exercise was too broad.
- Many BFUG data providers were unable to provide high quality, evidence-supported answers to the extensive number of questions, and were not able to meet the report's production deadlines.
- Data collectors, in turn, faced difficulties to prepare a very extensive data collection and, once data had been collected, to process and analyse very extensive information. Moreover, they faced the additional administrative burden of following up countries and ensuring the considerable checking required.

All the above issues compromised quality of information presented in the 2024 report.

2. Outcomes of BFUG and Working Group on Monitoring discussions

During 2024, the Working Group on Monitoring started addressing the above challenges. In this context, the group proposed different potential options for future reports, namely:

1. An option consisting of moving from reports mapping many topics to thematic reports focusing on one main thematic topic.
2. An option focusing on a small number of key indicators across different policy areas.
3. An option alternating the two above approaches.

After discussing these options with the BFUG, the agreed way forward is to develop a proposal around the second option. This option has been evaluated as the most appropriate, since it responds best to the need for regular implementation monitoring of the main policy commitments.

3. Developing the 2027 Bologna Process Implementation Report

Following the above, the Working Group on Monitoring has started discussing how to operationalise the chosen option, i.e. provide an overview of different thematic areas within a reporting exercise that is lighter both for BFUG members and for the data collectors. Several principles have been identified by the Working Group to guide this exercise.

Limit the number of BFUG indicators in each part of the report

While all policy commitments are important, this does not imply that it is necessary to monitor everything in every Bologna Process Implementation Report. To limit the extent of the BFUG data collection and to assure the quality of information collected, this proposal is based on the following guidelines:

- A chapter of 'simple indicators' (as opposed to composite 'scorecard indicators', which commonly monitor up to five dimensions), should include around ten indicators.
- A chapter constructed from composite 'scorecard indicators' should not include more than five indicators.
- A chapter with a mix of 'simple and scorecard indicators' should be situated between seven and eight indicators.

While indicative, the aim is to demonstrate that a chapter presenting 20 indicators, including 10 scorecard indicators and 10 simple indicators (e.g. Chapter 4 in the 2024 report) would need to be significantly re-constructed for the 2027 reporting. Moreover, these indicative numbers also signal that the 2024 chapter on Key Commitments might

require a division into several chapters. At the same time, the total number of chapters should remain reasonably consistent with previous editions.

Use the principle of indicator rotation

Future editions of the report could present indicators on a different frequency. This would mean that rather being updated and published in reports in 2027, 2030, 2032 and 2035 some indicators may only be updated in 2027 and 2032, and others only in 2030 and 2035. Through introducing a rotation concept, different editions of the report could put an accent on different aspects of a specific thematic area.

Potentially include relevant work undertaken by BFUG working groups/European stakeholder organisations/projects.

A description of the work and findings of BFUG working groups and projects conducted by other European organisations active in the field of higher education could potentially complement and enrich the report. This could be done in different ways (eg by including information from working group reports in the implementation report, or by experts producing text within a harmonised approach designed for the implementation report). There may be some risks in introducing such narrative sections into the implementation report, but the option may be considered appropriate in some chapters.

Eliminate or reduce statistical indicators

The 2027 Bologna report could substantially reduce statistical indicators based on the UOE data collection (see Chapters 1 and 6 in the 2024 report). The provision of these indicators requires substantial resources to be invested on the side of data collectors, especially due to organising and managing an extra data collection (through a separate project) for countries not covered by the UOE data collection.

The need for statistical data to be included in the Implementation report may be lessened by the establishment of the European Higher Education Sector Observatory (EHESO). Indeed, the EHESO, which has been conceived as a centralised platform integrating diverse higher education data from Erasmus+ programme countries could function as a source of quantitative information complementing or feeding into the 2027 Bologna Process Implementation Report. Currently the geographical coverage of the EHESO includes the majority of EHEA countries but not all of them, and this could be a matter for policy discussion on the future development of the EHESO.

4. Proposal

The Working Group proposes the following outline structure. It aims to align with the adopted working group structures for this period, and is intended as a skeleton which would need to be fleshed out and developed in the coming months:

0) Introduction & executive summary
1) Degree structures

This chapter would include Scorecard indicators on Degree Structures, ECTS and NQF. It would also potentially include information on work being undertaken by other relevant European level projects.

2) Recognition

This chapter would include Scorecard indicators on the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and on Automatic Recognition. Indicators related to recognition of prior non formal and informal learning could also be considered. information on work undertaken by relevant European level projects could also be considered.

3) Quality assurance

This chapter would include Scorecard indicators on compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines, and on student and international representation in external quality assurance. It would also include information on the implementation of the European Approach to quality assurance of joint programmes, as well as on cross-border quality assurance. It would also potentially include information on work in relevant projects at European level. The source for the majority of indicators would be EQAR, and TPG C will be consulted on the specific content.

4) Fundamental Values

The content of this chapter will require discussion with the Fundamental Values Working Group (which is responsible for developing and trialling indicators on fundamental values). Potentially the chapter can provide a state of the art description and analysis of respect and implementation of EHEA fundamental values. It may also include information on relevant European projects on fundamental values. The data collection to the BFUG would be limited to questions related to de jure implementation.

5) Social Dimension

The content of this chapter will require discussion with the Thematic Peer Group on the Social Dimension. It could include up to 5 of the scorecard indicators used in the 2024 report (with data for the other scorecard indicators to be collected in the period leading up to the 2030 report). It would also potentially include information on work being undertaken by other relevant European level projects.

6) Internationalisation and mobility

The content of this chapter will require discussion with the Working Group on mobility and internationalisation, particularly to identify relevant qualitative indicators. Some quantitative data may be extracted from the EHESO, although not every EHEA system would be included. The chapter would also potentially include information on work being undertaken in different European-level projects.

EHEA Long-term Secretariat: Call for expressions of interest for hosting countries and organisations

Proposal of the BFUG Task Force on Establishing a Long-Term Secretariat

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Explanatory note

This document provides the call for expressions of interest for hosting the Secretariat of the European Higher Education Area, including the application, evaluation, and selections process and criteria. The document is for comments and adoption by the BFUG. In order to keep the overall time schedule, the call would need to be launched soon after the BFUG in February 2025[1].

Following the suggestions of the BFUG Board, the TF SEC included a weighing system for the Principles of the EHEA-SEC, and for all sections and items of the application a scoring, similar to the traffic light approach of the Bologna Process Implementation Report. This would help the individual reviewers to express and communicate their evaluation results. On this basis, the TF SEC will be able to analyse the submitted applications in small teams (at least 3 TF members) and agree on final overview which will provide a summative analysis and serve as an input into the BFUG discussion and decision.

The applications and their analysis including evaluations with weighing and scores would allow every BFUG member to form a view on the applications, and inform the discussion of the BFUG on the best hosting arrangement. This approach also seems best to address the diversity of applications that the call may receive, especially as the applications may provide only a limited scope of detail to understand fully specific conditions and circumstances within individual countries or organisations. One may assume that several, maybe all proposals will be of good quality, but also quite different from each other, due to specific individual elements and features.

The evaluation results will be available in autumn 2025, and would be discussed at the Copenhagen BFUG in December 2025. The decision on the hosting arrangement could be taken immediately, or at the Spring BFUG 2026, especially should there be more applications shortlisted.

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[1] For more details on the objectives, process of identification of possible long-term EHEA Secretariat, agreed roadmap and concepts, please, consult the Term of Reference of the Task Force for establishing a long-term Secretariat and reference to conceptual document from the period 2022 – 2024 which are referred to in the chapter II of the proposed call.

Call for expressions of interest for the hosting of the Secretariat of the European Higher Education Area

I. Overall Context

The BFUG has been exploring during the 2021-2024 period the replacement of the present arrangement of a rotating Secretariat (usually staffed and hosted by one BFUG member for one working period) by a long-term Secretariat (with professional international permanent staff and situated in a fixed location).

The Task Force on the Review of Rules and Regulations for the Governance of EHEA concluded that such an arrangement is principally feasible, and provided some concrete suggestions on how it could be established. The Ministers, in the Tirana Communiqué (2024), tasked the BFUG to further explore the issue, in order to prepare a decision in Spring 2026 and, if positive, ensuring the launch of the Secretariat in June 2027.

To this purpose, a new Task Force (TF) on establishing a long-term Secretariat has been set up. One of the questions to be clarified is whether the Secretariat could be hosted by one of BFUG members/consultative members. The BFUG agreed that while such a hosting arrangement would not be mandatory[2], it might be useful for the Secretariat and its work, in terms of material and immaterial benefits and advantages, as laid down below.

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2   The EHEA-SEC can be principally established without any specific hosting arrangement.

II.   The role and tasks of the Secretariat

The role of the Secretariat is defined in the [Rules of Procedures of the EHEA and the BFUG](#), which are based on the present model of the rotating Secretariat, and in consideration of the long-term Secretariat in "[Long-term EHEA Secretariat. Principles and Roadmap](#)." For further information about the activity of the EHEA Secretariat, please refer to the [Terms of Reference](#).

The following elements of the work of the Secretariat are relevant in relation to the hosting party:

A.   Operational role of the Secretariat

- o The Secretariat supports the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) and its working structures by:
  - ▪ Providing neutral administrative, technical, operational and logistical assistance for the meetings and events of the BFUG and its working structures.
  - ▪ Preparing and maintaining official documents, such as reports and meeting minutes.
  - ▪ Coordinating communication with and between BFUG members, the BFUG's working structures and other relevant parties.

B.   Accountability and Independence

- o The Secretariat operates under the authority and guidance of the BFUG.
- o The BFUG oversees the Secretariat's work and ensures its alignment with EHEA goals.

C.   Requirements for its work

- o To fulfil its role, the Secretariat has to enjoy full freedom of operation, without any external pressure. This regards its entire work, including publishing, media use and public speaking.
- o The Secretariat's international staff members, whether employed or seconded and their families may require work and resident permits.

III. Role and Responsibilities of the Host

A. Principles of the establishment of the Secretariat

The hosting arrangement should respect the following principles on which the Secretariat is based:

1. *Independence and Accountability*

The Secretariat should operate independently from the country and/or organisation (with)in which it is hosted. Its legal, financial and organisational arrangements should ensure its independence, minimise the risk of undue influence. It should operate under the authority of and be fully accountable to the BFUG including its governing structure arrangements, reporting and appointment of its staff. Its main source of funding should be contributions by the EHEA members.

2. *Sustainability*

The chosen arrangements for the Secretariat must be sustainable, with a clear perspective on how it can function for a longer term.

3. *Staff*

The Secretariat must be able to recruit and contract a sufficient number of staff, with suitable profiles and competences, from different EHEA countries. The employment rules of the country in which the Secretariat is based should allow for this, under flexible and fair contracts.

In addition to its own staff, the Secretariat should be able to accept secondments from EHEA members and consultative members, according to the rules approved by the BFUG.

4. *Legal Environment*

Regulations of the country where the Secretariat will be located must ensure the rule of law, allow its operation without undue influence of the national and local authorities. There should be no obstacle for receiving funding from different other EHEA countries.

5. *Non-Profit Principle*

The Secretariat would operate on a non-profit basis, with any surpluses reinvested into its budget. It may accumulate a reserve, which however should not exceed one annual budget. Otherwise, the fees for EHEA members should be reduced.

B. Specific responsibilities of the host

Deducting from the description of the role and mode of operation of the Secretariat, the hosting party would not have any immediate legal, financial or organisational responsibilities or competences, beyond those shared by all BFUG members collectively. But, unlike other BFUG members, the host is in a special position as it is familiar with the national legal and regulatory framework in which the Secretariat operates and can lend its knowledge and competences to

support the Secretariat, e.g. by providing advice, and sharing resources, in order to find the most appropriate arrangements and solve or avoid problems.

The relationship between the host and the Secretariat must ensure the Secretariat's operational independence under the BFUG while enabling the host to support its functions through infrastructure, in-kind contributions, and collaboration. By fostering this partnership, the host plays a valuable role in advancing the mission of the EHEA and in contributing to its success. The BFUG is recognisant and grateful for this contribution.

This engagement would be a voluntary one, that has its limits in the host's resources and competences, but also as it must not compromise the independence of the Secretariat. Therefore, the call distinguishes between compulsory and optional elements that applicants should consider in their expression of interest.

In designing the application, the applicants should consider that the expected size of the EHEA Secretariat is around 8 (eight) full-time equivalent personnel.

Based on these principles, applications should address the elements below. In case of a consortium, they should be respected by all consortium members.

1. Legal and Operational Recognition (compulsory)

Support the Secretariat to function effectively within its national jurisdiction, including its recognition as an operational entity with legal personality, ability to enter legal arrangements and flexibly employ staff, ability to easily receive funding from other EHEA countries without substantial financial costs

Support the Secretariat in the process of receiving visas, residence and work permits for its employed staff and seconded staff members.

2. Facilitation of Collaboration and Local Support (compulsory)

Assist in navigating national and local administrative processes to ease the Secretariat's operations, especially assisting the Secretariat with legal registration in the country, including judicial procedures if appropriate, and offering guidance in adequately complying with legal frameworks, for example on fiscal, social security and employment related matters.

3. Coordination and Communication (compulsory)

Designate within the host's organisation a liaison person or contact point to facilitate smooth communication between the Secretariat, the BFUG and its working structures and the host.

4. Financial and in-kind contribution (optional)

The main source of income for the Secretariat must not come from the host, but from the regular contributions of the BFUG members. But as any other BFUG member, the host can allocate to the Secretariat a financial contribution beyond the required one. This should take place via the usual process through which BFUG members would contribute to the Secretariat's operating costs. As such, the application should only refer to the host's own additional contribution to the hosting the Secretariat.

The host is welcome to contribute to the Secretariats operation in-kind support, such as: provision of an office, at no cost or at an advantageous rate, or the bailment agreement for it, furniture, office equipment, and other resources; access to meeting venues and logistical support for events; interpretation or translation services for logistical purposes, if required; advantageous fiscal treatment, for example in relation to taxes and fees. The host can propose secondments to the EHEA Secretariat through the same procedure as any other BFUG member.

Any potential financial or in-kind contribution of the host should not imply any influence on the Secretariat's operations and agenda.

C. Engagement in the establishment of the Secretariat

1. Transparent and reliable engagement and commitment

Whatever the engagement or contribution of the host is, it should be reliable, predictable and transparent. Expressions of interest should spell out what the host may offer, but also the limitations, in terms of the nature, volume and duration of any support or contribution, and distinguish between guaranteed and potential provisions.

2. Initial support for the establishment of the Secretariat

While hosting is an enduring task, it can be assumed that the Secretariat will need the host's support in particular during the first 1-2 years of its establishment, and even more so in the first months before and after its establishment, with regards to

- Establishment of the legal status in the country
- Identification of premises
- Visa, resident and working permits for staff members

IV. Submission and review of applications

- Applications should be submitted by emailing the filled application form (Annex 1) and the budget template (Annex 2) to EHEA Secretariat - secretariat@ehea.info - by **12ᵗʰ of June 2025 at 12 CEST** in zip format. Late submissions will not be considered.

- The EHEA Secretariat will register all applications received in good time and perform an administrative compliance check.

- If an application has been submitted on time, but does not pass the administrative compliance check, e.g. because of an incomplete application form, or a missing document, the applicant will be invited to supplement it within 48h.

- The EHEA Secretariat will submit the applications to the Task Force.

- The Task Force will review the applications. At the start of the process, Task Force members should clearly indicate any actual or potential conflict of interest; as a result, they may not participate in the review process or the analysis of individual applications. A Task Force member must not analyse the application submitted by its own country or organisation.

- The Tasks Force, at any stage, may request additional information and clarifications from the applicants. These communications will be facilitated by the EHEA Secretariat.

- Each proposal will be reviewed by at least 3 TF members. The Task Force members will conduct this task independently and submit their analysis to the EHEA Secretariat. In case of major disagreements between the 3 reviews, additional analysis can be organised.

- The EHEA Secretariat will record the reviews and share them with the Task Force, for a meeting in September 2025. The Task Force will analyse the proposals, discuss the reviews, and form an opinion.

- The EHEA Secretariat will submit all applications, the reviews by TF members and the opinion of the Task Force to the BFUG

- At the December 2025 BFUG meeting, the applicants will be invited to present their applications. The BFUG may decide on a host, or to shortlist several candidates, for a decision to be taken after the BFUG meeting, in a written procedure, or at the spring 2026 BFUG.

- The final selection has to be taken in at the spring 2026 BFUG. At the same meeting the Go/No-Go decision on the Secretariat will take place, which will allow the process to be formally concluded by an agreement between the BFUG, represented by its Co-chairs, and the host.

V.   Evaluation criteria & checklist for applicants

Applications will be analysed based on the following aspects:

- ability to meet the principles described in section III:

    - Independence and accountability
    - Sustainability
    - Staff
    - Legal environment
    - Non-Profit Principle

- suitability and flexibility of the country's legal framework and the proposed legal form;

- openness and flexibility of employment regulations in terms of hiring nationals from other EHEA countries as well as receiving secondments.

- accessibility of the proposed location from across the EHEA;

- cost (budget required for usual salaries, premises, other costs and taxes).

- potential commitments of the country (if any, with a clear indication that this should not impact the neutrality and independence of the Secretariat, the approach should be generally open for in-kind contributions, e.g. provision of an office space).

A. Assessment scale

Applications and their responses will evaluated on the basis of the following scale:

Level of meeting the criteria	Score / colour
does not meet requirements	Red / 1
partially meets requirements	Yellow / 2
fully meets requirements	Green / 3
exceeds the requirements and shows evidence	Blue / 4

Principles and requirements for the Secretariat	Resulting responsibilities and tasks for hosts	Weight
A. Principles		**80%**
1. Independence and Accountability		20 %
The Secretariat should operate independently from the country and/or organisation (with)in which it is hosted. Its legal, financial and organisational arrangements should ensure its independence, minimise the risk of undue influence. It should operate under the authority of and be fully accountable to the BFUG including its governing structure arrangements, reporting and appointment of its staff. Its main source of funding should be contributions by the EHEA members.	• no immediate legal, financial or organisational responsibilities or competences, beyond those shared by all BFUG members collectively[3]. • lend its knowledge and competences, due a special position due to the host's familiarity with the national legal and regulatory framework • no interference into the Secretariat and its work[4]	
2. Sustainability		15 %
The chosen arrangements for the Secretariat must be sustainable, with a clear perspective on how it can function for a longer term.	• Support the Secretariat to function effectively within its national jurisdiction, including its recognition as an operational entity with legal personality, ability to enter legal arrangements and flexibly employ staff, ability to easily receive funding from other EHEA countries without substantial financial costs • Any engagement or contribution of the host should be reliable, predictable and transparent. Expressions of interest should spell out what the host may offer, but also the limitations, in terms of the nature, volume and duration of any support or contribution, and distinguish between guaranteed and potential provisions.	

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[3] The main source of income for the Secretariat must not come from the host, but from the regular contributions of the BFUG members. But as any other BFUG member, the host can allocate to the Secretariat a financial contribution beyond the required one. This should take place via the usual process through which BFUG members would contribute to the Secretariat's operating costs. As such, the application should only refer to the host's own additional contribution to the hosting the Secretariat.

[4] The relationship between the host and the Secretariat must ensure the Secretariat's operational independence under the BFUG while enabling the host to support its functions through infrastructure, in-kind contributions, and collaboration. By fostering this partnership, the host plays a valuable role in advancing the mission of the EHEA and in contributing to its success. The BFUG is recognisant and grateful for this contribution.

Principles and requirements for the Secretariat	Resulting responsibilities and tasks for hosts	Weight
3. Staff		15 %
The Secretariat must be able to recruit and contract a sufficient number of staff, with suitable profiles and competences, from different EHEA countries. The employment rules of the country in which the Secretariat is based should allow for this, under flexible and fair contracts. In addition to its own staff, the Secretariat should be able to accept secondments from EHEA members and consultative members, according to the rules approved by the BFUG.	• Support the Secretariat in the process of receiving visas, residence and work permits for its employed staff and seconded staff members. • No unduly restrictions for citizens of EHEA countries	
4. Legal environment		15 %
Regulations of the country where the Secretariat will be located must ensure the rule of law, allow its operation without undue influence of the national and local authorities. There should be no obstacle for receiving funding from different other EHEA countries.	• Allow the Secretariat to operate independently, without unduly interference of authorities, limited bureaucratic efforts, ability to receive funding from abroad etc. • Assist in navigating national and local administrative processes to ease the Secretariat's operations, especially assisting the Secretariat with legal registration in the country, including judicial procedures if appropriate, and offering guidance in adequately complying with legal frameworks, for example on fiscal, social security and employment related matters.	
5. Non-Profit Principle		15 %
The Secretariat would operate on a non-profit basis, with any surpluses reinvested into its budget. It may accumulate a reserve, which however should not exceed one annual budget. Otherwise, the fees for EHEA members should be reduced.	• Enable the Secretariat to operate as a non-profit organization, as an association, a foundation, or under another status to be specified	
Additional requirements		**20%**
6. Envisaged costs for the Secretariat	• A realistic calculation of the approximate costs – in the itemized budget template provided – around 8 full-time equivalent personnel	**5%**
7. Accessibility	• Country and venue of the Secretariat must be suitable for in- and outgoing travel for citizens of all EHEA countries	**5%**
8. Support (non-material)	• How the hosting country/organisation administration can support the Secretariat, and how this support will	**10%**

Principles and requirements for the Secretariat	Resulting responsibilities and tasks for hosts	Weight
	be organised and offered[5]. • Also specification how the host can contribute to the Secretariate in a initial period of its establishment[6]	
Financial or in-kind contribution	• Indication of any in-kind, volume and duration[7]	**Bonus[8]**

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[5]   e.g. by providing advice, and sharing resources, in order to find the most appropriate arrangements and solve or avoid problems. This engagement would be a voluntary one, that has its limits in the host's resources and competences, but also as it must not compromise the independence of the Secretariat. Therefore, the call distinguishes between compulsory and optional elements that applicants should consider in their expression of interest.

[6]   While hosting is an enduring task, it can be assumed that the Secretariat will need the host's support in particular during the first 1-2 years of its establishment, and even more so in the first months before and after its establishment, with regards to a) establishment of the legal status in the country; b) identification of premises, c) visa, resident and working permits for staff members

[7]   The host is welcome to contribute to the Secretariats operation in-kind support, such as: provision of an office, at no cost or at an advantageous rate, or the bailment agreement for it, furniture, office equipment, and other resources; access to meeting venues and logistical support for events; interpretation or translation services for logistical purposes, if required; advantageous fiscal treatment, for example in relation to taxes and fees. The host can propose secondments to the EHEA Secretariat through the same procedure as any other BFUG member. Any potential financial or in-kind contribution of the host should not imply any influence on the Secretariat's operations and agenda.

[8]   The in-kind contribution as an optional offer will be considered, mentioned in analysis, but not scored.

Annex 1 – Application Form

Application Form for the expression of interest for hosting the EHEA Secretariat

- Please fill in the template attached (Annex 1) containing the application form.

- Please try to respond to the questions of the form as complete and accurate as possible. The maximum number of words are estimative (not an eligibility criterion).

- If you have any questions, please address them to the TF Co-chairs and the Secretariat. Questions and responses will be shared with all potential applicants.

- Feel free to include additional information and documentation that you think might be helpful, in the application or referenced as annexes.

- Based on the expression of interest, you may be invited to answer further questions, in writing and/or during online meetings with the TF. A presentation of the application to the BFUG is expected in autumn 2025.

A. Administrative information	
1. **Applicant (or consortium leader)**	*Insert text*
2. **Legal representative**	*Insert text*
3. **Contact person and information**	*Insert text*
4. **Consortium members** (if applicable), contacts	*Insert text*

B. Facts and information regarding the hosting of the Secretariat

Please provide the necessary factual information as accurately as possible. Also indicate in case of issues where you are not entirely sure, and that you do not know.

5. Legal form (max. 2000 words)

Please advise on what would be best legal form for the Secretariat in the national context and describe the regulatory framework. Please describe the national legislation to the extent in which it allows flexibility for the governance and operations of the Secretariat.

a) As an association
b) As a foundation
c) Any other form
d) Any other explanation or information you want to add

Insert   text

6. Location (max. 400 words)

a) *Do you suggest a particular, or several venues and locations?**i
b) *If so, under what conditions and why do you think they are suitable?*
c) *If not, can you propose how venue and location should be identified, regarding the criteria and the process?*

Insert text

7. Budget

Please include an approximate budget estimate, based on national costs and the resources required for the operation of the Secretariat, that would be realistic for a Secretariat established in this location. Please note that if established, the main source of income for the Secretariat is not expected to come from the host, but from the regular contributions of the BFUG members.

Send the budget separately as an annex, based on the template provided in annex 2.

8. Other models (max 400 words) – *optional*

Can you suggest any other entity comparable to the EHEA Secretariat, located in your country, that could serve as a model?

Insert text

C. Conditions to be met

9. Complying with the hosting principles (max. 6000 words)

Elaborate separately how your application complies with each principle in section III) for hosting the Secretariat.

a) Independence and Accountability

The Secretariat should operate independently from the country and/or organisation (with)in which it is hosted. Its legal, financial and organisational arrangements should ensure its independence, minimise the risk of undue influence. It should operate under the authority of and be fully accountable to the BFUG including its governing structure arrangements, reporting and appointment of its staff. Its main source of funding should be contributions by the EHEA members.

b) Sustainability

The chosen arrangements for the Secretariat must be sustainable, with a clear perspective on how it can function for a longer term.

c) Staff

The Secretariat must be able to recruit and contract a sufficient number of staff, with suitable profiles and competences, from different EHEA countries. The employment rules of the country in which the Secretariat is based should allow for this, under flexible and fair contracts. In addition to its own staff, the Secretariat should be able to accept secondments from EHEA members and consultative members, according to the rules approved by the BFUG.

d) Legal environment

Regulations of the country where the Secretariat will be located must ensure the rule of law, allow its operation without undue influence of the national and local authorities. There should be no obstacle for receiving funding from different other EHEA countries.

e) Non-Profit principle

The Secretariat would operate on a non-profit basis, with any surpluses reinvested into its budget. It may accumulate a reserve, which however should not exceed one annual budget. Otherwise, the fees for EHEA members should be reduced.

10. Ability to fulfil the roadmap (max. 1200 words)

Please detail the necessary steps and the approximate time needed to establish the Secretariat once a decision would be taken by the BFUG.
a) Between Spring 2026, and June 2027, is it realistic to establish the Secretariat in the country, legally (legal status, registration, visa, residency and working permit for the director and other staff members, etc.) and physically (identification of venue and rental of office premises)
b) Would you as the host be able to provide the necessary support to ensure this

Insert text

D. Host motivation, contribution and self-assessment

11. Motivation and capacity of the host (max. 800 words)

What is your motivation, your main ideas and intentions in offering to host the Secretariat? In what ways can you, directly or through related administration and organizations and agencies contribute to the support of the Secretariat? (pls. avoid overlap with the next question)

Insert text

12. Financial and in-kind contributions (max. 600 words) – *optional*

Expressions of interest should spell out what the host may offer, but also the limitations, in terms of the nature, volume and duration of any support or contribution, and distinguish between guaranteed and potential provisions

13. Relevance (max. 400 words)

Why do you think your proposal is suitable?

Insert text

E. Summary

14. Summary (max. 500 words)

Please summarize the main points, in presenting how you mange that the EHEA Secretariat could operate, within the hosting arrangement that you proposed above

Insert text

F. Annexes – *optional*

Please list below the annexes that you attach to this application, apart from the budget

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Name of the legal representative, position
Signature of the legal representative

ⁱ "suggest" does not mean provide or offer.

Discussion on the process of revising the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in EHEA

BFUG meeting XCV, Warsaw (Poland), 24-25 February 2025
Plenary Session (1,5h)

Background Paper

1. Introduction and context

The Tirana Ministerial Communiqué acknowledges that the application of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) "promotes trust and transparency within and between higher education systems and facilitates accountability and enhancement". Considering that the last version of the document was approved through the Yerevan Communiqué in 2015[1], and in order "to keep them in line with ongoing developments, challenges and expectations" the ministers gave mandate to the authors[2] of the ESG to revise the document ahead of the next Ministerial conference. The authors have been tasked with presenting a revision proposal by 2026, with the final version of the ESG to be adopted at the 2027 Ministerial conference. If and where necessary, the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes[3] will also be updated.

At the XCIII Bologna Follow-Up Group meeting, hosted by Hungary in Budapest between 26-27 September 2024, a briefing note[4] on process and structures for the ESG revision was presented.

Between 2022 and 2024, an extensive stakeholder consultation – involving ministries, students, higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies - was carried out within the QA-FIT project, financed by the ERASMUS+ Programme (call ERASMUS-EDU-2021-EHEA-IBA). Key outcomes of the project, including the outcomes of stakeholder consultations, are available here.

The ESG revision Steering Committee has so far met twice (30 September and 4 December 2024), while the Drafting Committee also held two meetings. An updated roadmap for the continuation of the process is included in Annex to this paper.

2. Discussions and outcomes so far

In this initial stage of the work on the ESG revision, the Steering Committee (SC) and the Drafting Group (DG) focused on the introductory part of the ESG: *Context, scope, purposes and*

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[1]https://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2015_Yerevan/72/7/European_Standards_and_Guidelines_for_Q uality_Assurance_in_the_EHEA_2015_MC_613727.pdf

[2] The primary authors are ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE - the E4 Group, in cooperation with Business Europe, EI and EQAR.

[3]https://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2015_Yerevan/73/1/European_Approach_QA_of_Joint_Program mes_613731.pdf

[4]https://ehea.info/Download/ESG%20revision%20process%20and%20structures_for%20BFUG%20Sept %202024.pdf

principles. The main topics debated, relevant to the scope of the plenary session, are outlined below.

(1) Definitions of key concepts

> *(…) stakeholders, who may prioritise different purposes, can view quality in higher education differently and quality assurance needs to take into account these different perspectives. Quality, whilst not easy to define, is mainly a result of the interaction between teachers, students and the institutional learning environment.* (ESG 2015, p. 7)

Questions were raised about whether the notion of "quality" itself needs to be defined. The SC agreed that although a brief description can be included, the document needs to remain as open as possible to different concepts of quality in higher education.

(2) Scope

> *The focus of the ESG is on quality assurance related to learning and teaching in higher education, including the learning environment and relevant links to research and innovation.* (ESG 2015, p.7)

In complementarity with the feedback gathered through the QA-FIT project, some potential expansion areas include research activities, service to society, social dimension, and fundamental values such as academic freedom. The SC agreed that the focus of the ESG should remain on learning and teaching, but that there might be a stronger reference to the links to the research and societal missions of institutions. It is worth underlining that countries can decide to include also other aspects of the higher education institutions activities in their quality assurance procedures.

(3) Applicability

> *The ESG apply to all higher education offered in the EHEA regardless of the mode of study or place of delivery. Thus, the ESG are also applicable to all higher education including transnational and cross-border provision. In this document the term "programme" refers to higher education in its broadest sense, including that which is not part of a programme leading to a formal degree.* (ESG 2015, p.7)

Another issue that was discussed was whether to define the scope of the ESG in terms of educational level it applies to, i.e. "higher education". This question has both a structural dimension – in correlation with the qualification frameworks, and a content dimension – i.e. does higher education require certain academic or scientific rigour. It was concluded that the ESG should be almost fully neutral to the content of the programme, while its applicability should be connected to provision aiming for alignment with qualification framework levels corresponding to the levels of QF EHEA.

The current version of the ESG is already deemed applicable to all types of higher education provision. It was however discussed whether that link needs to be made more explicit with references to providers other than higher education institutions ("alternative providers") and to units of learning smaller than full programmes (e.g. micro-credentials). The SC agreed that the focus of the ESG needs to be on the provision itself, regardless of what type of entity delivers it, and that all elements of the ESG need to be suitable for different types of educational offer, including micro-credentials. However, in ensuring this, the ESG should not be made too vague or generic to the point where it would lose its guidance function for the primary actors in delivering higher education in Europe, which are higher education institutions.

(4) Structure

The standards for quality assurance have been divided into three parts:

- *Internal quality assurance*
- *External quality assurance*
- *Quality assurance agencies*

(...)The standards set out agreed and accepted practice for quality assurance in higher education in the EHEA and should, therefore, be taken account of and adhered to by those concerned, in all types of higher education provision. (...)

The guidelines explain why the standard is important and describe how standards might be implemented. They set out good practice in the relevant area for consideration by the actors involved in quality assurance. Implementation will vary depending on different contexts. (ESG 2015, p.9)

After thorough discussion and consideration, the SC agreed that the current structure should be maintained, even though there are cases in which the compliance of the quality assurance agencies with the ESG standards can be achieved only in certain legal framework conditions set at the national level. It was also underlined that the definition of standards should be self-explanatory, and not rely on the implementation indications described in the guidelines.

3. Questions for discussion

The objective of this plenary session is to determine the opinion of the BFUG members on key elements included in the introductory part of the ESG, reflecting on the following questions:

1. Which concepts should be defined by the ESG as being related to the scope of the document? Are the definitions for quality and quality assurance sufficient?
2. Should learning and teaching and the relevant links to research still remain the main focus of the ESG?
3. To which types of institutions and programmes should the ESGs apply?
4. Does the current structure of the ESG adequately support the implementation of the Bologna Process key commitment in quality assurance?

BFUG_PL_AL_95_7_1_ESG discussion background paper_11.02.2025

Next steps and timeline

The ESG revision Steering and Drafting Committee will continue working on the revision in accordance with the roadmap presented below. The roadmap will be modified if needed, based on the decision of the Steering Committee.

Date	Meeting/actors	Action
2025		
As needed between each SC meeting	DG meetings	Prepare each new draft of the ESG (and EAJP)
24-25 February 2025	BFUG meeting in Poland	1,5 hour session for discussion on key issues for the ESG revision
12 March 2025	SC meeting	Discuss input from BFUG, the draft Introduction, and directions for revision of Part 1
9 June 2025	SC meeting	Discuss draft Part 1 and on directions revision for revision of Part 2 and 3 Launch work on the EAJP
11 September	SC meeting	Discuss Draft Part 2 and 3
9 December 2025	SC meetings	Finalise draft ESG to be launched in public consultation
Autumn 2025	BFUG meeting in Denmark	TBC session for comments on draft of ESG
Winter 2025		Launch Public consultation on draft of the ESG
2026		
Early 2026	Meetings of the SC and DG	Work on ESG and EAJP
Spring 2026	BFUG meeting in Cyprus	TBC session to discuss ESG and EAJP
Spring/summer 2026		TBC consultation on drafts of ESG and EAJP
Autumn 2026	BFUG meeting Ireland	BFUG approve the final versions of the ESG 2027 and the EAPJ 2027
2027		
Spring 2027	Bologna Process Ministerial Conference in Romania/Moldova	EHEA Ministers adopt the ESG 2027 and EAJP 2027

SC: Steering Committee
DG: Drafting Group
ESG: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA
EAJP: European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes

Lifelong Learning in the EHEA

Background Paper from the Task Force on the Future of Bologna

Lifelong Learning has been recognised as an essential element of the European Higher Education Area since the Ministers met in Prague in 2001. The 2001 Prague Communiqué signals that in a Europe built on a knowledge-based society and economy, lifelong learning strategies are necessary to face the challenges of competitiveness and the use of new technologies, and to improve social cohesion, equal opportunities and quality of life.

Since then, there has been growing awareness of the need to embed lifelong learning within higher education, if we are to meet the challenges of the future. This includes the particular challenges arising from the changing demography of EHEA.

Increasingly, lifelong learning is seen as a cross-cutting issue, inherent in all aspects of the Bologna Process. The following steps were deemed necessary for the implementation of lifelong learning:

- widening access to higher education;
- creating more flexible, student-centred modes of delivery;
- improving the recognition of prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning;
- developing national qualifications frameworks
- improving cooperation with employers, especially in the development of educational programmes;

The 2007 London Communiqué reports that some elements of flexible learning exist in most countries, but a more systematic development of flexible learning paths to support lifelong learning is at an early stage. Ministers have therefore asked the Bologna Follow-up Group to increase the sharing of good practice and work towards a common understanding of the role of higher education in lifelong learning.

The 2009 Leuven/Louvain-La-Neuve Communiqué further specified the concept of lifelong learning, stating *"lifelong learning implies that qualifications may be obtained through flexible learning paths, including part-time studies, as well as work-based routes"*. The Ministers also acknowledged that successful policies for lifelong learning would include basic principles and procedures for recognition of prior learning on the basis of learning outcomes. Further on, the Ministers aimed to have national qualifications frameworks implemented and prepared for self-certification against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area by 2012.

The 2012 Bucharest Communiqué reaffirmed the role of lifelong learning as one of the important factors in meeting the needs of a changing labour market, and stressed the central role of higher education institutions in transferring knowledge and strengthening regional development, including by the continuous development of competences and reinforcement of knowledge alliances.

The 2024 Tirana Communiqué stated that *"the need for Lifelong learning in society is increasing, especially for all those requiring or desiring new competences to enhance their professional, personal or civic potential. Learning paths need to be flexible, properly delivered, quality assured, and recognised. They should promote inclusion, upskilling and reskilling, and be aligned with the requirements of learners, changing societies and labour markets. This also includes the recognition of prior learning, and new forms of education provision, such as micro-credentials. We commit to fostering such flexible learning paths in all higher education programmes."*

Topics Relevant to the EHEA and the Bologna Process

LEARNERS AND STAFF

To support lifelong learning in the EHEA, both learners and staff should have access to opportunities that encourage ongoing development. It is vital to **include under-represented groups in participation** in order to build a higher education system that is inclusive, diverse, and offers equal opportunity. It is not enough to create entry points in order to broaden access - attention must be widened to include **access, participation, and success** so that learners from every background can gain entry to higher education and receive assistance throughout their educational journey to achieve successful completion of their studies.

With changing labour markets and the emergence of new skill requirements, many individuals pursue upskilling or reskilling. To meet the needs of these **work-based learners**, institutions should provide flexible and adaptable learning pathways that take into account previous experience and learning. **Recognition of prior learning** can lower entry barriers and allow more people to participate in higher education without unnecessary coursework, enabling learners to transition more smoothly between work and study.

Cost can be a significant factor affecting uptake of lifelong learning and therefore, it is important that lifelong learning is financially affordable and accessible for everyone. This means considering issues such as tuition fees, the availability of financial support, and employer-sponsored education initiatives as well as financial aid, scholarships, and work-study programmes.

FLEXIBLE LEARNING

Flexible learning is a central tenet of lifelong learning, requiring a broad spectrum of delivery methods and environments. Learning can take place in various **locations**, including traditional onsite university campuses, online platforms, work-based training environments, and community-based learning hubs such as libraries and local education centres. Expanding learning opportunities across these different locations ensures that education is not confined to conventional classroom settings.

Knowledge dissemination through **open online sources** is becoming increasingly relevant and online learning platforms provide accessible, high-quality educational content to a broader audience, removing geographical and time constraints, which can act as barriers.

Lifelong learning is available in a **variety of modes**, including continuous learning, part-time study, modular courses, distance learning, evening and summer classes, and self-directed study. These flexible approaches accommodate individuals who need to balance education with work, family, caring or other commitments. Modular and stackable courses allow learners to build their qualifications over time rather than committing to long-term study programmes.

Methodologies and pedagogical approaches enhance the learning experience. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) promotes inclusivity by ensuring that courses are designed to accommodate a diverse range of learning styles and needs.

The **content** of lifelong learning should be aligned with workforce demands and societal needs. Reskilling and upskilling are key priorities, with curricula designed in such a way so as to support both personal and professional growth and bridge the gap between education and employment.

Assessment strategies may need to align with the evolving landscape of education and employment. Competency-based assessment models, which focus on demonstrating practical skills and knowledge, can provide a more effective measure of a learner's abilities compared to traditional examinations.

Criterion-referenced assessments ensure that learners meet clearly defined benchmarks, offering transparency and consistency in evaluation.

Certification mechanisms are critical for validating lifelong learning achievements, providing learners with formal recognition of their skills and knowledge. Micro-credentials and stackable degrees allow learners to earn qualifications in smaller, manageable units that can be accumulated over time, supporting a more personalised learning journey

ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT

Enhancing engagement is essential for the success of lifelong learning. **Career services** should provide lifelong career guidance and skills development support. **Employer engagement** should support alignment of educational provision with labour market needs while collaboration with **local communities**, including libraries and other public institutions, has the potential to expand access to learning resources and support networks. **Targeted outreach programmes** can also ensure that specific groups, such as marginalised cohorts and non-traditional learners, are included in lifelong learning opportunities.

Finally, **digital platforms** such as online learning environments can provide digital solutions that support lifelong learners. Leveraging technology to enhance accessibility, engagement, and efficiency can ensure that lifelong learning opportunities are available to a broader audience.

Questions for the BFUG:

- *Is this a relevant and live topic for Bologna and EHEA?*
- *What are the challenges and opportunities for higher education?*
- *Which tools are most important in enabling lifelong learning?*
- *Are the Bologna tools ready for use for micro-credentials?*
- *How useful are these tools for enabling lifelong learning? Is there the potential for a new tool?*
- *Are there other ways we can enhance the Bologna Process to enable lifelong learning?*
- *Is there potential for synergies with EEA-ERA to progress lifelong learning?*
- *How long will this take? Are there any potential quick wins, new ideas or solutions?*

XCV Bologna Follow-up meeting

25th of February 2025

Plenary session on „Artificial Intelligence in the context of Higher Education"

General background document

How to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in higher education.

In the Rome Communiqué, the ministers noted that *'While our societies increasingly rely on innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence, we must ensure that these observe ethical standards and human rights and foster inclusion. We recognize that digitalisation does not offer 'one size fits all' solutions, and ask the BFUG to propose ways in which all learners can benefit from the new technologies.'*

Due to the advent of large language models (LLMs) and the proliferation of AI tools, higher education required swift adaptations to gauge the technology, be aware of and minimise its pitfalls and ensure that students learn about AI and with AI in a qualitative, research-based and outcomes-oriented manner.

As a consequence, a more consistent space was dedicated to AI in the most recent Tirana Communiqué. Ministers acknowledged that *'Artificial intelligence (AI) impacts our societies and economies, and also learning, teaching, assessment and research. This requires the adaptation of existing, and development of new practices and policies at the level of institutions and systems in due consideration of opportunities, risks, and challenges. In particular, the ethical considerations in the development and deployment of AI are imperative. Its use should be free of biases, ensure the primacy of human decision-making, maintain data ethics and privacy, and protect academic integrity. Students and staff should be supported to understand and use AI responsibly.* Ministers also committed to *'supporting the ethical, trustworthy, responsible, and rights-based use of AI in learning and teaching, as well as in research practice, to ensure transparency, fairness, student and staff participation and well-being.'*

A specific mandate was given to the BFUG *to consider in its work the wider and longer-term impact of the digital transition on higher education in the EHEA, including AI, and in particular with regard to the key commitments and the use of Bologna Process tools.*

In the BFUG Work Programme 2024-2027, adopted at the XCIII meeting in Budapest in September 2024, the topic of AI was included as a transversal topic, to be tackled by the BFUG working structures in line with their mandate and responsibilities.

Within the international cooperation frameworks related to higher education, several initiatives have taken shape to support the ethical use of AI in higher education, to analyse its impact or offer policy guidelines to public authorities and stakeholders. Most notably, such developments have taken place within the European Union, the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

The plenary session will be divided into two parts: an expert presentation and a plenary discussion.

The expert introduction will be delivered by Dr. Jan Kwapisz - researcher at the Faculty of Physics at the University of Warsaw, expert in the field of artificial intelligence, with the following structure:

1. What is AI?

AI is systems that analyze data, recognize patterns, and automate decisions. Modern models are multimodal (e.g., they process text and images). AI is not conscious or magical—it is algorithms based on statistics.

2. What to teach in AI programming

- Basics: math, statistics, Python, TensorFlow, PyTorch.

- Practice: model training, data analysis, LLMs, AI implementation.

- Projects: hackathons, real data, AI in applications

3. What to teach in AI for non-programmers

- Business and humanities: data analysis, NLP.

- Ethics and social implications of AI.

- No-code tools: ChatGPT, AutoML, AI in Didactics.

4. AI in higher education

- Personalization of teaching: chatbots, recommendations.

- Automation: AI in administration, assessment of works.

- Scientific research: big data analysis, AI search engines

5. Proposal of an AI platform for lecturers and universities

- Toolkit: generative models, text analysis.

- Repository of didactic scenarios.

- Integration with LMS: AI supporting teaching and assessment.

Following the presentation and questions on the presentation, the plenary discussion will include the following questions:

1) What are the issues and main subjects of interest in your country, among the public authorities and stakeholders (higher education institutions, students, staff etc) regarding the use of AI in higher education?

2) Have you established/do you plan to establish national policies regarding the use of AI in higher education? If yes, what do they aim to achieve?

3) What do you see as the scope for EHEA's work on AI, ensuring synergies with other initiatives, such as those of the Council of Europe and the European Union?

Application for a BFUG partnership status

Dear BFUG Board,

We are pleased to submit an application from the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) for a partnership status within the Bolognia Follow-Up Group (BFUG).

EFEE is a recognised European social partner organisation for education employers and represents 61 education employers' organisations across all education sectors — from ECEC and VET to higher education and research — in 27 European countries. In the higher education sector alone, EFEE represents 25 education employers including ministries of education, university rectors' conferences, networks of private universities and local governments. Our mission to improve the quality of teaching and management for all through European cooperation and dialogue is based on the European Pillar of Social Rights. Through its activities, EFEE raises awareness and strengthens commitment to the European policy agenda, and shapes European policy by amplifying the voices of its members. Thereby, EFEE is in constant dialogue with EU institutions as well as other European partners such as trade unions and various educational networks. With its expertise, EFEE can significantly contribute to BFUG's WG on Learning & Teaching.

EFEE's activities and the Work Programme align closely with BFUG priorities. Specifically, by supporting education employers and ensuring that their perspectives shape relevant policies at the European levels, EFEE contributes to inclusive, high-quality education and training systems, as outlined in Tirana Communiqué. In this commitment, as a European social partner in education, EFEE actively participates in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education (ESSDE) facilitated by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL). Part of these activities are two Working Group meetings, one of which is concentrated on the HE. This work, in turn, can be reflected in input for the BFUG's WG on Social Dimension.

Among its policy activities, EFEE co-leads the established European Parliament Intergroup on the Future of Education and Skills for a Competitive Europe. Since 2013, EFEE members and its Secretariat actively participated in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture's (DG EAC) Working Groups, structured within the European Education Area's Strategic Framework. EFEE's involvement in the Education and Training 2025 (ET2025) Working Groups enables direct contributions to policy discussions and strategic planning aligned with the EEA's objectives. In these working groups, including one on higher education, EFEE actively contributes through its members' expertise by attending the Peer Learning Activities, and plays a critical advocacy role for education employers across Europe. EFEE representatives ensure that the distinct needs and perspectives of education employers are fully represented in EU-level policy discussions. As outlined in the BFUG Work Plan 2021-2024 and coupled with EFEE's relentless work, we can provide input into Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue and an *ad hoc* Task Force to increase synergies between EU-initiatives, including EHEA, HE aspect of the EEA and the ERA.

Currently, EFEE manages eight projects aimed at building the capacity of education employers. These include a project on "*Sustainable competitiveness in the twin transition through higher education staff acquisition – academia-industry collaboration and hybrid careers supporting experienced professionals in accessing the teaching and research professions in HE in Europe*" (HigherED4Industry), which aims to bridge the gap between academia and industry by supporting experienced professionals in transitioning to teaching and research roles within higher education institutions across Europe. Another project, which includes HEIs, is the joint EFEE-ETUCE project about "*Schools as learning institutions – European social partners in education promoting effective quality and innovation management models in the education sector in a post COVID-19 era*" (LearningSchools), focusing on effective quality and innovation management in education institutions, including universities, after COVID-19. Through these projects, EFEE supports and promotes collaboration between education employers and public authorities by providing the space for stakeholders to meet and strengthen their partnerships, exploring country-specific education systems to discuss challenges and opportunities, and providing topic-specific policy recommendations.
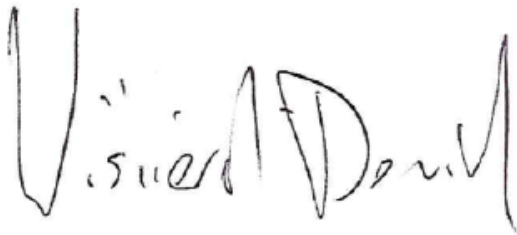
In addition, EFEE has a strong network of education employers across Europe that fosters the organisation's collective voice and impact. In this commitment, EFEE is the coordinator of the Educational Leadership Network Europe (ELNE), which represents the voice of thousands of education employers, teachers, school heads, parents, students, researchers, and policymakers. This vast network unites 60 member organisations from 25 countries and is composed of top research-oriented universities and other relevant actors. ELNE is a European-level network that also encompasses a variety of national, regional, and local institutions within the formal education and training sector.

The partnership status at BFUG will offer valuable opportunities for EFEE, as collaboration with EHEA stakeholders will ensure that employers' needs and perspectives are considered in education reform development. Partnering with the BFUG will open doors for EFEE to broaden its network with education stakeholders, policymakers, and institutions across Europe. Additionally, the opportunity to participate in BFUG events and meetings will provide a platform for exchanging practices, and to be engaged in policies that shape the future of education. Looking at the above-mentioned BFUG Work Plan 2021-2024, we noticed that other relevant education actors are represented, while employers' voices seem not to be present. Therefore, we would like to fill this gap to ensure a diversified perspective in such a crucial area.

In summary, EFEE brings added value to BFUG with its extensive representation of education employers and delivers new insights regarding the practical needs of education leaders in various contexts. EFEE's mission and work can significantly contribute to BFUG's WGs, *ad hoc* Task Force or Coordination Group on GPD. Given our shared priorities, EFEE is eager to become and commit as a partner of the BFUG to further contribute our expertise and ensure the perspective of education employers is integrated into higher education policies and practices.

We remain at your disposal should you require any further information and thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Wisniewski
EFEE General Secretary

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

(7th and final draft, 30.6.09)

Part I. Form, name, registered office, duration, goal and object

Titre 1. Forme, dénomination, siège, durée, but et objet

Article 1

An international non-profit association is created, governed by the Belgian law of the 27th of June 1921 on non-profit associations, international non-profit associations and foundations, as amended.

Une association internationale sans but lucratif est créée, régie par la loi belge du 27 juin 1921 sur les associations à but non lucratif, les associations internationales à but non lucratif et les fondations, telle que modifiée.

Article 2

The name of the Association is "The European Federation of Education Employers", "Federation Europeene des Employeurs d'Education" in French, abbreviated as EFEE.

La dénomination de l'association est « Fédération Européenne des Employeurs d'Education » en français, « European Federation Of Education Employers », en anglais, en abrégée EFEE.

Article 3

The registered office of the Association is established in a commune of the Brussels agglomeration. It is currently located in the European Centre of Public Enterprises and Public Employers (CEEP), 26 Rue des Deux Eglises, 1000 Brussels, in the judicial district of Brussels. It can be transferred to any other place within the agglomeration of Brussels by simple decision of the Executive Committee published in the month of the transfer in the Annexes to the *Moniteur Belge.*

Le siège de l'association est établi dans une commune de l'agglomération bruxelloise. Il est actuellement situé au Centre Européen des Entreprises à Participation Publique (CEEP), 26 Rue des Deux Eglises, 1000 Bruxelles, dans l'arrondissement judiciaire de Bruxelles. Il peut être transféré dans n'importe quel autre endroit de l'agglomération bruxelloise par simple décision du Comité de direction, publiée dans le mois du transfert aux Annexes du Moniteur Belge.

Article 4

The Association is created for an indeterminate period of time. It can be dissolved at any time in conformity with the provisions of Article 24.

L'association est créée pour une période indéterminée. Elle peut être dissoute à tout moment, conformément aux dispositions de l'article 24.

Article 5

The Association has the purpose of representing the views and interests of employers in the Education sector by bringing together at European level national associations of employers and Ministries acting as employers in the Education sector, in order to co-ordinate their viewpoints and actions in the European context.

L'association a pour but de représenter les positions et les intérêts des employeurs du secteur de l'éducation en regroupant, au niveau européen, les associations nationales d'employeurs ainsi que les ministères agissant en tant qu'employeurs dans le secteur de l'éducation, afin de coordonner leurs points de vue et actions dans un contexte européen.

In order to achieve this goal, the Association undertakes to promote social dialogue in the Education sector and to act in such a way that the opinions of the employers are better taken into account by the institutions of the European Union when new policies are launched that have an impact on management and labour relations in the Education sector at European and national level.

Pour atteindre ce but, l'association s'engage à favoriser le dialogue social dans le secteur de l'éducation et de faire en sorte que les avis des employeurs soient mieux pris en considération par les institutions de l'Union Européenne au moment du lancement de nouvelles politiques ayant un impact sur les relations de management et de travail dans le secteur de l'éducation au niveau européen et national.

Article 6

The pursuit of the goal of the Association shall be carried out through the following activities:

- To establish with its social partners an autonomous European framework in order to develop social dialogue in the Education sector
- To act as a principal source of opinions on social policy including employment and social dialogue vis-a-vis the European institutions

La poursuite du but de l'association se réalisera par les activités suivantes :

- *Etablir, avec les partenaires sociaux, un cadre européen autonome afin de développer le dialogue social dans le secteur de l'Education.*

- *Agir en tant que source principale d'avis en matière de politique sociale incluant l'emploi et le dialogue social vis-à-vis des Institutions européennes.*

The Association shall carry out these activities by bringing together the associations of employers and Ministries acting as employers in the field of Education and representing their interests vis-vis the European institutions with the goal of improving the methods of management, the economic situation and the quality of services supplied in the Education sector.

The Association will act as a member and close partner of CEEP.

L'association réalisera ces activités en réunissant les associations d'employeurs et les ministères agissant en tant qu'employeurs, dans le domaine de l'Education et en représentant leurs intérêts vis-à-vis des Institutions européennes avec le but d'améliorer les méthodes de gestion, la situation économique et la qualité des services fournis dans le secteur de l'Education.

L'association agira en tant que membre et proche partenaire du CEEP.

Part II. Members and categories of members

Titre II. Membres et catégories de membres

Article 7

The Association is composed of **full members** and **observers**. The three **founder members** shall be full members of the Association. The decision to admit organisations as members or observers must be taken by the General Assembly, with the assent of at least two-thirds of those present or represented.

L'association se compose de membres titulaires et d'observateurs. Les trois membres fondateurs seront membres titulaires de l'association. La décision d'admettre des organisations comme membres ou observateurs doit être prise par l'Assemblée générale, et recueillir une majorité d'au moins deux-tiers des membres présents ou représentés.

Full members (hereafter called organisations) are:

1) national employers' organisations in the field of Education in a member state of the European Union or in a country belonging to the European Economic Area (EEA), or

2) Ministries acting as employers in the Education sector in a member state of the European Union or in a country belonging to the EEA.

 Les membres titulaires (ci-après dénommés « organisations ») sont :

1) des organisations nationales d'employeurs dans le domaine de l'éducation d'un Etat membre de l'Union européenne ou d'un pays appartenant à l'EEE (Espace Economique Européen), ou,

2) des ministères agissant en tant qu'employeurs dans le secteur de l'éducation, d'un Etat membre de l'Union européenne ou d'un pays appartenant à l'EEE (Espace Economique Européen).

Observers are similar organisations to full members but from countries outside the European Union or the European Economic Area which are recognised by the United Nations. Observer members can participate fully in the work of the Association, but have no right to vote.

Les observateurs sont des organisations semblables aux membres titulaires mais provenant de pays en dehors de l'Union Européenne ou de l'Espace Economique Européen et qui sont reconnues par les Nations Unies. Les membres observateurs peuvent participer pleinement au travail de l'association mais n'ont pas de droit de vote.

Article 8

The legal entities that are full members must be incorporated in conformity with the laws and customs of their country of origin.

Les personnes morales qui sont membres titulaires devront être constituées conformément aux lois et aux usages de leur pays d'origine.

Article 9

The acquisition of the status of full member or observer presupposes the approval of the present Articles of Association.L'acquisition du statut de membres titulaires ou observateurs suppose l'approbation des présents statuts.

Membership and resignation as a full member or observer must be registered in accordance with the following forms and conditions:

L'adhésion et la démission en tant que membre titulaire ou observateur s'effectuent selon les formes et conditions suivantes :

Membership: a representative of each organisation accepted as a full member or as an observer by the General Assembly shall sign a Declaration of Membership in a form approved by the General Assembly. The Chair and the General Secretary of the Association shall also sign each such Declaration.

Adhésion : un représentant de chaque organisation admise en tant que membre titulaire ou en tant qu'observateur par l'Assemblée générale, signera une déclaration d'adhésion selon la forme établie par l'Assemblée Générale. Chacune de ces déclarations sera également signée par le Président et le Secrétaire général de l'association.

Resignation: an organisation intending to resign from the Association shall present its resignation by registered letter addressed to the General Secretary.

Démission : une organisation ayant l'intention de démissionner de l'association présentera sa démission par lettre recommandée, adressée au Secrétaire général.

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Part III. The bodies of the Association

Titre III. Les organes de l'Association

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Article 10

The bodies of the Association are the General Assembly and the Executive Committee.

Les organes de l'Association sont l'Assemblée générale et le Comité de direction.

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Part IV. The General Assembly

Titre IV. L'Assemblée Générale

</div>

Article 11

The General Assembly consists of all the full members of EFEE. One vote is allocated to each EU member state or EEA country in membership of the Association.

If there is more than one organisation from a member state or country in membership of EFEE, the organisations concerned will decide collectively how their member state's or country's vote is to be used.

L'Assemblée générale se compose de tous les membres titulaires de l'EFEE. Un vote est accordé à chaque Etat membre de l'UE ou pays appartenant à l'EEE, membre de l'association. S'il y a plus d'une organisation par Etat membre ou par pays appartenant à l'EFEE, les organisations concernées décideront collectivement comment le vote de leur Etat membre ou de leur pays sera utilisé.

Article 12

The General Assembly has full authority to carry out any activity in pursuance of the objectives of the Association.

L'Assemblée générale dispose des pleins pouvoirs pour réaliser les objectifs de l'association.

Specifically, the General Assembly is responsible for:

Elle est, notamment, exclusivement compétente pour :

- The approval of full members and of observers

- L'approbation des membres titulaires et observateurs

- The approval of the budget and the subscriptions due each year

- L'approbation du budget et des cotisations dues chaque année

- The approval of the annual accounts for the preceding year

- L'approbation des comptes annuels de l'année précédente

- The appointment or re-appointment and, if necessary, the dismissal of the Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of the Association. These appointments will be for two years, subject to no individual holding office as Chair or Vice-Chair of the Association for more than six consecutive years

- La nomination ou le renouvellement et, si nécessaire, la révocation du mandat du Président et du Vice-président de l'Association. Ces mandats ont une durée de deux ans renouvelables et ne pourront en aucun cas excéder six années consécutives.

- The annual appointment or re-appointment and, if necessary, the dismissal of members of the Executive Committee

- La nomination annuelle et, si nécessaire, la révocation des membres du Comité de direction.

- The appointment and, if necessary, the dismissal of the General Secretary of the Association; and the determination of the terms and conditions of the General Secretary

- La nomination et, si nécessaire, la révocation du Secrétaire général de l'association ; ainsi que l'établissement des conditions relatives à son statut.

- The appointment and dismissal of any accountants or auditors as well as the setting of any fees

- La nomination et la révocation de tout expert-comptable et commissaire ainsi que la fixation de leurs honoraires.

- The discharge to be granted to members of the Executive Committee and to the accountants

- La décharge à accorder aux membres du Comité de direction et aux experts-comptables.

- The approval of regulations, including financial rules, defining the operating conditions of the Association

- L'approbation des règlements, incluant le règlement financier, définissant les conditions de fonctionnement de l'association.

- The approval of the results of any negotiation within the framework of the European social dialogue and other related activities.

- L'approbation des résultats d'une négociation dans le cadre du dialogue social européen et autres activités décrites.

- The exclusion of a full member or observer

- L'exclusion d'un membre ou d'un observateur.

- The amendment of the Articles of Association

- La modification des statuts.

- The dissolution of the Association and in this event the allocation of any assets

- La dissolution de l'association et, dans ce cas, l'affectation de l'actif.

Article 13

The General Assembly meets by right at least once a year, within the six months following the end of the accounting year.

L'Assemblée générale se réunit de plein droit au moins une fois par an, dans les six mois de la clôture de l'exercice social.

The agenda for the Annual General Meeting must at least include the following:

- Approve the budget and the subscriptions due each year

- Approve the annual accounts for the preceding year

- Make the necessary appointments as described in article 12.

- The discharge to be granted to members of the Executive Committee and to the accountants

L'ordre du jour de l'Assemblée générale annuelle comportera au moins les points suivants :

- L'approbation du budget et des cotisations dues chaque année

- L'approbation des comptes annuels relatifs à l'année précédente

- Les nominations telles que décrites à l'article 12

- La décharge à accorder aux membres du Comité de direction et aux experts-comptables

The General Secretary convenes meetings of the General Assembly, by electronic mail. The General Secretary is required to convene a meeting, if requested to do so by at least one-fifth of the members of the Executive Committee or one-third of the members of the Association.

L'Assemblée générale est convoquée par le Secrétaire général, par courrier électronique. Il devra également la convoquer à la demande d'au moins un cinquième des membres du Comité de direction ou d'un tiers des membres de l'Association.

Notification of ordinary meetings shall be sent at least two months in advance, except under Article 24, and shall include the agenda, the date, the time, and the place of the meeting. If an extra-ordinary meeting is needed, at least three weeks' notice must be given.

La convocation à l'Assemblée générale ordinaire est envoyée au moins deux mois à l'avance, sauf hypothèse de l'article 24. Elle reprendra l'ordre du jour, la date, l'heure et le lieu de réunion. En cas

d'Assemblée générale extraordinaire, la convocation sera adressée au moins trois semaines à l'avance.

Article 14

Except under the provisions of Article 24, the General Assembly's deliberations are valid only if at least one-half of its members are present or represented.

Sauf dispositions de l'article 24, l'Assemblée générale ne délibère valablement que si la moitié de ses membres sont présents ou représentés.

If these conditions are not fulfilled, a new General Assembly shall be called with the same agenda. The deliberations of the new Assembly shall be valid whatever the number of members present or represented.

Si ces conditions ne sont pas remplies, une nouvelle Assemblée générale sera convoquée avec le même ordre du jour. La nouvelle assemblée délibérera valablement quel que soit le nombre des membres présents ou représentés.

Each member of the General Assembly can be represented by another member holding a proxy. Such a proxy shall be registered in advance of the meeting with the General Secretary. No member may hold more than two proxies.

Chaque membre de l'Assemblée générale peut se faire représenter par un autre membre porteur d'une procuration. Cette procuration sera, préalablement à la réunion, transmise au Secrétaire général. Un membre ne pourra être porteur de plus de deux procurations.

Article 15

No decision may be taken on a subject that is not recorded on the agenda.

Aucune décision ne peut être prise sur un sujet qui n'est pas inscrit à l'ordre du jour.

Except in the specific cases stipulated in the present Articles of Association, the resolutions of the General Assembly are adopted by a simple majority of its members present or represented by a proxy. These decisions are then communicated to any member not present by the most appropriate means of communication.

Sauf dans les cas particuliers prévus dans les présents statuts, les résolutions de l'Assemblée générale sont adoptées à la majorité simple des membres présents ou représentés. Ces résolutions sont alors communiquées à tous les membres absents, par les moyens de communication les plus appropriés.

Where a vote is tied, the decision will be taken by the casting vote of the Chair.

En cas de partage des voix, celle du Président est prépondérante.

The following decisions require at least a two-thirds majority of those members present or represented by a proxy:

- Approval of new members and observers

- Exclusion of members and observers

- Any dismissal under Article 12

- Amendments to the Articles of Association

- Dissolution and liquidation.

Les décisions suivantes doivent être prises à la majorité d'au moins deux-tiers des membres présents ou représentés :

- Approbation des nouveaux membres et observateurs

- Exclusion de membres et observateurs

- Toute révocation prévue à l'article 12 des présents statuts

- Modification des Statuts de l'association

- Dissolution et liquidation

The minutes of the General Assembly are entered in a register signed by the General Secretary and kept at the registered address. They are to be available for inspection by any full member or observer. Requests to inspect the minutes are to be notified to the General Secretary.

Les procès-verbaux de l'Assemblée générale sont inscrits dans un registre signé par le Secrétaire général et conservés au siège. Les membres titulaires ainsi que les observateurs peuvent exercer leur droit de consultation. Le Secrétaire général doit être informé de toute demande de consultation.

Part V. The Executive Committee

Titre V. Le Comité de direction

Article 16

The Association is administered by an Executive Committee consisting of at least six persons in addition to the Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of EFEE.

L'Association est administrée par un Comité de direction composé d'au moins 6 personnes outre le Président et le Vice-président de l'EFEE.

Only natural persons (individuals) may be members of the Executive Committee.

Seules des personnes physiques (individus) peuvent être membres du Comité de direction.

The Chair of EFEE is by right the Chair of the Executive Committee. The Vice-Chair(s) of EFEE also by right hold the same position(s) in the Executive Committee.

Le Président de l'EFEE est de plein droit le Président du Comité de direction. Le Vice-président de l'EFEE a également, de plein droit, la mêmes fonctions au Comité de direction.

The General Secretary of EFEE also holds the same position in the Executive Committee, without however having the status of a full member of the Executive Committee.

Le Secrétaire général de l'EFEE exercera également cette fonction au sein du Comité de direction, sans pour autant posséder la qualité de membre du Comité de direction.

The General Assembly shall ensure that each member of the Executive Committee originates from a different EU member state.

L'Assemblée générale devra s'assurer que chaque membre du Comité de direction est originaire d'un Etat membre différent de l'UE.

The list of the members of the Executive Committee shall be published in the Annexes to the *Moniteur Belge.*

La liste des membres du Comité de direction devra être publiée aux Annexes du Moniteur Belge.

In the case of resignation from the Executive Committee. at least two months' notice of resignation must be given by means of a letter addressed to the Chair of the Association.

Tout membre du Comité de direction est en droit d'adresser sa démission par lettre recommandée au Président de l'association moyennant préavis de deux mois.

Article 17

The Executive Committee shall meet at least twice a year as notified by the General Secretary. The General Secretary is obliged to convene a meeting at the written request of at least half of the Committee's members.

Le Comité de direction se réunira au moins deux fois par an, sur convocation du Secrétaire général. Le Secrétaire général est obligé de convoquer une réunion à la demande écrite d'au moins la moitié des membres du Comité.

The deliberations of the Executive Committee are valid only if at least half of its members are present or are represented. Another member of the Committee may represent a member of the Executive Committee, but each member may hold only one such proxy.

Le Comité de direction ne délibère valablement que si au moins la moitié de ses membres sont présents ou représentés. Un membre du Comité de direction peut être représenté par un autre membre du Comité, mais chaque membre ne pourra être porteur que d'une seule procuration.

Article 18

The Executive Committee has full authority to administer and manage the Association; subject to the powers listed in Article 12 that are the exclusive competence of the General Assembly.

Le Comité de direction dispose des pleins pouvoirs pour administrer et gérer l'association, sous réserve des pouvoirs énumérés à l'Article 12 qui sont de la compétence exclusive de l'Assemblée générale.

Specifically, the Executive Committee shall submit for the approval of the Annual General Meeting of the General Assembly: the annual accounts for the preceding year, and the draft budget for the new accounting year and, at the same time, the proposed subscriptions for the new accounting year.

Plus particulièrement, le Comité de direction soumettra à l'approbation de l'Assemblée générale ordinaire: les comptes annuels de l'année précédente, le projet de budget et les propositions de cotisations pour la nouvelle année comptable.

In relation to social dialogue, the mandate to begin negotiations is given to the Executive Committee.

Le Comité de direction est mandaté, dans le cadre du dialogue social, pour engager la négociation.

The Executive Committee can appoint and, if necessary, dismiss staff members of the Association other than the General Secretary.

Le Comité de direction peut nommer et, si nécessaire, révoquer le personnel de l'association, à l'exception du Secrétaire Général.

The Executive Committee can also receive all amounts of money or securities.

Le Comité de direction peut également recevoir tous montants d'argent ou de valeurs/titres.

Legal actions, in defence or on request, are introduced and followed by the Executive Committee represented by the General Secretary or by any other person appointed by the General Secretary and approved by the Executive Committee.

Les actions judiciaires, tant comme demandeur que défendeur, sont introduites et suivies par le Comité de direction, représenté par le Secrétaire général ou toute autre personne nommée par le Secrétaire général, après approbation par le Comité de direction.

The functions of members of the Executive Committee of the Association are not remunerated.

La fonction de membre du Comité de direction de l'Association n'est pas rémunérée

Article 19

The resolutions of the Executive Committee are taken by a simple majority of its members present and represented. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair has the casting vote.   The resolutions are

recorded in a register signed by the General Secretary and kept at the registered address. The register is available for inspection by any member of the Association.

Les décisions du Comité de direction sont prises à la majorité simple de ses membres présents ou représentés. En cas de partage des voix, celle du Président est prépondérante. Les décisions sont inscrites dans un registre signé par le Secrétaire général et conservé au siège social. Le registre peut être consulté par les membres de l'association.

Part VI. The General Secretary and the Treasurer

Titre VI. Le Secrétaire général et le Trésorier

Article 20

The General Secretary is appointed for two years by the General Assembly following advertisement of the post in accordance with procedures determined by the Executive Committee.

Le Secrétaire général est nommé, pour une période de deux ans, par l'Assemblée générale après l'annonce du poste conformément aux procédures déterminées par le Comité de direction.

Once appointed, the General Secretary is subject to re-appointment by the General Assembly every two years.

Une fois nommé, le Secrétaire général est sujet à un renouvellement de mandat par l'Assemblée générale tous les deux ans.

The General Secretary must give at least three months' notice to the Executive Committee if he or she intends to relinquish the appointment. The Executive Committee will then determine the selection procedures to be followed for appointing a new General Secretary.

Le Secrétaire général doit donner au moins trois mois de préavis au Comité de direction si il ou elle a l'intention de démissionner. Le Comité de direction déterminera alors la procédure de sélection à suivre pour nommer un nouveau Secrétaire général.The General Secretary is not a member of the Association or of the Executive Committee but is entitled to attend all meetings of the Association, the Executive Committee or any working groups.

Le Secrétaire général n'est pas membre de l'Association ni du Comité de direction mais il pourra assister à toutes les réunions de l'Association, ainsi qu'à celles du Comité de direction et participer à tout groupe de travail.

Article 21

The General Secretary shall be responsible for day-to-day management, including representation of the Association in such matters. He may act on his own. *Note : the remainder of the French text of this paragraph is for technical legal purposes only and does not change the fact that the GS may act*

on his own in relation to day-to-day management issues. The purpose of this paragraph is to assure third parties (for instance EFEE's bank) that the GS has the power to act for the Association).

Le Secrétaire général sera chargé de la gestion journalière et la représentation de l'association en ce qui concerne cette gestion journalière. Il pourra agir individuellement. Cette disposition est opposable aux tiers dans les conditions prévues par la loi. Toute restriction apportée au pouvoir de représentation attribuée à la personne chargée de la gestion journalière, pour les besoins de la gestion journalière, est inopposable aux tiers même si elle est publiée.

Any acts, other than those of day-to-day management, which commit the Association must be signed, except where there are special written permissions, by the General Secretary with the Chair and/or [one of] the Vice-Chair[s] and/or the Treasurer. These signatures will be sufficient for third parties.

Tous les actes autres que ceux de gestion journalière qui engagent l'association sont, sauf procurations spéciales, signés par le Secrétaire général avec le Président et/ou le Vice-président et/ou le Trésorier de l'association, qui n'auront pas à justifier envers les tiers des pouvoirs conférés à cette fin.

Article 22

The Executive Committee may appoint a Treasurer from among its members. This role shall not be remunerated.

Le Comité de direction peut nommer un Trésorier parmi ses membres. Cette fonction ne sera pas rémunérée.

Article 23

At the request of the General Secretary, the Executive Committee may appoint assistant members of staff to work under the direction of the General Secretary and within the framework of the Association's policies and procedures.

A la demande du Secrétaire général, le Comité de direction peut engager des collaborateurs, lesquels travailleront sous la direction du Secrétaire général et dans le respect des politiques et des procédures de l'association.

Part VII. Accounts

Titre VII. Comptabilité

Article 24

The accounting year starts on 1 January and ends on 31 December of each year. In accordance with the provisions of the Belgian law of 17 July 1975 concerning the accounts of enterprises in cases covered by article 53.3 of the law, the Executive Committee is responsible for submitting the final

accounts and the budget for the following year for the approval of the General Assembly when it next meets.

L'exercice social commence le premier janvier et se clôture le 31 décembre de chaque année. Sous réserve de l'application des dispositions de la loi belge du 17 juillet 1975 relative à la comptabilité des entreprises dans les cas prévus par l'article 53 §3 de la loi, le Comité de direction est tenu de soumettre le compte de l'exercice écoulé et le budget de l'exercice suivant à l'approbation de l'assemblée générale qui statuera lors de sa prochaine assemblée.

Article 25

In cases covered by article 53.5 of the [above-mentioned] law, the General Assembly will entrust control of the Association's finances to one or more commissioners of its choice. *Note : these cases do **not** apply to EFEE at present since they concern only organisations employing more than 100 staff ; or having a financial turnover far in excess of that likely for EFEE. Therefore this Article is included to cover the purely theoretical possibility that EFEE later develops to a far greater degree than is envisaged at this stage.*

Dans les cas prévus par l'article 53 §5 de la loi, l'assemblée générale confiera le contrôle financier de l'association à un ou plusieurs commissaires de son choix.

Part VIII. Amendments of the Articles of Association – Dissolution

Titre VIII. Modifications des statuts - dissolution

Article 26

Without prejudice to the legal provisions, any proposal to amend the Articles of Association or to dissolve the Association must be submitted by the Executive Committee or by at least two-thirds of the full members of the Association.

Sans préjudice des dispositions légales, toute proposition de modification des statuts ou de dissolution de l'association doit être déposée par le Comité de direction ou par au moins deux tiers des membres titulaires de l'association.

The Executive Committee must give at least three months' notice in the form of electronic mail of the date of the General Assembly that will rule on the aforementioned proposal.

Le Comité de direction doit porter à la connaissance des membres de l'association, au moins trois mois en avance, sous forme de courrier électronique, la date de l'Assemblée générale qui statuera sur ladite proposition.

The General Assembly may deliberate validly only if at least two-thirds of its members are present or represented by valid proxies. No decision may be taken to amend the Articles of Association or to dissolve the Association unless there is a majority of at least two-thirds.

L'Assemblée générale ne peut valablement délibérer que si deux-tiers au moins de ses membres sont présents ou dûment représentés. Aucune décision ne peut être prise pour modifier les statuts ou pour dissoudre l'association à moins d'obtenir une majorité d'au moins deux tiers.

If two-thirds of its members are not present or represented by valid proxies at the General Assembly, a new meeting of the General Assembly shall be convened by virtue of Article 14 above. This new meeting shall take the final and valid decision on the proposal in question, whatever the number of members present or represented by valid proxies.

Si deux tiers des membres ne sont pas présents ou dûment représentés à l'Assemblée générale, une nouvelle Assemblée générale sera convoquée en vertu de l'article 14 ci-dessus. Cette Assemblée prendra une décision finale sur la proposition en question, quel que soit le nombre de membres présents ou valablement représentés.

Decisions concerning fundamental matters such as the purpose of the Association, the allocation of powers ; the method of convening meetings ; the rules for making decisions about the management of the Association ; the arrangements for communicating decisions to members ; and the rules for amending the Articles of Association, for dissolution, liquidation and the disposition of funds shall be recorded in authorised form at the registry of the Tribunal of Commerce and published in the *Moniteur Belge.*

Les décisions touchant à des éléments essentiels tels que le but social, les attributions, mode de convocation, et mode de décision de l'organe général de direction, ainsi que les conditions dans lesquelles les résolutions sont portées à la connaissance des membres, et les conditions de modification des statuts, de dissolution, de liquidation, et la destination du patrimoine social de l'association, seront constatées par acte authentique déposé au dossier tenu au greffe du Tribunal de Commerce et publié au Moniteur belge.

Moreover, in conformity with article 50.3 of the [above-mentioned] law, resolutions to change the purpose(s) of the Association shall not have effect until they have been approved by the King and published in the *Moniteur Belge*. Other decisions to change the Articles need not be submitted for the approval of the Belgian Minister of Justice or his delegate.

En outre et conformément à l'article 50 §3 de la loi, les résolutions de modification du ou des buts de l'association n'auront d'effet qu'après approbation par le Roi également publiée au Moniteur belge. Les autres décisions de modification des mentions statutaires ne doivent pas être communiquées pour acceptation par le ministre belge qui a la Justice dans ses attributions ou à son délégué.

The General Assembly shall determine the method of dissolution and liquidation of the Association.

L'Assemblée générale fixera le mode de dissolution et de liquidation de l'association.

Article 27

In the event of voluntary dissolution, the General Assembly shall appoint a liquidator and shall define his or her powers. The General Assembly shall decide concerning the disposition of the existing funds after payment of debts, in favour of another Association with a similar purpose. These decisions, as well as the name of the liquidator, shall be published in the Annexes to the *Moniteur Belge.*

En cas de dissolution volontaire, l'Assemblée générale nommera un liquidateur et définira ses pouvoirs. L'Assemblée générale décidera de l'affectation des fonds existants après paiement des dettes, et ceci en faveur d'une association aux buts similaires. Ces décisions, de même que le nom du liquidateur, seront publiées dans les Annexes du Moniteur Belge.

Part IX. General Provisions

Titre IX. Dispositions générales

Article 28

Everything that is not provided for in the present Articles of Association shall be governed in conformity with the terms of the Belgian legislation.

Tout ce qui n'est pas prévu dans les présents statuts sera réglé conformément aux dispositions de la législation belge.

Article 29

Any litigation between the Association, its members, observers, directors, commissioners and liquidators concerning the affairs of the Association and the application of these Articles of Association, shall be conducted in the Belgian courts, unless the Association specifically resolves otherwise.

Pour tous litiges entre l'association, ses membres, observateurs, directeurs, commissaires et liquidateurs relatifs aux affaires de l'association et à l'exécution des présents statuts, compétence exclusive est attribuée aux tribunaux du siège social, à moins que l'association n'y renonce expressément.

Article 30

For the application of these Articles of Association, each member, observer, director and liquidator who resides abroad is deemed to be domiciled at the registered office of the Association for the purpose of valid notification.

Pour l'exécution des présents statuts, tout membre, observateur, directeur et liquidateur, domicilié à l'étranger, fait élection de domicile au siège de l'association où toute notification peut lui être faite valablement.

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Background note on EFEE's application for EHEA Partnership status

Prepared by the EHEA Secretariat for the XCV BFUG meeting in Warsaw, 24th-25th of February 2025

I. Information about the application

On the 20th of December 2024, the **European Federation of Education Employers** (hereinafter referred to as 'EFEE') sent an application to the EHEA Secretariat to request obtaining the EHEA partnership status.

The request has included as attachments two documents: a formal application letter ('**EFEE application**'), which relates to the way EFEE argues the fulfilment of the EHEA partnership criteria, and **the EFEE Statutes** in English.

According to the [Rules of Procedure of the European Higher Education Area](#) ('RoP-EHEA'), *'Organisations wishing to become consultative members or EHEA partners need to send an application to the EHEA Secretariat, documenting that they satisfy the listed criteria. The Secretariat then puts the request on the agenda of the BFUG that in turn will assess the application. The decision is taken by the Ministerial Conference for consultative members and by the BFUG for EHEA partners.'* (Annex 4).

The curent EHEA Partners are: EAIE, EUROCADRES, Eurodoc, EuroScience, Association Européenne des Conservatoires and Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen.

__Proposed action:__ The application from EFEE is put on the agenda of the BFUG to decide on granting EHEA partnership status to EFEE.

II. Criteria for EHEA partnership

According to the RoP-EHEA, *'**The BFUG** may grant organisations that **do not fulfil the criteria for consultative membership** an association with the EHEA, as EHEA partners. They are invited to Ministerial Conferences and can be invited to the BFUG meetings as determined by the RoP-BFUG'* (Article II.3).

Their rights are further detailed in the BFUG Rules of Procedure (RoP-BFUG): *'EHEA partners can participate in BFUG meetings or BFUG working structures as observers, upon approved prior request in writing to the Co-chairs. During the BFUG meetings, they may speak on the agenda issues for which they requested participation'.* (Article I.6)

The **admission of EHEA Partners is decided by the BFUG** through consensus. Based on the exceptional voting regime outlined in Article V.3 of the RoP-EHEA, if no consensus can be achieved, a decision can be taken by vote, decided by a majority of the valid votes cast.

The **four cumulative criteria** for consultative membership and EHEA partnership status are stipulated in Annex 4 of the RoP-EHEA: **added value to the Bologna Process, Relevance of the stakeholder group, Representativeness and Organisational Form.** In comparison with consultative membership status, the criteria for EHEA partners are less restrictive.

The four criteria are detailed in the annex as follows:

1. **Added value to the Bologna Process:** *any new consultative member or EHEA partner should provide added value to the Process, meaning that their contribution should have a European scope and be relevant to the work of the BFUG.*

2. **Relevance of the stakeholder group**: *organisations should have higher education as a central field of interest. The stakeholder group should be relevant to the principles, action lines and goals of the Bologna Process. Organisations that may contribute to stronger links between higher education and the labour market are relevant to the Process. Organisations that may contribute to stronger links between higher education and other educational fields may also be relevant. Organisations representing special professions do not fit with the BFUG, which deals with general principles of, and structures in, higher education.*

3. **Representativeness:** *a new consultative member or EHEA partner should not be a sub-organisation of a member or consultative member of the Bologna Follow-up Group.*

4. **Organisational form**: *either be a non-governmental organisation (NGO) or an inter-governmental organisation.*

For comparison, the additional criteria applicable <u>only for consultative membership are</u>: their contribution cannot be easily covered by an existing consultative member and cooperation with the BFUG cannot be better covered at another level; be the most representative organisation in its field of interest, be a European organisation or a European branch of an organisation, accept organisations from all the EHEA member States as full members, have full members from no less than 50% of the Bologna countries and have full members from EHEA member States outside the EU/EEA and EU candidate countries; its mandate should reflect its relevance to the Bologna Process and its right to give an opinion on behalf of its members on matters relating to the Bologna Process.

In the XCIV BFUG Board meeting in Albania, held on the 9ᵗʰ of January 2025, the BFUG Board discussed the application and recommended that the BFUG does not grant EHEA partnership status to EFEE. The discussion is recorded in the minutes of the XCIV BFUG Board meeting, which can be found [here](). (page 14)

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Original: English

Strasbourg, 16 January 2024

Implementation of the Council of Europe Higher Education programme in 2024
and priorities for the future programme 2024-27

Report to the Bologna Follow Up Group

DGII-Directorate for Democracy/Education Department) Secretariat contact:
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The Council of Europe Higher Education Programme

The higher education programme of the Council of Europe is guided by the **Council of Europe 2030 Education Strategy "Learners First'.** The Strategy not only provides the vision for the Council of Europe work in the field of education in general and higher education in particular, but also includes a Roadmap for its Programme of Activities 2024-2027.

The new Education Programme 2024-2027 was adopted by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers in November 2023. At the end of 2023 the Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee for Education were adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The higher education programme comprises the programmes related to the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, including its Co-Secretariat, running (jointly with UNESCO) of the ENIC Network; democratic mission of higher education, Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED) and the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees. '.

The work in the field of higher education is overseen by the Sub-Group on higher education policy of the Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU). The CDEDU Sub-Group reports to the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Education, which comprises representatives of public authorities responsible for education from the 46 member States of the Council of Europe, Holy See and Kazakhstan and a number of observers.

Through the adoption of its new terms of reference in October 2023, the CDEDU Sub-Group on Higher Education has been reinforced and its membership has been enlarged from 13 to 25 members, comprising representatives of Ministries, in charge of higher education, as well as academic representatives and international NGOs. To ensure better coordination of work with the Bologna Process, a representative of the EHEA is among the Sub-Group members.

To date the new CDEDU Sub-Group on Higher Education had two meetings - on the 14-15 February 2024 in Strasbourg and on 18-19 September 2024 in Paris. The next meeting of the Sub-Group on Higher Education Policy will take place on 6-7 March 2025 in Strasbourg.

At the end of 2024 the Council of Europe published a brochure containing an overview of its higher education projects, which can be viewed on the newly updated higher education website.

Higher education projects

1. Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee

Overview

Together with UNESCO, the Council of Europe ensures the Secretariat of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC). The Lisbon Recognition Convention is one of the most ratified Conventions in the Council of Europe and it remains the only legally binding text in the European Higher Education Area.

Key priorities in 2024-2027

In 2025 the Lisbon Recognition Convention Bureau is pursuing its work on:

* Finalising the update of the ENIC- NARIC Charter

* Updating the 'Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education'(2007)

The workplan also foresees drafting a new text on 'digital solutions', taking into account the existing 'Guidelines for national online information systems' (2019).

The LRC Bureau started its work on the Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education. The workshop on this topic was held in the framework of the next annual ENIC-NARIC meeting, which took place in Naples on 23-25 June 2024.

The next meeting of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee will be held in autumn 2025 and will be hosted by UNESCO in Paris.

2. Contribution to the ENIC-NARIC Networks

Overview

Since 1994 the Council of Europe has been actively involved in running jointly with UNESCO the European Network of National Information Centres (ENIC). It is run jointly with the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) network, which was established in 1984 with the European Commission as Secretariat.

The ENIC-NARIC networks have joint initiatives, linked to supporting exchange on qualifications-recognition information on policies and practices and providing an opportunity for capacity building activities, as well as participating in consultative processes on international normative instruments related to qualification recognition.

For the efficient functioning of both the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the ENIC and NARIC Networks the renewal process is constantly required, given new developments in the field of higher education, such as the digitization, automatic recognition, micro-credentials, recognition of non-formal and informal education and recognition of prior learning, transnational education.

Developments in 2024

The current composition of the ENIC Bureau is as follows:

- Chiara Finocchietti (Italy) – ENIC President
- Dženan Omanović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) – ENIC Vice-President

The elections for the second ENIC Vice-President will be held at the next ENIC-NARIC meeting in Tirana (Albania) in May 2025.

The current composition of the NARIC Advisory Board is as follows:

- Gunnar Vaht (Estonia);
- Helén Sophie Haugen (Norway);
- Gianina Chirazi (Romania).

In 2023, for the first time, the Council of Europe launched a call to support ENIC centres, which are not eligible for the NARIC call and are part of the CoE Education Programme.

As a result of the call for pilot projects, nine applications were received for funding. Out of these applications the evaluation board decided to support six projects from the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Ukraine and United Kingdom. The projects were implemented until the end of 2023 and the projects' results were presented in the framework of a workshop at the last annual ENIC-NARIC meeting in June 2024.

The topics range from the recognition of refugees' qualifications to combatting education fraud to stepping up the capacity of the National Information Centres through enhanced training of credential evaluators.

The second call for ENIC projects was launched at the end of 2023 and currently three projects are being implemented from the following countries: Armenia (on refugee qualifications), Bosnia and

Herzegovina (on automatic recognition), Ukraine (on recognition of qualifications from temporarily occupied territories and on education fraud).

The 2025 annual ENIC-NARIC meeting will take place in Tirana, Albania, organised with the financial support of the Council of Europe.

3. **Automatic Recognition**

In 2023, the Council of Europe set up an Ad Hoc Working Group on automatic recognition of qualifications. Its terms of reference were adopted by the CDEDU Bureau at its meeting in February 2023.

According to its terms of reference, t he purpose of this Group was to:

- Exchange views on the current developments, related to establishing the right to automatic recognition, making good use of the trial-and-error experiences across Europe;

- Advise the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Education on different possibilities and prepare an option paper to establish a legally binding text on automatic recognition.

In 2023-2024 the he Council of Europe Ad Hoc Working Group on Automatic Recognition of Qualifications held five meetings. From November 2023 through March 2024, the Working Group organised consultations with the key stakeholders, notably students, higher education institutions and public authorities in charge of higher education.

Through its consultations and discussions with key stakeholders, the Working Group has advanced the understanding of automatic recognition, underlining the differences and divergencies in approaches and identified the necessary steps to move forward.

The Working Group presented its findings and proposals for the work ahead at the last Plenary session of the Steering Committee for Education in October 2024

The Steering Committee for Education renewed the mandate of the Working Group and extended its membership, including more key stakeholders, including public authorities in charge of higher education, as well as representatives of the European Commission and UNESCO.

The primary objective of the Working Group is to identify and design the necessary building blocks to ensure clarity, build trust, and establish the preconditions required for the successful implementation of automatic recognition.
The Group will advise the Steering Committee for Education on the development and implementation of a common framework for automatic recognition of higher education qualifications. An essential aspect of the Group's work is establishing a triangular, mutually reinforcing relation between the new legal instrument, Multilateral Treaty and the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

4. **Recognition of refugees' qualifications:**

There are currently two important initiatives implemented in this field: Draft CM Recommendation on "Valuing the Academic and Professional Skills of Refugees in Europe and the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR).' in Italy.

4.1.Draft CM Recommendation on "Valuing the Academic and Professional Skills of Refugees in Europe".

In order to implement the CoE Education Strategy, in particular one of its priority themes 'Enhancing education's social responsibility and responsiveness', the Council of Europe started to work on the

Committee of Ministers Recommendation on Valuing the Academic and Professional Skills of Refugees in Europe (provisional title), containing principles and guidelines.

The draft Recommendation was discussed by the Sub-Group on Higher Education at its meeting at the end of September 2024 and passed its first reading at the last session of the Steering Committee for Education in October 2024.

The revised text of the Recommendation will be presented at the next meeting of the Steering Committee for Education on 17-19 March 2025.

4.2. The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR)-

An overview

The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR) is a Council of Europe initiative aiming at facilitating the recognition of refugees' qualifications even in the absence of full documentation.

The EQPR project is developing synergies and cooperates with the UNESCO Qualifications Passport for Refugees and Vulnerable Migrants, which is targeting countries outside the European Region. The coordination is carried out both at the strategic level, as well as on a technical level.

Latest developments

There are 23 countries currently participating in the EQPR: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Monaco, Montenegro (joined in October 2024), the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, United Kingdom. To date, over 100 EQPRs have been issued.

More than 80 credential evaluators from 22 participating ENICs are now trained on the EQPR methodology, which increases the capacity of the project to promote the EQPR as a valid and trustful tool to assess qualifications of refugees without sufficient documentation.

In June 2024 the event 'Hand in hand to support the integration of refugees-education, training and recognition of qualifications" co-organised by the Council of Europe and France Education International and the University of Lyon 2, supported by NGOs, explored practical tools and programmes helping refugees to continue their studies. The event was followed by an evaluation session, where 8 out of 22 countries were represented among the evaluators's team.

The EQPR evaluation session took place in Bonn, Germany from 23 to 27 September 2024.

In 2025 the EQPR will undergo an evaluation in order to assess its progress, achievements and identify ways of further advancing the work.

5. Democratic mission of higher education

Latest developments

The work on the democratic mission of higher education is strongly linked to the fundamentalvalues of the Council of Europe, respecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

With the launch of the new project "Academic Freedom in Action", the Council of Europe Education department continues its work on the protection and promotion of the values of academic freedom, the premises of which were given in the Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the responsibility of public authorities for academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

To new Working Group on the Democratic Mission of Higher Education was set up at the end of 2023 with eight prominent academic experts.To date the Working Group has held four meetings.

The [conference "Academic Freedom in Action" took place in on 13-14 November 2024 in Strasbourg](#).

The collaboration between the Council of Europe and the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy also continues and the eighth instalment of the Global Forum on Higher Education is currently being prepared to take place at the Charles University in Prague, on 3-4 June 2025.

6. The Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED)

An overview and main developments

The ETINED [Platform](#) is a network of specialists appointed by member States of the Council of Europe and of States Parties to the European Cultural Convention. Its mission is to:

- Share information and good practices in the field of transparency and integrity in education;
- Contribute to the development of adequate answers to challenges that corruption poses to the sector of education and higher education;
- Create a virtuous cycle in education, whereby all actors commit to fundamental positive ethical principles;
- Develop capacity-building for all actors.

Latest developments

The [ETINED](#) Platform is currently working on the following initiatives:

6.1. Setting up a Centre for Preventing and Countering Education Fraud

The Steering Committee for Education recognised establishing a Centre on Preventing and Countering Education Fraud as a key initiative.

The CDEDU took note of the strong support received from the Italian delegation to the CDEDU, which indicated, on behalf of the Minister of Universities and Research of Italy, that the country was also prepared to offer logistical support, including hosting the structure of the future Centre in its territory.

6.3. FraudS+ "Student Awareness on Fraud in Education"

Following the endorsement by the CDEDU in March 2024, the Council of Europe launched the survey on "Student awareness of fraud in education", building on the previous research from the Erasmus+ project "FraudS+ - False Records, Altered Diploma, and Diploma Mills Qualifications Collection".

The survey targets higher education students and its objectives are to:
•   Understand the knowledge of students on fraud in higher education.
•   Raise awareness about this issue and enhance their ability to address it.
•   Support the creation of tools that promote ethics and transparency in higher education.

Currently, the survey replies are being collected and assessed by CIMEA, who are the partners in this project.

7. Council of Europe Students' Rights Charter

The development of the Council of Europe Students' Rights Charter is part of the main actions proposed in the 2030 Council of Europe Education Strategy "Learners First".

This work on the Charter has been launched at the start of the 2025 with the production of a report providing an overview of existing charters related to students rights at international, regional and national levels. The report will highlight the main objectives, scope and specific features of each selected instrument and will identify any impact and implementation gaps that the Council of Europe Students' Rights Charter could fill.

The report will be presented at the next meeting of the Sub-Group on Higher Education Policy on 6-7 March 2025 and the Steering Committee for Education meeting on 17-19 March, together with the proposed Terms of Reference for the Drafting Group.

8. Artificial Intelligence and Recognition

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming education and the recognition of qualifications, offering both opportunities and challenges. Recognising these developments, the Council of Europe would like to launch a new initiative aimed at understanding and addressing the intersection of AI with higher education credential evaluation.

The project proposal on artificial intelligence and recognition will be presented at the next meeting of the Sub-Group on Higher Education Policy and the Steering Committee for Education meeting in March 2025.

![ENQA logo] enqa.

European Association for
Quality Assurance in Higher Education

ENQA report to the BFUG
24-25 February 2025, Poland

Highlights of ENQA's activities since September 2024

ENQA (the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) is the designated stakeholder organisation of quality assurance agencies in the EHEA. ENQA represents their interests internationally, supports them nationally and provides them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities. Under ENQA's umbrella, the community of agencies drives innovation in quality assurance and refines quality assurance processes.

In 2025 ENQA celebrates its 25th anniversary. The occasional will be marked with a series of initiatives throughout the year, culminating an anniversary event in Brussels in October 2025.

1. ENQA GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

Elections for ENQA's governing Board took place at the General Assembly meeting on 24-25 October 2024 in Malta. Heli Mattisen (HAKA, Estonia) was elected for her first three-year term; Patrick Van den Bosch (VLUHR QA, Belgium) and Kristin Vinje (NOKUT, Norway) were re-elected for subsequent terms.

ENQA's full membership currently stands at 61 agencies in 32 countries in the EHEA, as well as 41 affiliates in 52 countries worldwide. Full members are agencies that have demonstrated compliance with the ESG through an independent peer review. There are ENQA members and/or affiliates in 45 out of the 47 EHEA countries (excluding Russia and Belarus where members and affiliates are currently suspended).

Whilst a number of agencies are working towards ESG compliance, including with support through the SEQA-ESG project, at least ten EHEA member states do not have agencies compliant with the ESG. The key barriers (as reported in ENQA's statement to the Tirana conference) are independence from government involvement in the agency affairs and legislative systems that block ESG compliance, for example student involvement in external quality assurance and publication of reports. At this BFUG and in the coming months, ENQA would appreciate an opportunity to meet with colleagues from Ministries to discuss how we can support them in alignment with the ESG.

2. LATEST ENQA ACTIVITIES

Conclusion of QA-FIT project and launch of ESG revision
On 7 November 2024, the final event of the QA-FIT project was held in Brussels to gather higher education stakeholders and policy-makers to discuss the current context for quality assurance and reflect on how the EHEA framework can evolve to remain responsive and relevant, drawing on the findings of the project activities. In conjunction with this, a final paper was published that sets out some key principles for the revision of the ESG. All resources from the project are available here.

The project and its associated activities have provided an evidence base for the revision of the ESG, which got underway in September 2024, following the mandate from the EHEA Ministers in the Tirana Communiqué. So far two meetings of the ESG Steering Committee have taken place, primarily to discuss the core aims, principles and scope of the ESG, with particular reflection on how the higher education landscape has changed in the decade since the framework was last revised. The BFUG will

be consulted on these points at the meeting in February 2025. A briefing note on the ESG revision is available here.

Report on quality assurance and academic integrity
The ENQA working group on quality assurance and academic integrity concluded their work and published their report in October 2024. The report analyses the key issues, maps current activities by quality assurance agencies and provides recommendations on how agencies, depending on their remit and jurisdiction, can contribute to fostering and upholding cultures of academic integrity. Importantly, the report highlights the need for cross-sectoral action to protect academic integrity and address the challenges and threats from the commercial cheating industry.

Focus on staff development for quality assurance agencies
In December 2024, ENQA held two events in Brussels to support professional development within quality assurance agencies. A seminar on the European dimension of quality assurance took place on 11 December 2024, providing an opportunity for agency staff to learn about the fundamentals of quality assurance at the European Level and gain an understanding of the broader context in which agencies work.

On 12 December 2024, ENQA ran a workshop on staff development in agencies, which explored the changing competencies needed by agency staff and initiatives to provide professional development and attractive working environments. During the workshop, participants reflected on how ENQA's 2016 Professional Competencies Framework could be updated to match the evolving needs and expectations of the sector. Follow-up work in spring 2025 will result the publication of an updated version of the framework.

In February 2025, ENQA will also launch registrations for this year's edition of the Leadership Development Programme, which provides a unique training and peer learning opportunity for high potential staff at agencies.

Global engagement
In November 2024, ENQA presented at the national conferences of the Malaysian Qualifications Authority, and the National Authority for Quality Assurance & Accreditation in Education in Egypt. The events were attended by quality assurance colleagues from across the ASEAN regional and Africa respectively.

Under the HAQAA Initiative, ENQA is supporting the coordination of agency reviews in Africa to achieve alignment with the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. A call for participation in 2025-26 is currently open.

ENQA is also working with the Ibero-American System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (SIACES) and agencies from both regions on a project looking at alignment between the ESG and the SIACES Principles of Good Practice. A report mapping the similarities and differences between these two regional quality assurance frameworks will be published in spring 2025.

3. ENQA AGENCY REVIEWS

In 2025, ENQA is coordinating seven external peer reviews of quality assurance agencies. The review process assesses the compliance of agencies with the ESG, in line with the Bologna Process key commitment on quality assurance, and also provides recommendations to the agencies for their further development.

ENQA is currently engaged in an external review of its Agency Review service to assess ENQA's compliance with the ESG and to follow up on the outcomes of the previous external review in 2019. This is an important exercise for the transparency and improvement of the Agency Reviews, ensuring that ENQA is held to the same high standards that are expected of quality assurance agencies in the EHEA.

The review is being coordinated by the Knowledge Innovation Centre, who were selected following an open tendering process. ENQA published a self-assessment report in September 2024 and hosted a visit of the external review panel in December 2024. The final report of the external review is expected in spring 2025 and will be shared with BFUG members.

4. UPCOMING EVENTS

ENQA Members' Forum 2025 will take place on 10-11 April in Paphos, Cyprus.

ENQA webinar on external quality assurance of research will take place on 14 March 2025. The webinar will explore conclusions and case examples from ENQA's working group on quality assurance of research in higher education. The webinar is open to all interested stakeholders. Further information and the registration link are available here.

ENQA Agency Review Seminars will take place back-to-back on 26-28 March 2025 in Madrid, Spain. The first seminar is for recently reviewed agencies, while the second one is for agencies preparing for a review.

ENQA General Assembly and anniversary reception will take place on 22-24 October 2025 in Brussels, Belgium.

To stay updated on all ENQA's activities, subscribe to the quarterly news Bulletin through the link on ENQA's website **here**.

ETUCE – European Trade Union Committee for Education
Education International - European Region

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ETUCE Activity Report on

Higher education and research

To BFUG Plenary meeting on 24-25 February 2025, under the Polish Presidency

The following report is a summary of ETUCE[1] activities on higher education and research between February 2024 and February 2025.

Global efforts of protect democracy and academic freedom in higher education and research

10th World Congress of Education International met in Buenos Aires, Argentina between 27 July and 2 August under the theme *Growing our unions, elevating our professions, defending democracy*. Over 1200 representatives of the education trade unions, including higher education and research staff, from over 150 countries   participated. The specific meeting of the trade unions of higher education and research discussed the role of higher education to protect democracy and academic freedom:

 Joining forces to protect Higher Education: A stand for democracy and rights
The congress adopted many resolutions including some on protecting academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and trade union rights:

-    Protecting higher education and research staff from attacks on academic freedom
- Research and innovation: supporting basic research for resilient societies
- Organising against the political and ideological attacks on academic freedom and institutional autonomy

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[1] The *European Trade Union Committee for Education* (ETUCE) is a recognised European social partner for education and represents 11 million teachers and educators affiliated to 131 education trade unions across 49 European countries. It was established in 1975 and, since 2010, has been the *Regional European Structure of Education International* (EI). It is also a European Trade Union Federation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). ETUCE is composed of national trade unions of teachers and other staff at all levels of general education, including higher education and research.

- [Technology, artificial intelligence and the future of the teaching profession](#)

EI and CAUT (Canadian Union of Teachers) hosted a Conference on Academic Freedom in Calgary, Canada, 7-8 Febr. 2025 for member organisations. More information: [Defending academic freedom: Higher education unions mobilise against escalating attacks](#)

Fighting for the Future of Public Education in a Social Europe

Education trade unions of the European region of Education International, ETUCE met in November, in Budva, Montenegro in the framework of a quadrennial statutory conference to discuss about Future of Public Education in a Social Europe. The Conference discussed about the role of education trade unions to protect democracy. It adopted resolutions which demanded public investment to higher education and research to ensure attractive salary and working conditions to staff:
- [Defending higher education and research in an age of crises (2024)](#)
- [Research and innovation: supporting fundamental research for resilient societies (2024)](#)

Higher education and research staff are concerned about the increase of far-right movements

Higher Education and Research Standing Committee (HERSC) is a permanent body of ETUCE representing 45 education trade unions whose membership covers higher education and research staff. HERSC meets twice a year and discusses education trade unions' reactions to higher education and research policies in Europe.

The Standing Committee met twice in 2024 to discuss, among others, the following issues:
- The impact of increasing far-right movements on higher education, research, and academics;
- Attractiveness of academic professions in higher education and research in light with precarious contracts, lack of support for young academics, and declining salaries. [ETUCE's Campaign on the attractiveness of the teaching profession](#) and events planned for the [European Week of Teachers](#) aimed to address these issues were presented.
- The members discussed and adopted an [ETUCE Position on European Degree and Academic Careers](#) and their views on the [Future of the Bologna Process](#);

Expert conference on AI at work in the higher education and research sector

The joint ETUCE and ETUI (European Trade Union Institute) expert conference on AI at work, took place on 28-29 February 2024 in Brussels, to address the impact of AI on higher education and research and aims to develop trade unions' strategy on this topic.
The detailed report can be found here: [ETUI-ETUCE Expert Conference Explores Impact of AI on Higher Education and Research Sector - European Trade Union Committee for Education](#)

European Social dialogue in the Higher Education Sector

In order to cope with challenges of the future, strong social dialogue in higher education institutes is key. In relation to the new Social Dialogue Work Programme 2024-2026 the partners of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education met for the Working Group on Higher Education and Research, on 24 September 2024 to discuss crucial developments in the field. Two significant topics took centre stage: the development of the OiRA (Online Interactive Risk Assessment) tool for Higher Education, jointly developed by ETUCE and EFEE with the European Commission's agency EU-OSHA, and the importance of enhancing the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

More information:
Rob Copeland, Vice-president of ETUCE, BFUG member; and Agnes Roman, Senior policy coordinator of ETUCE, BFUG member

ESU written report

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1.   Latest ESU activities

1.1.   89th Board Meeting

The 89th Board Meeting (General Assembly) of ESU took place in **Oslo, Norway**. It was dedicated to the topic of **democracy** in higher education. We had the opportunity to visit **Utøya** and participate in the democracy workshop organised by the Learning Center of the Memorial, reflecting on the active **role that students and students' unions can have in promoting and defending democratic values**. During the Board Meeting we adopted many new policies, including ESU's Strategic Political Priorities 2024-2029, the **Fundamental Values and Solidarity Policy Paper**, a Statement on Sustainability of Higher Education and a Resolution on the improvement of the processes related to the Recognition of Prior Learning in Europe.

1.2. 2nd ESU Conference of the Student Bodies of the Alliances

The 2nd ESU Conference of the Student Bodies of the Alliances was held in **Timișoara** from the 30th of October to the 3rd of November, co-organised by ESU and ANOSR, the Romanian Students' Union. More than **90 student representatives from 35 European Universities Alliances** participated in the activities. We had very fruitful

discussions and exchanges of best practices on **student representation and participation** within the alliances, and many group activities on how we can proceed further in the formulation and implementation of the **inclusivity framework** for the European Education Area.

2. Latest News and Publications

- Serbia: [ESU Statement regarding students Protest in Serbia](#)
- Georgia: [ESU Statement regarding current developments in Georgia](#)
- Romania: [Defending democracy and Romania's European path against extremism](#)
- [Still Striving for Change: The Fight Against Gender-Based Violence in HE](#)
- [Podcast (Episode 10): Student Actions Against Gender-Based Violence across Europe](#)
- [Urgent Call to Preserve Erasmus+ Funding](#)
- [Slovakia: Open Letter from ŠRVŠ and ESU to the Minister of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic](#)

3. Recent Policies

3.1. General

- [ESU's Priorities for a Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034 and European Semester that future-proof education](#)

3.2. Policies adopted by the 89th Board Meeting

- [Fundamental Values and Solidarity Policy Paper](#)
- [Statement on Sustainability of Higher Education – BM88](#)
- [Strategic Political Priorities 2024-2029](#)
- [Resolution on the improvement of the processes related to the Recognition of Prior Learning in Europe](#)

3.3. Resolutions & statements on national level issues

- Austria: [Against the Closure and Unaffordability of Austrian Cafeterias](#)
- Belgium: [Resolution against the government's policy of reducing funding and discriminating against non-Belgian students](#)
- Denmark: [Resolution to Recognize Faroese as a Distinct Native Language in Danish Higher Education](#)
- Estonia: [Resolution on the Higher Education Budget Cuts in Estonia](#)
- Faroe Islands: [Students in the Faroe Islands Must Have Access to Erasmus+ as Soon as Possible!](#)
- Finland: [Resolution on Finnish student housing crisis](#)
- Georgia: [ESU Statement regarding current developments in Georgia](#)
- Germany: [Demand for comprehensive teaching on abortion in human medicine degree programmes](#)
- Ireland: [Resolution on Student Housing and Student Cooperative Housing in Ireland](#)
- Israel/Palestine: [Safeguarding Palestinian students' in Gaza access to education](#)
- Netherlands: [Against increasing surveillance of the student population in Dutch HEIs](#)
- Netherlands: [Resolution on the Long-Term Study Penalty in the Netherlands](#)
- Portugal: [Not one step back on the path to free education in Portugal](#)
- Portugal: [Resolution on psychological support in Portuguese HEIs](#)
- Romania: [Defending democracy and Romania's European path against extremism](#)
- Serbia: [ESU Statement regarding students Protest in Serbia](#)
- Switzerland: [Federal Budget Cuts and Rising Tuition Fees – A Dangerous Cycle Begins](#)
- Switzerland: [Resolution on Accessibility Arrangements](#)
- UK: [Supporting Education in Minority Languages](#)
- Ukraine: [Ensuring Equal Access to International Academic Mobility for Male Students of Private and Public Higher Education Institutions in Ukraine](#)

4. Upcoming Events

Upcoming	Topic	When/Where
49th European Students' Convention	Quality in Higher Education	February 2025, Galway, Ireland
Study Session	Operationalisation of a national Student Rights Charter	March 2025, Strasbourg, France
PLAR-U-PAGs	Final Conference - Peer Learning Activities and Resources to underpin the Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension	March 25th 2025, Brussels, Belgium
89th Board Meeting	General Assembly, with a focus on EU integration and enlargement, especially when it comes to student mobility	May 12th-18th 2025, Banja Luka, BiH

5. Upcoming Projects

Upcoming	Topic	When/Where
SAMUELE	Lifelong learning, Student governance, European Higher Education Area	February/March 2025
NELS	Student Leadership, skills and competencies development in Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa	February/March 2025

European University Association (EUA)

Activities - state Jan. 2025

This update provides a selection of EUA activities that might be of interest for you and your colleagues.

You are welcome to share this within your ministry, your organisation, with higher education institutions and other relevant organisations.

For more information, please check our website www.eua.eu or sign up to the newsletter

- Publications & Expert voices
- Ongoing projects
- Events

Recordings of past events are usually available on EUA's YouTube channel

EUA 2023 annual report

Upcoming events and initiatives

DATES	EVENT/INITIATIVE	PLACE	TARGETED AUDIENCE	LINK
16-17 January 2025	2025 EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop	University of Minho, Portugal	Academic leaders, doctoral school managers, professionals and doctoral candidates from EUA-CDE members	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/2025-eua-cde-thematic-workshop.html
21 Jan 2025	Staff development in learning and teaching: the state of play Webinar	Online	Vice-rectors for academic affairs, deans, heads of learning and teaching centres, and management involved in learning and teaching, students, policy makers and other stakeholders in higher education.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_xk3f0NCgE&pp=ygUDZXVh
February – September 2025	EUA Leadership Development Programme	A combination of online and onsite sessions

Onsite sessions in Riga, Latvia, and Brussels, Belgium | Dynamic programme crafted to enhance leadership skills and competencies for senior academic and professional support leaders of EUA member universities. With a distinctive European perspective, the programme provides a blend of international insights and tailored support for EUA members. EUA's Leadership | https://www.eua.eu/our-work/projects/eua-projects/eua-leadership-development-programme.html |

			Development Programme aims to foster meaningful connections with European peers and equip participants to drive impactful change within their institutions.	
4 February 2025	How universities can protect and promote academic freedom: EUA principles and guidelines	Publication	In Europe and across the globe, academic freedom – and its close relative, institutional autonomy – find themselves increasingly under pressure. For the European University Association, it is essential to support universities as central actors in the protection and promotion of academic freedom. In this position paper, EUA offers concrete and practical guidance on how universities can protect and strengthen academic freedom. Complementing EUA's existing work and contributions to related expert and policy discussions over recent years, this text formulates key principles that highlight the essential role of academic freedom for universities and for societies. It also proposes a number of guidelines to frame and reinforce efforts by university leadership, individual academics and university communities to ensure that academic freedom is a lived daily reality. Indeed, EUA calls on its members across Europe to commit to the protection and promotion of academic freedom at their universities, by developing and, crucially, implementing their own institutional guidelines and policies. The Association also reiterates certain key actions in support of academic freedom that can be taken by governments and public authorities. Academic freedom experts and practitioners guided the development of this text, which was endorsed by the EUA Council on 31 January 2025.	https://www.eua.eu/publications/positions/how-universities-can-protect-and-promote-academic-freedom.html?highlight=WyJwcm90ZWN0IiwicHJvbW90ZSIsInByaW5jaXBsZXMiLCJndWlkZWxpbmVzIiwiaG93IiwidW5pdmVyc2l0aWVzIiwiY2FuIiwiYWNhZGVtaWMiLCJmcmVlZG9tIiwiZXVhIl0=

27-28 February 2025	2025 European Learning & Teaching Forum	Cork, Ireland	Vice-rectors for academic affairs, deans, heads of learning and teaching centres, and management involved in learning and teaching, students, policy makers and other stakeholders in higher education.	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/2025-european-learning-teaching-forum.html
10-11 Apr 2025	2025 EUA Annual Conference "Connecting the dots on sustainability and resilience"	University Of Latvia, Riga, Latvia	The 2025 EUA Annual Conference, hosted by the University of Latvia in Riga from 10-11 April, will strive to define what sustainability and resilience, as multi-faceted concepts, mean for universities. By 'Connecting the dots on sustainability and resilience', this event will explore how universities can contribute to a more sustainable future, both on and off campus, while strengthening institutional and societal resilience. So, how can university leadership and communities best pursue sustainability and resilience as key objectives of institutional missions, strategies and activities?	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/2025-eua-annual-conference.html
26 - 28 May 2025	Master Class (STAFF-DEV project): Transitions and transformations in staff development for learning and teaching	University College Cork, Ireland	Senior institutional representatives with responsibilities in developing and organising staff development and enhancing learning and teaching at the institutions (e.g. institutional leadership, directors of learning and teaching centres) from across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/transitions-and-transformations-in-staff-development-for-learning-and-teaching.html
4-6 June 2025	2025 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting	University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland	Academic leaders, doctoral school managers, professionals in doctoral education, doctoral candidates and other stakeholders with an interest in doctoral education	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/2025-eua-cde-annual-meeting.html

Recent events & publications

EVENT/PUBLICATION	DESCRIPTION	LINK
EUA webinar "Towards a strategic vision for open repositories in Europe" **3 December 2024**	The online event addressed challenges, opportunities and future directions for open repositories in Europe. Results from the report 'Current state and future directions for open repositories in Europe', published in December 2023 by OpenAIRE, LIBER, SPARC Europe, and COAR, were presented to set the context for the discussion. Experts from European and institutional repositories were also invited to share their insights and experiences on challenges and the evolving needs of their repositories. Participants had the opportunity to discuss strategies for enhancing collaboration and integration among repositories, with the goal of building a more robust open repository infrastructure across Europe.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wXAy9a-NS8
EUA High-level roundtable "R&I for a prosperous and competitive Europe" **21 November 2024**	The high-level roundtable was organised as part of the European University Association's 2024 R&I Forum. The event delved into questions raised by the renewed interest in a fifth freedom to enhance research, innovation and education within the European market and EU's ambitious goals to increase its competitiveness. With this topic set to guide political discussions for the next five years, a diverse panel of experts discussed the role of research and innovation (R&I) in achieving a prosperous and competitive Europe, where knowledge diffusion propels both economic vitality, societal advancement and cultural enlightenment.	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/high-level-roundtable-r-i-for-a-prosperous-and-competitive-europe.html
EUA webinar "Universities and knowledge security: managing risks in research and innovation" **22 October 2024**	With research and innovation as key pillars of Europe's competitiveness, universities are working with national and European policy makers to ensure the robustness of knowledge production and exchange while being aware of foreign interference risks and threats to ethics and integrity. Therefore, this webinar was an opportunity to learn about best practices for boosting knowledge security and working with governments to uphold academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Participants also learned about ways to effectively allocate roles and responsibilities among institutional leaders and individual academics in order to facilitate broad ownership and coordination of security policies across universities. Please note that this event was reserved for EUA members.	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/universities-and-knowledge-security-managing-risks-in-research-and-innovation.html
EUA Funding Forum 2024 "Sense & Sustainability: future paths for university finances" **3-4 October 2024**	The EUA Funding Forum, in collaboration with the University of Helsinki, brought together over 200 participants from more than 30 countries, including university leaders, managers, policymakers, researchers, and sector representatives, to shape the future of university funding. In addition to showcasing the key findings of the EUA's latest survey on university finances and global trends, the forum explored various aspects of university funding, including the funding of university alliances, funding reforms, models and policy choices, the shifting dynamics of power within the funding ecosystem, funding expectations, and the costs of sustainability in an unstable environment. The forum rich in data and insights sparked numerous formal and informal discussions on funding within the community. Striking the right balance between realism and optimism, the Forum introduced fresh ideas and energy to strengthen universities' capacity to move forward and enhance financial resilience. In 2025, building on the latest funding survey, EUA plans to publish a series of briefings addressing various aspects of university finances.	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/2024-eua-funding-forum.html

EUA webinar "Strengthening research management in the European Research Area: Action 17" **26 September 2024**	Research management encompasses a wide variety of roles, responsibilities and tasks at institutional level. However, there is a need for a shared definition and clear career development paths for the research management profession to fully capitalise on the role that research managers play in supporting and facilitating the whole research and innovation process. To address these challenges, the European Research Area (ERA)'s action 17 addresses improving the training and skills development of research managers, contributing to the recognition of the research management profession, and supporting networking and capacity building opportunities across the ERA. Together with a panel of experts, participants of this webinar had the opportunity to learn more about the implementation of activities related to action 17 and how they impact universities. They also learned about synergies with other actions and potential next steps. Please note that this event was reserved for EUA members.	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/strengthening-research-management-in-the-european-research-area-action-17.html
EUA webinar "Developing institutional policies for Open Access books" **24 September 2024**	This webinar addressed the diversity of OA policies among universities and other research performing organisations in the European Research Area (ERA), focusing on the state of policy for Open Access books. As such, PALOMERA project partners shared the results of a policy mapping research that had identified different national approaches to OA books policy. Key insights from this webinar therefore included the added value of having a policy for OA books, which elements are most important within the scope of such a policy, what it would mean for a university to add books to its Open Access policy, and life-cycle thinking about policy development for Open Access and Open Science.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRX94pPfJSI
2024 EQAF (European Quality Assurance Forum) **14-16 November 2024**	The 2024 EQAF was hosted by the University of Twente, Netherlands. The Forum, entitled "Enhancing education, research and societal engagement through quality assurance," combined sessions about policies and trends, research, and practical case examples related to the Forum theme and more generally about current developments in quality assurance. Connecting quality assurance efforts across teaching, research, and the third mission is crucial for universities to achieve their strategic objectives. This integrated approach fosters a well-rounded and impactful educational experience for students while advancing research and contributing meaningfully to society. However, addressing the interconnectedness of the three missions becomes more challenging both for internal and external QA systems due to the wide variety of new developments and trends in higher education. These range from the need to base learning and teaching on research, to technological advancements including artificial intelligence, and the rise of projects that envisage the cooperation of different actors including non-academic stakeholders. EQAF 2024 explored new policies, innovative methodologies and tools that ensure a holistic approach to quality and quality assurance. It also invited the audience to reflect on how quality assurance can meet needs and challenges arising at the interconnection of the three missions. In addition to researchers, practitioners and policy makers in quality assurance, this year's event was of special interest to professionals responsible for the quality of research and outreach functions at universities, and to staff with project management functions.	https://www.eua.eu/events/eua-events/2024-european-quality-assurance-forum.html

EURASHE Highlights - Fall of 2024 and the "fresh start" in 2025

Introductory words from EURASHE President Hannes Raffaseder

Dear BFUG Colleagues,

As we move forward in the post-Tirana Ministerial Conference period and into a new phase of the Bologna Process under the leadership of Romania and Moldova until 2027, I would like to thank you for your continued cooperation in building a stronger EHEA. We are entering this new Bologna period at a time of significant global shifts, where recent political developments are reshaping the world around us. In this context, Europe must define its path to maintain and strengthen its competitiveness—including in higher education. More than ever, we need a higher education area that is integrated, innovative, and responsive to society's needs.

Despite ongoing geopolitical uncertainty, implementation challenges, and the risk of disinvestment in higher education and research, we cannot afford to scale back our ambitions. Instead, we must continue demonstrating the essential role of knowledge and skills in driving Europe's economic and social resilience. EURASHE joins the calls for increasing Erasmus and Horizon funds to ensure that Europe remains at the forefront of global talent and innovation.

In the past months, we have deepened our dialogue with applied-oriented higher education institutions and reinforced our engagement in shaping EHEA policies. To support the implementation of key priorities, we have also applied for several projects within the EHEA call. These initiatives focus on strengthening lifelong learning strategies, enhancing cooperation on learning and teaching, and addressing challenges in qualifications frameworks and recognition—critical elements for ensuring that European higher education remains both competitive and accessible.

One of EURASHE's key priorities in the upcoming period is to work closely with countries and partners to support higher education's role in economic transitions, including the green and digital agendas. We also aim to explore how micro-credentials can bolster lifelong learning, improve access to higher education for diverse student groups, and strengthen the link between higher education, innovation, and the world of work.
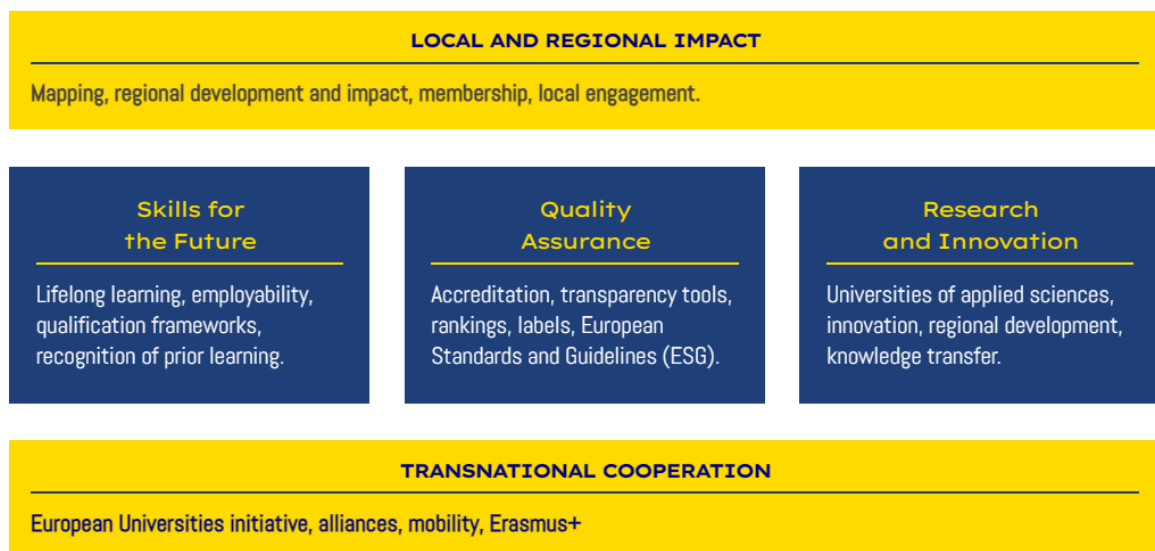
In line with the BFUG's intention to streamline the agenda for 2024–2027, we look forward to discussing the next work programme. Unlike in previous cycles, there seems to be a consensus that Learning and Teaching (L&T) should be embedded across all BFUG structures rather than assigned to a stand-alone Working Group. This will ensure a stronger presence of this key topic and foster broader engagement from across the EHEA.

EURASHE urges countries to fully implement the key commitments, as challenges to mobility between different EQF levels and countries remain. For instance, despite the inclusion of short-cycle higher education in the EHEA since the 2018 Paris Communiqué, students seeking to continue their education across borders still face recognition barriers. Beyond integration, higher education must be more active in addressing Europe's social and territorial inequalities. To maintain public trust, we must demonstrate higher education's accountability to society. We therefore call for strong commitments to fulfilling the Tirana Communiqué's goals, particularly in fostering competencies for the digital and green transitions and strengthening higher education's local and regional impact.

The upcoming BFUG meeting in Warsaw on 24–25 February 2025 will be an essential milestone in our continued work together. I want to thank all outgoing and incoming co-chairs for their dedication. While I am unable to join you in person, I send my best wishes from Austria.

EURASHE Strategic Priorities

The EURASHE strategy for 2023-2025 aims to make the Association a reference point for a wide range of policymakers and higher education institutions who seek to harness the power of Professional Higher Education (PHE) to address the green and digital transitions. The thematic priorities are shown in the figure below. Three horizontal subjects (Skills, Quality in HE and Applied Research) are complemented by two overarching concerns, namely to promote both local engagement and transnational cooperation.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL IMPACT

Mapping, regional development and impact, membership, local engagement.

Skills for the Future

Lifelong learning, employability, qualification frameworks, recognition of prior learning.

Quality Assurance

Accreditation, transparency tools, rankings, labels, European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).

Research and Innovation

Universities of applied sciences, innovation, regional development, knowledge transfer.

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

European Universities initiative, alliances, mobility, Erasmus+

In 2024, EURASHE dedicated its Annual Conference to the priority of transnational cooperation, building on the momentum of the European Universities Initiative. In 2025, the Annual Conference is taking place at the Polytechnic University of Portalegre (PT) under the theme "Place, Knowledge, Skills. In the most recent Erasmus+ call, several alliances were awarded funding that focus specifically on applied education and research. Furthermore, EURASHE is pleased that a Community of Practice has been established with the support of Erasmus+ funding, and that we can contribute as an associate partner.

Applied universities are close to the world of work and regional skills ecosystems. Therefore EURASHE is involved in the Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) initiative, both as a beneficiary in one of the Erasmus+ supported CoVEs and in working groups set up by the European Commission and the European Training Foundation. While under the same section of the Erasmus+ Programme, and despite calls in the European Strategy for Universities, much more could be done to integrate these two EEA flagship initiatives.

EURASHE Communities of Practice

The EURASHE Communities of Practice were established in 2022 to develop the three horizontal priorities of the 2023-2025 strategy (Skills, Quality of Higher Education, and Applied Research). To enhance their impact and provide greater value to EURASHE members, the rules of procedure have been updated. Participation in the Communities of Practice is open to EURASHE members, ensuring a more focused and engaged collaboration. The Communities operate through regular exchanges, virtual cooperation, and online meetings, fostering knowledge sharing and strategic discussions among members.

EURASHE Annual Conference

EURASHE Annual Conferences attract a diversity of delegates – heads of institutions, higher education practitioners, policymakers, academics and students – from the higher education community across Europe and beyond its borders. They are widely recognised as a communication platform for education experts and professionals and characterised by an innovative and refreshing approach. Each year, the conference theme explores a new issue relevant to applied higher education, i.e. skills, transnational cooperation, or regional development.

In 2025, the Annual Conference is taking place at the Polytechnic University of Portalegre (PT) under the theme "Place, Knowledge, Skills: Applied universities driving regional competitiveness". It proposes to analyse European competitiveness through a sustainable and inclusive approach, ensuring that the growth of the European Union happens evenly and leaving no one behind.

Forthcoming EURASHE Position papers

EURASHE recently contributed to an informal consultation with the cabinet of the Commission Executive Vice President, Roaxana Minzatu related to the **Union of Skills**. This will be followed by forthcoming reactions to the **Competitivness Compass** and ongoing progress towards establishing a **European Label and European Degree**.

Forthcoming and recently started EURASHE Projects

List of EURASHE Projects can be found here

Update on EQAR Activities

for the 24-25 February 2025 BFUG meeting

Contents

1. Register

Since the last report, the **EQAR Register Committee** held two meetings: on 9 and 11 October 2024 and on 26-27 November 2024.

At the October 2024 meeting, the EQAR Register Committee concluded that the following agencies demonstrated their substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG).

Approved applications:
- **ECAQA** — The Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health care (Kazakhstan)

At the November 2024 meeting, the EQAR Register Committee concluded that the following agencies demonstrated their substantial compliance with the ESG.

Approved applications:
- **AQUIB** — Balearic Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- **ACCUA** — Agency for Scientific and University Quality of Andalusia
- **ACSUG** — Agency for Quality Assurance in the Galician University System
- **VLUHR QA** — Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council

See also:
- Full list of the Register Committee decisions

- Database of precedents, featuring various search/filter options and including relevant excerpts of RC decisions.

- Key statistics on the application process and ESG compliance (make sure to scroll down to view all the different charts).

2. EQAR Members Dialogue (28-29 October, online)

The 14th EQAR Members' Dialogue "Shaping the future in an evolving HE landscape" was organised online in October 2024.

This edition of the Members' Dialogue was centred around current policy discussions and relevant practices presented by practitioners. The contributions covered the following topics:

- European Degree package and what it entails for EQAR. Attention was also paid to EQAR's contribution to the European Degree package in relation to DEQAR and the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EA).
- EQAR's contribution to the new working cycle of the BFUG
- ESG revision process and interlinks between the ESG and national-level regulation
- DEQAR updates and examples of DEQAR integration, as well as the European Commission input on the link between European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDCL) and DEQAR.
- Using DEQAR reports for thematic analyses ("Quality of recognition – Insights from the analysis of reports by EQAR registered agencies")
- External QA of micro-credentials and alternative providers

3. Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR)

DEQAR is the Database of External Quality Assurance Results on activities performed by EQAR-registered quality assurance agencies. DEQAR collects their reports and decisions (i.e. accreditations and evaluations) on higher education institutions mainly based in the EHEA, but also beyond.

Key Statistics (January 2025)		
The DEQAR Website continues to attract ca. 3000 page views monthly, making up over a third of the total traffic to EQAR's website.		
	March 2024	January 2025
Reports	97 197	109 929
Institutions	3740	4 243
Agencies*	55	57
Coverage**	31	33

*Number of agencies that have at some point uploaded reports in DEQAR

** EHEA systems where DEQAR includes reports on at least 50% of the institutions listed in the European Tertiary Education Register (ETER), except where this does not represent a substantial part of the HE system:
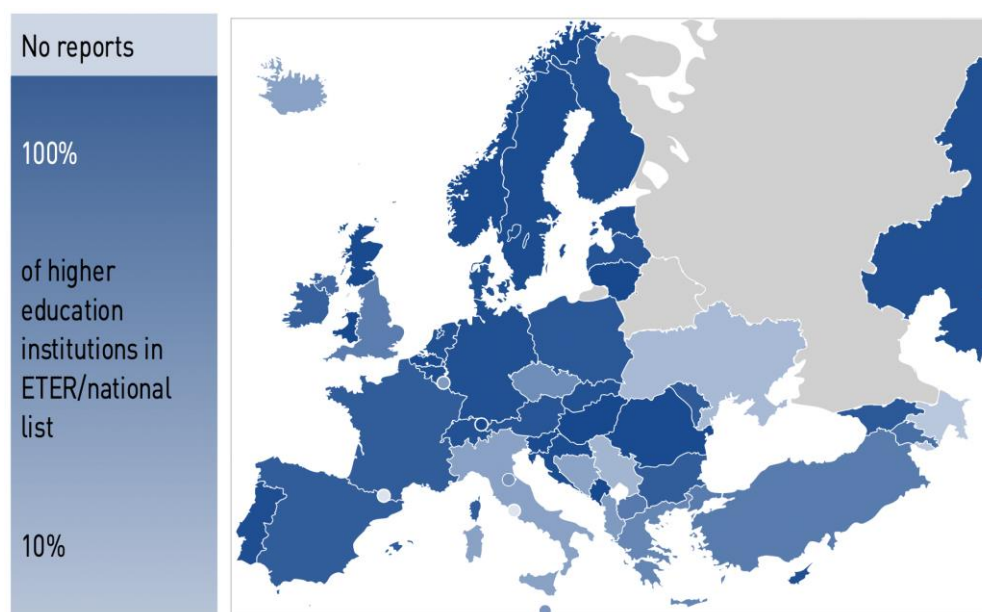
Figure 1: DEQAR coverage (percentage of HEIs with QA reports)

Updates from DEQAR:

- The number of higher education systems covered extensively as a result of EQAR agencies upload of external QA reports in March is thirty three: Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Belgium (French Community), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales).

- Some **ENIC-NARIC** centres are **integrating information on accredited higher education institutions from DEQAR into their workflows**, with a view to speeding up the recognition process for qualifications issued by HEIs present in DEQAR.

- Since March 2024, **QA agencies can store accreditations and evaluations on other (alternative) providers** (i.e. providers not having degree awarding powers but offer programmes at QF level 5-8) and **micro credentials** (i.e. programmes of small volume not leading to full recognised degree). **First uploads** took place throughout the summer of 2024 — the results can be accessed here.

- All DEQAR data, including the **programme accreditations**, is now uploaded to the **European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDC)** by default. As a result, all providers covered in DEQAR are able to issue accredited digital credentials in EDC.

- EQAR introduced **Glossary of terms** on its website, aimed to help end users understand the **terminology used in DEQAR**, including keywords

such as "micro-credentials", "other providers" and "higher education institutions". The glossary can be [found here](#).

Further general information on DEQAR can be found at: https://www.eqar.eu/qa-results/infographics/

Information on how to connect to the DEQAR's API and extract the data can be found here: https://www.eqar.eu/qa-results/connect-to-api/

4. Projects where EQAR is involved

4.1. IMINQA

The Implementation and Innovation in QA through Peer Learning (IMINQA) project is a three-year ERASMUS+ co-funded project (May 2022 – April 2023) led by the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training in partnership with ENQA, ARACIS (on behalf of Romania) and EQAR.

EQAR participated in three IMINQA events: Focus Groups on European University Alliances (8 November 2024, Brussels), TPG C meeting (28 November, Ghent), IMINQA thematic workshop (29 November, Ghent). EQAR also concluded work on two project deliverables: **feasibility study on quality label** for all providers working in alignment with the European Approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability, and a **cross-cutting analysis** of three peer-learning activities conducted within the IMINQA project.

4.2. QA FIT

The **QA FIT project** was led by ENQA having as partners EUA, EURASHE, ESU, EQAR, FINEEC, Irish University Association, ANOSR (NUS from Romania) and the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (associate partner). The projects activities included a desk research, four surveys on the ESG implementation, four reports and four focus groups including one with national ministries (led by EQAR), a final report, a final webinar and a final policy event in Brussels (November 2024).

EQAR organised the final event of the project on 7 November 2024 in Brussels, and with that the project was completed in November 2024.

4.3. TPG LRC CORE

The project is led by the Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence (CIMEA) and aims to **support the work of the TPG B**. Other project partners include: HARNO, FEI, Nuffic, UHR, EUA, ESU and the Prime Minister Office – Albania. Main activities involve panel discussions and peer learning activities on common challenges (i.e. recognition of knowledge gained through alternative pathways, micro credentials, digitalisation of recognition workflows, European Degree etc.) and research that will further enable the peer learning.

In January 2025, EQAR produced a pre-final version of a project publication (deliverable) on digitalisation of recognition processes.

UNESCO Higher Education Activity Report for the Bologna Follow-up Group Meeting

February 2025

This report provides an overview of UNESCO's activities since September 2024 which are of relevance to the European Higher Education Area.

1. Major UNESCO's Education Events in late 2024

- **International Forum of UNESCO Chairs and Partners** (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25 – 27 September), aimed to strengthen knowledge sharing, partnership building and interdisciplinary and collaborative research capacity in Africa, including through more inclusive and effective South-South and South-South-North research partnerships. More information here.

- **World Teachers' Day** (Paris, France, 4 October). The 2024 celebrations focused on "Valuing teachers' voices: towards a new social contract for education." The event emphasized the importance of integrating teachers' perspectives into educational policies and fostering a supportive environment for their professional development. More information here.

- **Global Education Meeting** (Fortaleza, Brazil, 31 October – 1 November), brought together Ministers of Education and Finance as well as some 800 key stakeholders to review SDG 4 advancements, highlight transformative actions, and foster multilateral engagement. The meeting focused on equity, inclusion and on boosting education investments and innovative financing, culminating in the Fortaleza Declaration which reaffirmed the commitment to international cooperation in education. During the Meeting, a session on equitable access, quality, and mobility in higher education was organized. More information here.

- **UNESCO International Forum on the Futures of Education** (Suwon – Gyeonggido, Republic of Korea, 2- 4 December) emphasized the need for higher education institutions to play a pivotal role in addressing global challenges such as the climate crisis, the rise of artificial intelligence, and increasing social inequalities. The forum advocated for a renewed social contract for education, urging universities to foster lifelong learning, promote interdisciplinary research, and strengthen their commitment to social responsibility to build more just, inclusive, and sustainable futures. More information here.

The **2024/5 Global Education Monitoring Report** was released on 31 October during the Global Education Meeting. Entitled "Leadership in Education," this edition of the flagship report underscores the pivotal role of effective leadership at all levels, including higher education, in enhancing learning outcomes. It emphasizes the necessity for identifying, selecting, training, and supporting individuals with the requisite skills and vision to lead educational institutions.

Lastly, on **24 January 2025** UNESCO organized a major event in Paris for the International Day of Education, under the theme of AI and Education: Preserving Human Agency in a World of Automation. As part of this, a panel discussion was organized on "How are human agency and AI being navigated in higher education classrooms". The panel explored how AI is impacting teaching and learning in HED, its implications for skills trajectories and how to support students in their interactions with AI for learning.

2. Higher Education

Update on activities - September 2024 – February 2025

Thirty-six (36) countries have now ratified the [Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education](#) which entered into force in 2023, with San Marino and Djibouti being the latest to join. This represents over 25% of the world's 6.4 million internationally mobile students. About twenty UNESCO Member States report to be at an advanced stage in the ratification process and it is hoped that we will see an exponential growth in ratifications by end 2025.

The implementation of the [interim work programme](#) (2024-2025) of the Global Convention adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties in 2024 is underway, in particular related to the development of operational guidelines for the Global Convention, research studies on quality assurance, including transnational education, and the recognition of refugee qualifications. These documents will be discussed during the next ordinary session of the Intergovernmental Conference to be held on 24-25 June 2025 in Paris. It is hoped that during this conference the new Operational Guidelines will be adopted. Work on a new recommendation on the relationship between the Global and regional conventions will also kick off in 2025.

At the regional level, Greece ratified the **Lisbon Recognition Convention** in September 2024, allowing the treaty to reach nearly universal ratification within the region. The LRC Bureau continues to meet regularly, and in 2025 will be working towards the organization of the Committee in October in Paris, hosted by UNESCO. The Bureau has also recently approved the new ENIC-NARIC charter, and this will be submitted to the States Parties during Q1 2025 for final adoption.

A series of regional meetings were organized in late 2024/early 2025.

- 11-12 November – [ASEAN Policy Forum on Higher Education](#) was held in Lao PDR to discuss a common space for higher education, also reaffirming their commitment to implement the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership (2023-2027).
- 3-4 December – [4th Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres](#) (APNNIC) Plenary meeting was organised by the APNNIC Secretariat to foster dialogue to promote the fair and transparent recognition of educational qualifications across the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on credential fraud, AI and transnational education.
- 10 – 12 December - States Parties and Observers gathered for the 3rd session of the [Buenos Aires Convention Committee and CINALC (](#)Network of National Information Centres in Latin America and the Caribbean) [Network](#) meeting in Montevideo
- 12 December – A special event was convened during the Nairobi Forum (see below) to mark the 10th Anniversary of the [Addis Convention](#) and convene the meeting of the African Network of National Implementation Structures to discuss the current work plan.

Campus Africa Flagship: The UNESCO Chairs and Partners Forum included two Campus Africa side sessions presenting the Flagship and facilitating a dialogue on the Future of Work in Africa. This was followed up by two online dialogues reconvening the UNESCO Chairs to arrive at a road map for moving forward. Day 1 of the [2024 UNESCO Forum on higher education in Africa: A driver for sustainable development](#) took place in Nairobi, Kenya from 10 - 11 December focused on Campus Africa. The forum gathered some 250 participants from all over Africa to discuss how the higher education sector can drive green and digital solutions supporting more sustainable and inclusive development on the continent, and the ways in which higher education could be even more closely aligned with labour market needs while

empowering youth with future-ready skills. Participants also examined the critical role of strategic funding in higher education to drive innovation, close skills gaps and foster economic growth.

During this event, some 40 participants from the **UNESCO-China Funds-in-Trust Phase III** project also met to discuss the progress and share innovative flagship solutions in enhancing the quality and relevance of technical higher education in the 6 countries participating in the project (Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda).

By the end of 2024, the **UNESCO Qualifications Passport (UPQ)** had been implemented in 11 refugee-hosting areas[1], including both refugee settlements and urban areas. Collaboration is ongoing with 11 national qualifications/recognition authorities. To date, UNESCO has received 464 applications from these 11 refugee hosting areas. A total of 216 interview evaluation sessions have been conducted, resulting in 160 Qualifications Passports being issued. Out of these 160 UQP recipients, approximately 22% are female.

Looking ahead for 2025

With its focus on "Reinventing Higher Education", the [Word Higher Education Conference III](#) in 2022 mobilized an iterative global process of collaborative agenda-setting and action for transforming higher education systems and institutions to unleash higher education's transformative potential to contribute to social and human development. **In 2025, this work will advance though a WHEC III+3 follow-on publication**. This publication will spark conversations with regional stakeholders and feed into WHEC III+5 convenings envisioned for 2027. In addition, UNESCO will advance **thematic work related to WHEC III+3 recommendations** (e.g. on academic freedom, the transformation of higher education teaching and pedagogy, and strengthening the university research-innovation nexus).

In its WHEC follow-up work, UNESCO will also be focusing attention on **higher education financing**, inclusive of innovative financing modalities, with commissioned mapping and research work as an initial step.

Additionally, in 2025 UNESCO will launch a new strand of work on **scholarships** in cross-border / transnational higher education. This will commence with a commissioned mapping of scholarship modalities, actors and trends; and be followed by the organization of an expert group consultation with the possibility of developing new UNESCO recommendations in this area, both for immediate dissemination and to inform post-2030 planning around academic mobility.

Scholarships and intracontinental mobility are a particular focus of work within **Campus Africa**. It has a dedicated line of work intended to catalyze international cooperation in **scholars**, **researcher and student mobility**. In 2025, the programme will extend its support in higher education to refugees and learners in emergency contexts.

During 2025, the **CFITIII** project will further improve the quality of its flagship products through capacity building and related research, generate shareable and actionable results, strengthen international cooperation among the higher education institutions that are part of the project.

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[1] *Ongoing implementation countries for the UPQ include Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Togo, South Sudan. Countries where mapping and/or dialogue is ongoing are: Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Egypt, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, Iraq, Qatar.*

In 2025 UNESCO will be working on the revision process of the **1997 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel,** anticipated to be approved at the UNESCO General Conference in November 2025. UNESCO will develop a complementing line of work specifically on academic freedom and institutional autonomy.