

REVISION OF THE ESG

BACKGROUND FOR THE BFUG DISCUSSION

24 FEBRUARY 2025

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ON BEHALF OF THE ESG REVISION STEERING COMMITTEE**



TIRANA COMMUNIQUÉ

- Reaffirmed the role of the three key commitments for the successful development of the EHEA.
- Gave the mandate for the revision of the ESG

“The application of the ESG promotes trust and transparency within and between higher education systems and facilitates accountability and enhancement. To keep them in line with ongoing developments, challenges and expectations, we invite the authors of the ESG to propose a revised version by 2026 to the BFUG, to be adopted by us at our 2027 Ministerial conference, as well as an adjustment, where required, of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.”

REVISION STRUCTURES AND PROCESS

- ESG Steering Committee
 - Representatives of all ESG authors (ENQA, EUA, EURASHE, ESU, EQAR, Education International & Business Europe)
 - Coordinate the overall process, including main directions and consultations
- ESG Drafting Group
 - Representatives of primary ESG authors (ENQA, EUA, EURASHE & ESU)
 - Prepare drafts and identify issues for further discussion
- Consultation rounds with all key stakeholders, including BFUG
- Parallel revision of the European Approach for QA of Joint Programmes
- Final versions in autumn/winter 2026, ministerial approval in 2027

PREPARATORY PROJECT: 'QA FIT FOR THE FUTURE'

Aims

- Mapping the state of play of quality assurance in the EHEA
- Explore perspectives for the future of quality assurance
- Provide an evidence base of a future revision of the ESG

Activities

- Surveys to main stakeholder groups
- Focus groups and consultations
- Papers and webinars to present the results



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RESOURCES



Material from the QA-FIT project is available here:

<https://www.enqa.eu/projects/quality-assurance-fit-for-the-future-qa-fit/>

Including

- Papers from each stakeholder organisation mapping the state of play and perspectives for the future
- Paper on QA and internationalisation
- Paper on the future of the ESG
- Policy brief and key considerations for the revision of the ESG
- Webinar recordings



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CONSULTATION OUTCOMES:WHAT WORKS?

- ✓ Importance of a European QA framework
- ✓ Strong agreement that the ESG are still needed
- ✓ The ESG support development of L&T, trust in and recognition of qualifications, student mobility, quality culture
- ✓ The basic principles remain relevant

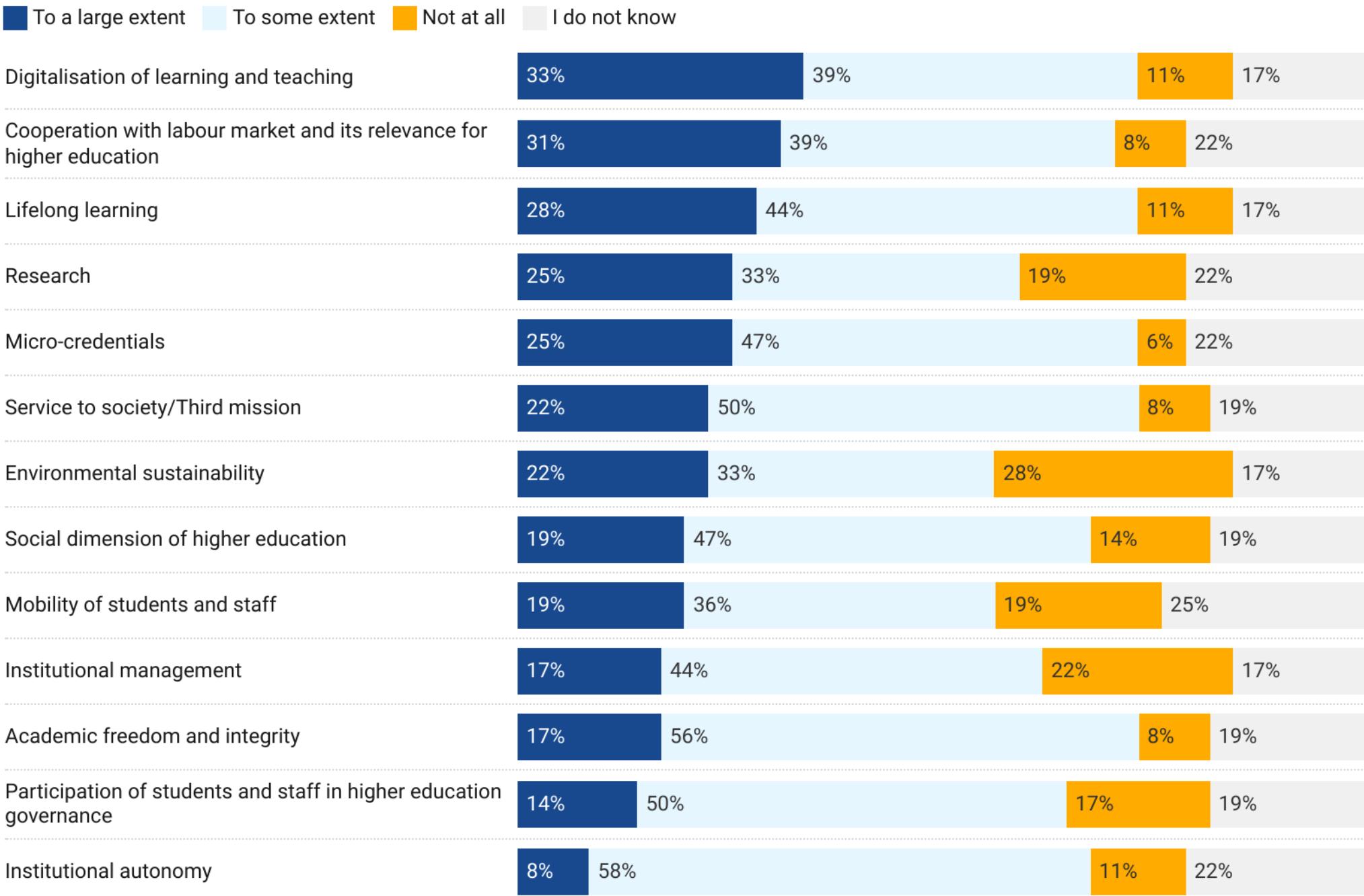
These points are agreed by all main stakeholder groups

CONSULTATION OUTCOMES:WHAT NEEDS CHANGING?

- Introduction: Update and make main concepts and messages clearer
- Internal QA: digitalisation, diversity of learners and academic staff, flexible learning pathways, links with other institutional missions, transversal topics (...)
- External QA: flexibility in QA methodologies while maintaining sufficient accountability (...)

If the scope of the ESG Part I were to be expanded, what should it cover in more detail?

(QA-FIT survey to ministries)



CONSULTATION OUTCOMES: KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE ESG REVISION

- Recognise the existing purposes of the ESG as relevant and valid
- Maximise the added value of EHEA standards
- Celebrate the diverse contexts and cultures in higher education
- Situate the quality assurance of learning and teaching in its broader context
- Balance current issues with long term relevance

STEERING COMMITTEE PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS (I)

- Re-writing of introduction to update the context and make the key messages clearer
- The ESG should support different concepts of quality
- The ESG are standards for quality assurance and not for quality itself
- The ESG should remain focused on L&T, but with stronger reference to the links to the research and societal missions of HEIs (countries and agencies can include other aspects in their quality assurance procedures)
- Scope vs topics: questions over the expansion to broader topics within the scope L&T

STEERING COMMITTEE PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS (2)

- The ESG should maintain applicability to all types of higher education provision, but should there be more explicit references to “other/alternative providers” and to smaller units of learning smaller (e.g. micro-credentials)?
- The current structure should be maintained (introduction, 3 parts)
- There should be further work on ensuring that the standards are self-explanatory, while the guidelines support implementation in different contexts

FURTHER TOPICS OF RELEVANCE

- Digitalisation in/of L&T
- Lifelong learning
- Micro-credentials / short learning units
- Transnational education
- Degree recognition
- Environmental sustainability (sustainability as a broader term?)
- Social dimension
- Fundamental values
- Societal mission - relevance to the society/region/labour market
- Research

BFUG CONSULTATION: QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

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?

+ Reflections on links to further topics of relevance



**On behalf of the
ESG Revision Steering Committee**

**THANK
YOU**

enqa.