EHEAROME**2020**

Advisory Group 1 on Social Dimension

FINAL REPORT

EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area

bologna
process

ITALIAN **BFUG** SECRETARIAT
2018-2020

INDEX

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) Advisory Group 1 on Social Dimension (AG1) developed a new strategic document that defines ten principles and guidelines to strengthen the social dimension of higher education in the EHEA - *Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA*.

This document is the main result of the AG1 for the period 2018-2020 and aims at developing fit-for purpose policy measures by the EHEA members to enabling tangible progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.

This report outlines the highly effective process that the AG1 adopted with the intention to accomplish the ambitious goal of creating the Principles and Guidelines. Also, the report shows that the AG1 sees a clear need to establish a new advisory group on social dimension in the period 2021-2024 in order to continue developing the social dimension in the EHEA. This report also contains a proposal of the Terms of Reference with main objectives for the future BFUG work in strengthening social dimension in the EHEA.

INTRODUCTION

2

The Advisory Group on Social Dimension (AG1) is co-chaired by Ninoslav S. Schmidt (Croatia) and Robert Napier (the European Students' Union – ESU). 17 other members and stakeholders are part of this advisory group, and these are: Austria, Belgium Flemish Community, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Sweden, United Kingdom and United Kingdom (Scotland), European Commission, European University Association, Education International and Eurostudent.

The mandate of the AG1 set in the Terms of Reference, defined by the BFUG, was to develop instruments and policies to fulfil one of the objectives in the Paris Communiqué related to the social dimension in higher education, namely to support national plans and strategies aimed at strengthening social dimension of higher education, as well as to improve access and completion by under-represented and vulnerable groups. The AG1 was tasked to fulfil this objective by developing a common understanding of the definition of social dimension within the BFUG. Furthermore, the AG1 was tasked to develop principles and guidelines that would enable realization of the definition for social dimension and further strengthen the development of the policy for the social dimension of higher education within the EHEA.

The mandate of the group lasted from November 2018 until the Rome ministerial meeting in November 2020. In February 2019 in order to fulfil its mandate the AG1 developed two important documents that successfully guided its work: the 'Workplan 2019-2020 for the AG1 on Social Dimension' and the 'Vision for the future "Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension " (accompanied with the SWOT analysis for achieving the vision).

Also, the AG1 created a comprehensive on-line database and repository, which consists of literature related to the social dimension, policy briefs, articles with ideas on how to develop principles and guidelines for the social dimension, presentations and other materials that helped the AG1 being effective in its work. All these on-line resources are available on the EHEA web site, because the AG1's principle was to keep its work transparent. Furthermore, the AG1's intention was that the on-line resources stay on the EHEA web-site in the long-term period in order to enable all stakeholders to strengthen the social dimension. These resources could also enhance the work of the future BFUG advisory groups on social dimension. The AG1 on-line resources are available at *http://www.ehea.info/page-Advisory-Group-1*.

ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

3

The group had a total of five meetings between February 2019 and February 2020, and used a multitude of online tools to continue the dialogue and work in between meetings:

1. First Meeting of AG1 on Social Dimension in Zagreb on 19 February 2019
2. Second Meeting of AG1 on Social Dimension in Brussels on 29 March 2019
3. Third Meeting of AG1 on Social Dimension in Vienna on 5 June 2019
4. Fourth Meeting of AG1 on Social Dimension in Helsinki on 11 November 2019
5. Fifth Meeting of AG1 on Social Dimension in Copenhagen on 11 February 2020

In order to inspire better discussions, the group also welcomed a number of guest speakers during the meetings, which helped identify key issues related to social dimension in higher education and develop them accordingly within the Principles and Guidelines.

From its first meeting held in Zagreb in February 2019, the Advisory Group decided to focus most of its energy on creating a concrete set of Principles and Guidelines, which are short, concise and can bring about a real change within social dimension in higher education. Before starting to work on this document, we discussed and agreed that the definition of social dimension should combine the definitions used in the London 2007 and the Yerevan 2015 Communique, but also should aim to go beyond this. Within the revised definition adopted by the AG1, social dimension encompasses the creation of an inclusive environment in higher education that fosters equity and diversity, and is responsive to the needs of local communities. The AG1 kept in mind the common understanding that social dimension goes beyond identifying vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups of students and that social dimension principles should be integrated into the core higher education functions, which include among others learning and leaching, research, knowledge exchange and outreach, institutional governance and management and policies for empowering students and staff.

For this reason, the AG1 is proposing a forward-looking strategic document for higher education development, entitled the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA, which the AG1 is proposing to be annexed to the 2020 Rome Ministerial Communique, with a clear commitment to its full implementation over the upcoming decade. Since this document has been widely consulted, not just within the AG1, but also within the BFUG at large, we believe it is time to have a clear political commitment from the EHEA ministers to truly improve the social dimensions of higher education.

The document Principles and Guidelines defines ten principles for social dimension in higher education for the upcoming decade of the Bologna process 2020-2030 as the basis for conceptualizing different policies for social dimension enhancement. The guidelines are recommendations intended to advise policy makers on how to implement the principles in practice. Therefore, this document allows for continuous improvement of social dimension policies and their effective implementation at the national, regional, local and institutional level, as well as at the EHEA and the EU level.

Through the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines the AG1 wants to ensure a holistic approach to social dimension which will aim to create coherent policy measures from early childhood, through schooling and into higher education and throughout lifelong learning. This will mean more connectivity between the work of those responsible for higher education and other ministries and departments, which only together can bring about a tangible change.

Through the adoption and implementation of these Principles and Guidelines, the AG1 also wants to ensure that public authorities continue to support higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity in responding to the needs of a more diverse student body, particularly through continuing professional training for both academic and administrative staff. It is ineffective advocating to achieve the definition adopted in the AG1 on social dimension, unless efforts are made in this regard.
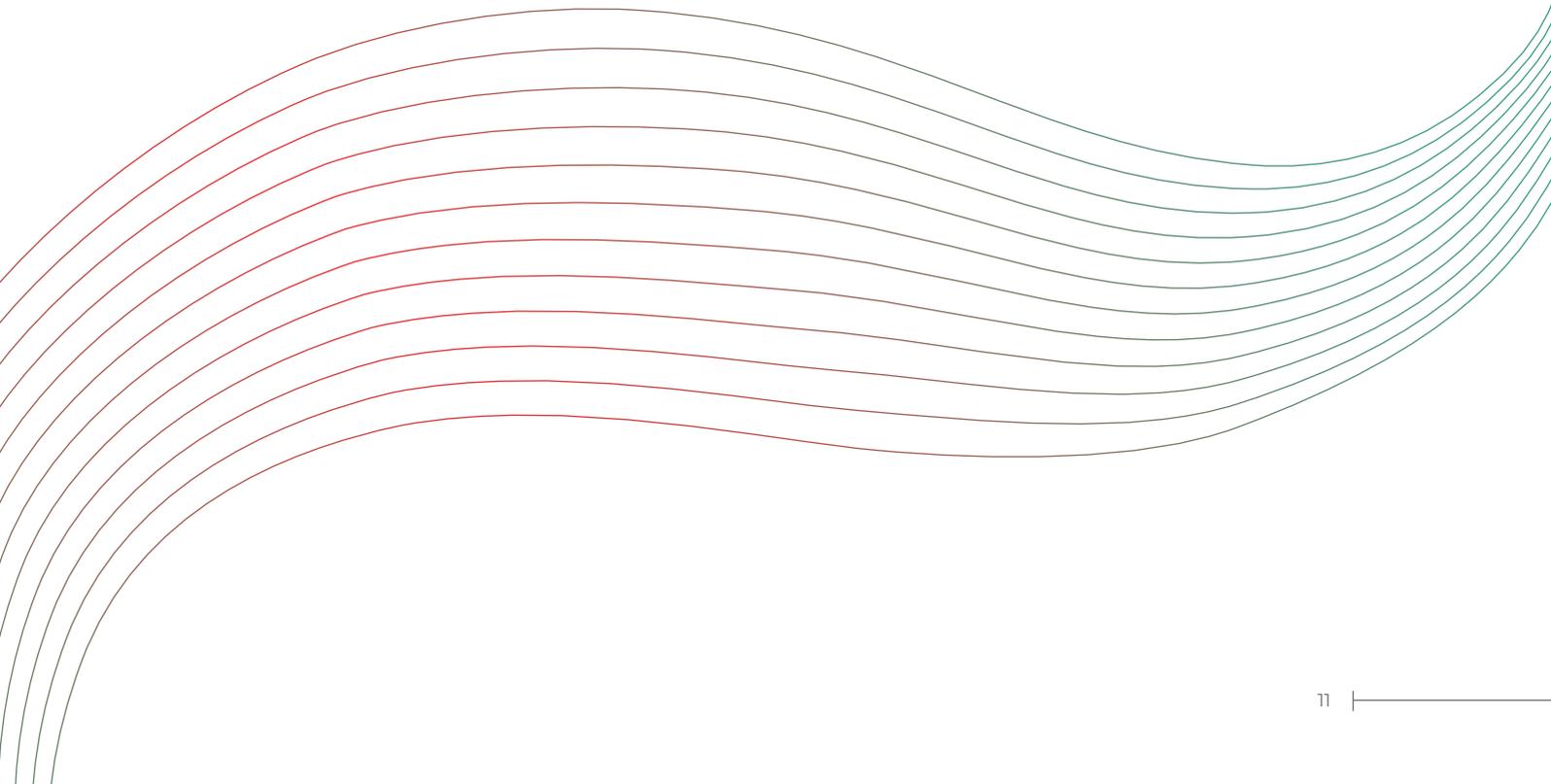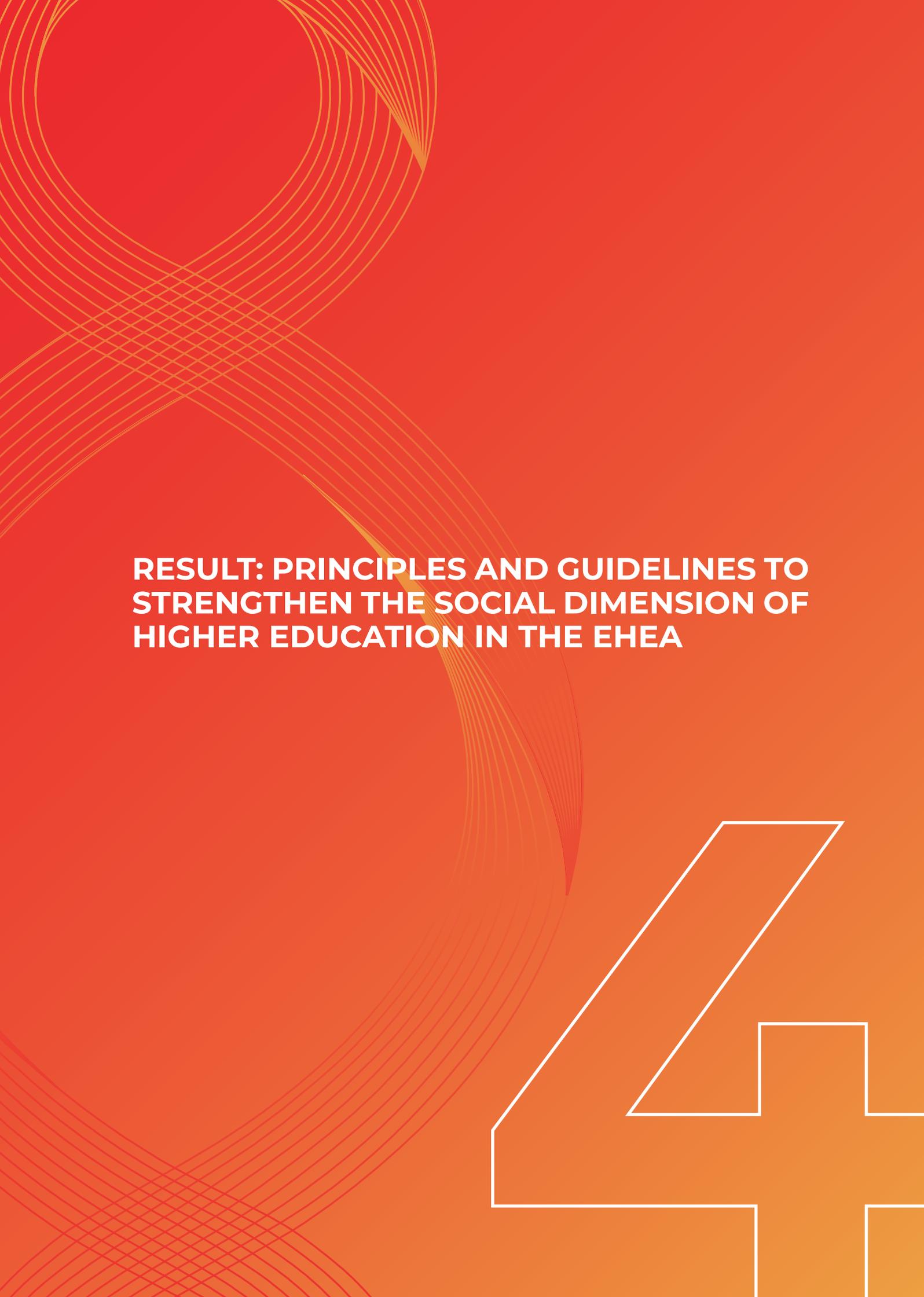
RESULT: PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES TO STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EHEA

4

The document Principles and Guidelines takes as its starting point the definition of the social dimension provided in the 2007 London Communique, namely that the composition of the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should correspond to the heterogeneous social profile of society at large in the EHEA countries. This approach embraces a social justice agenda, because it includes policy levers for improving the prospects of underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable students.

The novelty of the Principles and Guidelines is that it goes beyond this definition and has enlarged it by stressing that the social dimension encompasses the creation of an inclusive environment in higher education that fosters equity and diversity and is responsive to the needs of local communities. It means that public authorities and higher education institutions need to integrate the principles into the core higher education mission: learning and teaching, research, innovation, knowledge exchange and outreach, institutional governance and management, as well as in the policies for empowering present and future students and higher education staff.

Improving the social dimension by moving beyond widening accessibility clauses and focusing on public good agenda by integrating the social dimension principles in core higher education mission and governance is a crucial step forward when looking to strengthen inclusion, equity, and diversity of our higher education systems and institutions.

The new social dimension principles

The first principle wants to ensure that the social dimension becomes central to higher education strategies at system and institutional level, as well as at the EHEA and the EU level. The social dimension should interconnect the principles of accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion into all laws, policies and practices concerning higher education such that access, participation, progress and completion of higher education depend primarily on students' abilities, not on their personal characteristics or circumstances beyond their direct influence.

Secondly, it is important to ensure a holistic approach to social dimension aiming to create coherent policies from early childhood education, through schooling to higher education and throughout lifelong learning. This requires more connectivity between the work of those responsible for higher education and other ministries and sectors, who can bring about change only in a joint effort.

Reliable data is a necessary precondition for an evidence-based improvement of the social dimension of higher education. Higher education systems should define the purpose and goals of collecting certain types of data, taking into account the particularities of the national legal frameworks. Adequate capacities to collect, process and use such data to inform and support the social dimension of higher education should be developed.

Public authorities should provide sufficient and sustainable funding and financial autonomy to higher education institutions, allowing them to build adequate capacity to embrace diversity and contribute to equity and inclusion in higher education.

Higher education institutions need to strengthen their capacity in responding to the needs of a more diverse student and staff body, particularly through improving initial and continuing professional training for academic and administrative staff. Effective counselling and guidance for potential and enrolled students should help widening their access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies. International mobility programs in higher education should be structured and implemented in a way that fosters diversity, equity and inclusion.

Lastly, community engagement should be considered as a process whereby higher education institutions engage with external community stakeholders to undertake joint activities that can be mutually beneficial. Like social dimension policies, community engagement should be embedded in core missions of higher education. Such engagement provides a holistic basis on which universities can address a broad range of societal needs, including those of vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, while enriching their teaching, research and other core functions.

During the last meeting of the AG1 held in Copenhagen in February 2020, the group spent a substantial time on improving the introductory part and introducing a short glossary to the Principles and Guidelines. The glossary is intended to highlight the differences in terminology between three different terms used within the document, namely, underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable students. The definitions of these terminologies are not to be understood as legal definitions but rather are intended as explanatory definitions used in relation to the contents of the Principles and Guidelines.
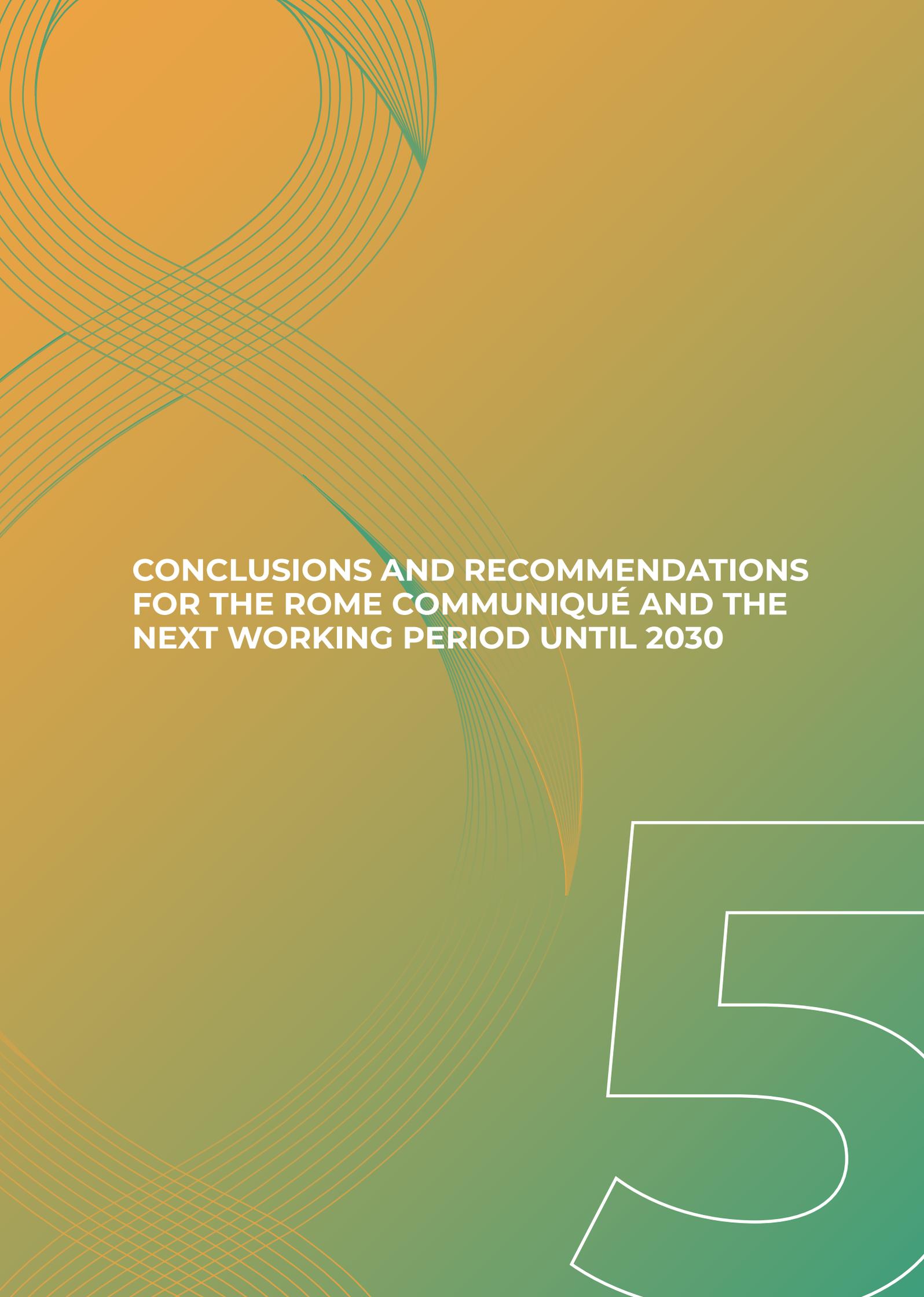
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ROME COMMUNIQUÉ AND THE NEXT WORKING PERIOD UNTIL 2030

5

The highly effective and visionary work of the AG1 resulted in the adoption of the Principles and Guidelines from 48 EHEA countries at the BFUG meeting in Kiev on March 4, 2020. At the BFUG Meeting in Kiev it was agreed to include the Principles and Guidelines as an annex to the Rome ministerial communique. The expected adoption of the Principles and Guidelines by the EHEA ministers in Rome on November 18-20, 2020 could provide a new impulse for the social dimension in higher education in the EHEA, which should be seen as an investment towards building more inclusive and cohesive societies.

It is essential to bear in mind that the adoption of Principles and Guidelines should only be seen as the beginning of a journey to holistically improve the social dimension of higher education in the EHEA. The proposed document should not be seen as a checklist, but rather as an instrument which can help bring about concrete and tangible change over the next decade and beyond. In order to be able to achieve the above goals, it is crucial that the BFUG enables the establishment and work of the Advisory Group for Social Dimension in the next BFUG cycle. The AG1 drafted a proposal of the terms of reference for the new Advisory Group. The main objective for the new mandate of the Advisory Group for Social Dimension should be (a) developing a system of monitoring of the Principles and Guidelines and (b) defining indicators and benchmarks for the principles for social dimension.

In the meantime, in order to avoid the scenario of having no improvement over the next three years, while the indicators and monitoring mechanisms are being developed, the AG1 suggests that the Peer Support Groups are broadened to incorporate the topic of social dimension. The social dimension requires more peer support at this point, as we still see significant discrepancies in the level of policy development and implementation within the EHEA. The AG1 suggests that this is done in parallel to Thematic Country Reviews for the Social Dimension, because it could ensure that the relevant areas for peer support are identified and acted upon.

Lastly, the AG1 recommends to organize a seminar or conference on social dimension at the end of the next Bologna cycle with the aim of discussing progress in social dimension in the EHEA. The AG1 hopes that by holding such a conference, countries and stakeholders alike will be able to come together and analyse the impact of the work done on the social dimension, which will further enhance the development of this important policy.

After adoption of the document in Rome, public authorities should engage in a policy dialogue with higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders about how the Principles and Guidelines can be translated and implemented both at national system and institutional level. Such policy dialogue should result in fit-for purpose policy measures, respecting institutional autonomy, avoiding any unnecessary administrative burden, and thus enabling tangible progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.
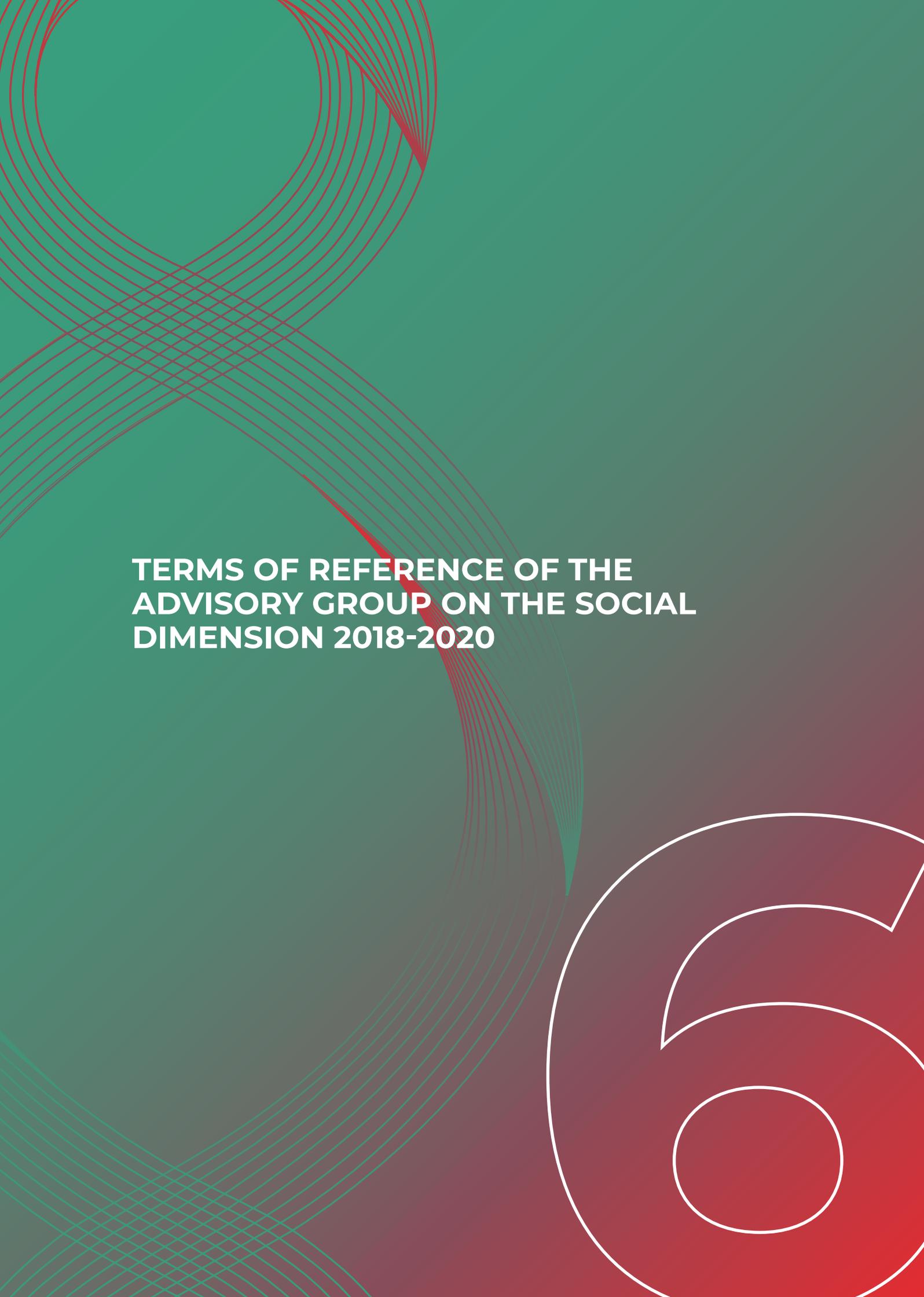
TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ADVISORY GROUP ON THE SOCIAL DIMENSION 2018-2020

NAME OF THE ADVISORY GROUP

Advisory Group on Social Dimension

CONTACT PERSONS (CO-CHAIRS)

Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt – Croatia
Robert Napier – ESU

COMPOSITION

Austria, Belgium Flemish Community, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark – National Union of Students, EI-IE, ESU, EUA, European Commission, Eurostudent (technical expert), Germany, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom, United Kingdom (Scotland).

OVERARCHING AIM

The overarching aim is to develop proposed instruments and policies to fulfil the objective in the Paris Communiqué and to support national plans and strategies aimed at strengthening social dimension of higher education, as well as to improve access and completion by under-represented and vulnerable groups.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop a common understanding of the concept of social dimension within the BFUG.
- To develop proposed principles and guidelines for the social dimension of higher education within the EHEA and to submit these, through the BFUG, to the 2020 Ministerial conference for adoption.
- To gather and examine data on good practices in the field of social dimension, drawing on previously agreed commitments and existing data.
- To explore the scope for EHEA cooperation to strengthen the social dimension of higher education.
- To begin working on Peer Learning Activities within the Social Dimension sphere.

REFERENCE TO THE PARIS COMMUNIQUÉ

"We call on the BFUG to submit proposals in time for our 2020 meeting in order to enable higher education to fully play its role in meeting the challenges faced by our societies."

"We recognise that further effort is required to strengthen the social dimension of higher education. In order to meet our commitment that the student body entering and graduating from European higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations, we will improve access and completion by under-represented and vulnerable groups. Therefore, we mandate the BFUG to take this issue forward by the next EHEA Ministerial conference."

REPORTING

Minutes of working group meetings will be made available online to the BFUG by the BFUG Secretariat. The BFUG Secretariat, at the request of the AG Chairs, may circulate relevant updates to the AG members by email. The BFUG shall also receive regular reports and updates from the group. To ensure good communication with the BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, progress reports shall be submitted at least two weeks before each BFUG meeting.

DRAFT MEETING SCHEDULE

The content and timeline of the meetings will be discussed amongst the co-chairs and the members of this Advisory Group, however, the following can be seen as a draft schedule:

1. Governance (setting up group) - February 2019
   - Outline what should be achieved under each objective
2. Collect data and map the way forward - April 2019
   - Gather and examine data
   - Outline how this can be converted into workable/feasible goals and concrete reference points
3. Draft - July 2019
   - Compose a first draft based on analysed data gathered during the previous meeting
4. Amendments - October 2019
   - Proposal of amendments of the draft which are in line with the objectives of the working group
5. Final document - February 2020
   - Agree on the finalisation of the document which will be presented to the BFUG before the next Ministerial Conference in Rome
   - Analyse the work of the group and make a recommendation on its future
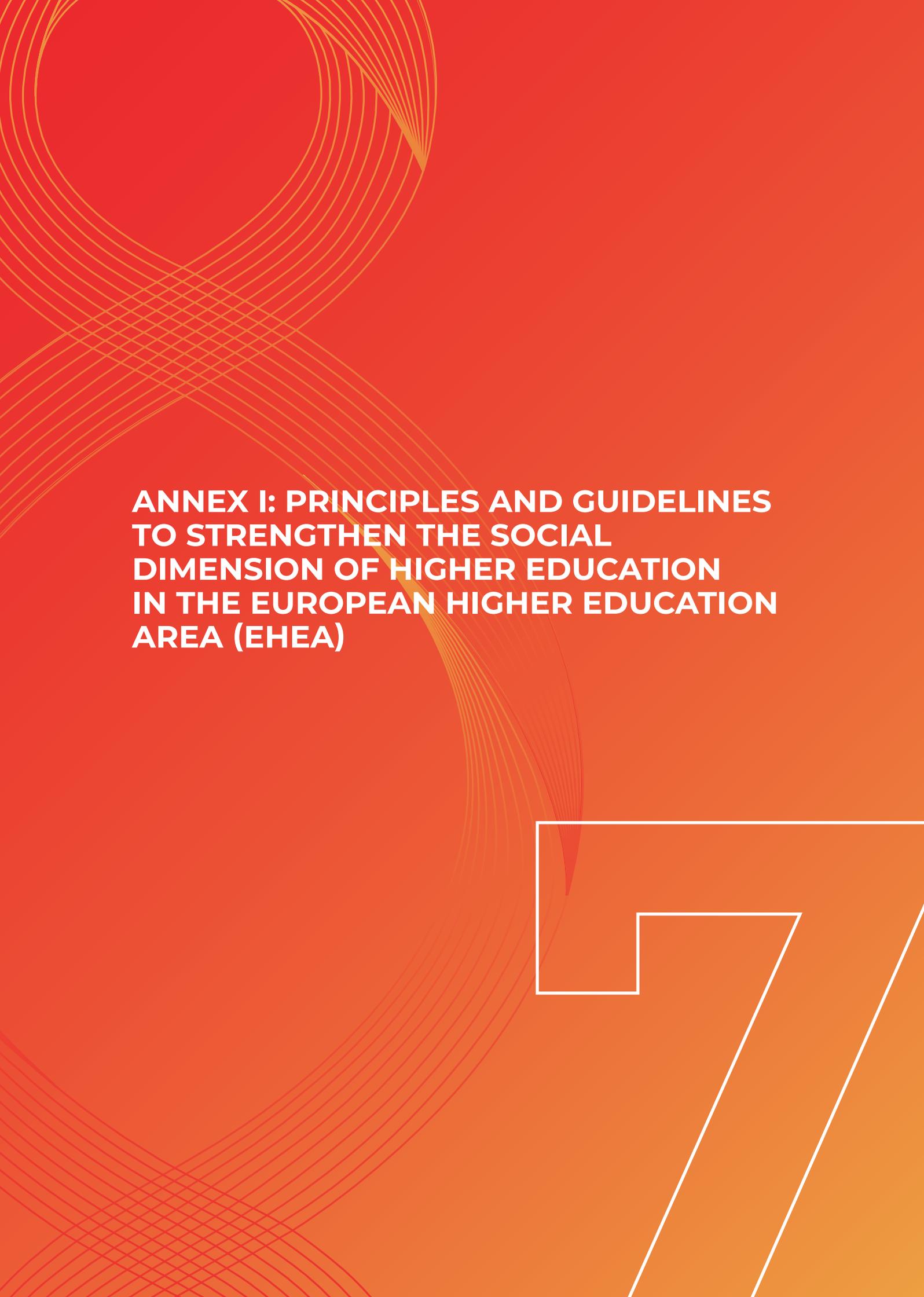
ANNEX I: PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES TO STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA (EHEA)

INTRODUCTION

The 2018 Paris Communiqué recognized the need to guide member states on how to define and implement policy for improving the social dimension of the EHEA. This document outlines core principles and guidelines, which we believe are fundamental to the further development of the social dimension in higher education. This document takes as its starting point the definition of the social dimension provided in the *2007 London Communiqué*, namely that the composition of the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should correspond to the heterogeneous social profile of society at large in the EHEA countries. The Advisory Group for Social Dimension also goes beyond the before mentioned definition and has enlarged the definition by stressing that the social dimension encompasses creation of inclusive environment in higher education that fosters equity, diversity, and is responsive to the needs of local communities.

The principles and guidelines within this document complement the EHEA 2020 strategy "Widening Participation for Equity and Growth"[1], which ministers adopted in Yerevan in 2015 as a means to further strengthen the social dimension while concomitantly contributing to increasing quality in higher education. The social dimension should interconnect the principles of accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion into all laws, policies and practices concerning higher education in such a way that access, participation, progress and completion of higher education depend primarily on students' abilities, not on their personal characteristics or circumstances beyond their direct influence. With this scope at heart, public authorities should support the implementation of these Principles and Guidelines by offering a legal, financial, administrative and informative framework that can initiate processes of implementation at the local level. This framework will promote inclusive strategies, which provide both specific support for vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented students[2] as well as highlight broader measures and policies wherefrom the student population and staff employed at higher education institutions can mutually benefit.

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[1] Accessible at *http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2015_Yerevan/71/5/Widening_Participation_for_Equity_and_Growth_A_Strategy_for_the_Development_of_the_SD_and_LLL_in_the_EHEA_to_2020_613715.pdf*
[2] Glossary of Terms and Definitions related to the definitions for vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented students is at the end of this document.

Increased participation of vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in higher education produces wider benefits with respect to decreased social welfare provision, improved health outcomes and increased community involvement. Collectively, these wider benefits sustain cohesive, democratic societies where social justice, public good, public responsibility and social mobility prevail. Graduate qualifications delivered to a wider pool of citizens means better employment prospects, higher earnings premiums and the passing on of an appreciation for the benefits of higher education to the next generation and to their local communities. Beyond reaching the commitments made by the EHEA, taking a holistic and proactive approach to improving the social dimension of higher education further serves to accelerate progress in attaining the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

These Principles and Guidelines set the course for the next decade of the EHEA for public authorities and higher education institutions to integrate these principles into the core higher education missions: learning and teaching, research, innovation, knowledge exchange and outreach, institutional governance and management, as well as in the policies for empowering present and future students and higher education staff. Improving the social dimension by moving beyond widening accessibility clauses and instead focusing on the concept of 'leaving no one behind' is a crucial step forward when looking to strengthen our societies and democracies. Supporting diverse learning environments is a necessity and should be seen as an investment towards societies, and public authorities need to shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that the proposed principles and guidelines are consulted, adjusted to national realities and implemented, in order to safeguard a better future for our higher education systems.

Principles in the text below should be understood as high-level statements that serve as a basis for the conceptualization of different policies for social dimension enhancement. Guidelines are recommendations intended to advise policy makers on how the principles should be implemented in practice. Therefore, the entirety of this document is not to be seen as a checklist, but rather as the basis for continuous improvement of policies and their effective implementation at national and institutional level.

PRINCIPLES

1. **The social dimension should be central to higher education strategies at system and institutional level, as well as at the EHEA and the EU level. Strengthening the social dimension of higher education and fostering equity and inclusion to reflect the diversity of society is the responsibility of a higher education system as a whole and should be regarded as a continuous commitment.**

Guidelines:

- Strategic commitment to the social dimension of higher education should be aligned with concrete targets that can either be integrated within existing higher education policies or developed in parallel. These targets should aim at widening access, supporting participation in and completion of studies for all current and future students.

- In the process of creating strategies there should be a broad-based dialogue between public authorities, higher education institutions, student and staff representatives and other key stakeholders, including social partners, non-governmental organisations and people from vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. This broad-based dialogue is to ensure the creation of inclusive higher education strategies that foster equity and diversity, and are responsive to the needs of the wider community.

2. **Legal regulations or policy documents should allow and enable higher education institutions to develop their own strategies to fulfil their public responsibility towards widening access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies.**

Guidelines:

- Legal regulations and administrative rules should allow sufficient flexibility in the design, organisation and delivery of study programmes to reflect the diversity of students' needs. Higher education institutions should be enabled to organise full-time and part-time studies, flexible study modes, blended and distance learning as well as to recognise prior learning (RPL), in order to accommodate the needs of the diverse student population.

- Public authorities should promote recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning (RPL) in higher education, because it has a positive impact on widening access, transition and completion, equity and inclusion, mobility and employability. RPL enables flexible modes of lifelong learning in the entire education sector, including higher education. Implementing RPL will require effective cooperation amongst the higher education system, employers and the wider community and to enable this national qualifications frameworks should facilitate transparent recognition of learning outcomes and reliable quality assurance procedures.

3. **The inclusiveness of the entire education system should be improved by developing coherent policies from early childhood education, through schooling to higher education and throughout lifelong learning.**

Guidelines:

- It is important to create synergies with all education levels and related policy areas (such as finance, employment, health and social welfare, housing, migration etc.) in order to develop policy measures that create an inclusive environment throughout the entire education sector that fosters equity, diversity, and inclusion, and is responsive to the needs of the wider community.

- The social dimension policies should not only support current students, but also potential students in their preparation and transition into higher education. Participation in higher education has to be a lifelong option, including for adults who decide to return to or enter higher education at later stages in their lives. An inclusive approach needs to involve wider communities, higher education institutions and other stakeholder groups to co-create pathways to higher education.

- Equity, diversity and inclusion should play a key role in the training of pre higher education teachers.

4. **Reliable data is a necessary precondition for an evidence-based improvement of the social dimension of higher education. Higher education systems should define the purpose and goals of collecting certain types of data, taking into account the particularities of the national legal frameworks. Adequate capacities to collect, process and use such data to inform and support the social dimension of higher education should be developed.**

Guidelines:

- In order to develop effective policies, continuous national data collection is necessary. Within the limits of national legal frameworks, such data collection should provide information on the composition of the student body, access and participation, drop-out and completion of higher education, including the transition to the labour market after completion of studies, and allow for the identification of vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.

- In order to make such data collection comparable internationally, work on categories for administrative data collection that are relevant for the social dimension should be developed at the EHEA level through Eurostudent or similar surveys. With the aim to rationalize the process and avoid administrative burden on public administration and higher education institutions, this development should take account of existing national practices and relevant data collection processes.

- Such national data collection exercises could, where relevant and necessary, be complemented by higher education institutions undertaking additional surveys, research and analysis to better understand vulnerability, disadvantages, and underrepresentation in education, as well as transitions of students across the education system.

5. **Public authorities should have policies that enable higher education institutions to ensure effective counselling and guidance for potential and enrolled students in order to widen their access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies. These services should be coherent across the entire education system, with special regard to transitions between different educational levels, educational institutions and into the labour market.**

Guidelines:

■ Public authorities should create conditions that enable collaboration between different public institutions that provide counselling and guidance services together with higher education institutions in order to create synergies and omit duplication of similar services. These services should uphold the principles of clarity and user-friendliness, because end users must be capable of understanding them easily.

■ Within a diverse student body, special attention should be directed towards students with physical and psychological health challenges. These students should have access to professional support to secure their success in accessing and completing higher education studies. Special focus should be placed on prevention of psychological challenges caused by the organisation of study and students' living conditions.

■ Public authorities should also consider setting up ombudsperson-type institutions that will have the capacity and knowledge to mediate any conflicts, particularly related to equity issues that may arise during accessing or participating in higher education, or conflicts that hinder the completion of studies.

6. **Public authorities should provide sufficient and sustainable funding and financial autonomy to higher education institutions enabling them to build adequate capacity to embrace diversity and contribute to equity and inclusion in higher education.**

Guidelines:

■ Higher education funding systems should facilitate the attainment of strategic objectives related to the social dimension of higher education. Higher education institutions should be supported and rewarded for meeting agreed targets in widening access, increasing participation in and completion of higher education studies, in particular in relation to vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. Mechanisms for achieving these targets should not have negative financial consequences for higher education institutions' core funding.

■ Financial support systems should aim to be universally applicable to all students, however, when this is not possible, the public student financial support systems should be primarily needs-based and should make higher education affordable for all students, foster access to and provide opportunities for success in higher education. They should mainly contribute to cover both the direct costs of study (fees and study materials) and the indirect costs (e.g. accommodation, which is becoming increasingly problematic for students across the EHEA due to the increased housing, living, and transportation costs, etc.).

7. Public authorities should help higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity to respond to the needs of a more diverse student and staff body and create inclusive learning environments and inclusive institutional cultures.

Guidelines:

■ Public authorities should support and provide adequate means to higher education institutions to improve initial and continuing professional training for academic and administrative staff to enable them to work professionally and equitably with a diverse student body and staff.

■ Whenever possible, external quality assurance systems should address how the social dimension, diversity, accessibility, equity and inclusion are reflected within the institutional missions of higher education institutions, whilst respecting the principle of autonomy of higher education institutions.

8. International mobility programs in higher education should be structured and implemented in a way that foster diversity, equity and inclusion and should particularly foster participation of students and staff from vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds.

Guidelines:

■ International experiences through learning mobility improve the quality of learning outcomes in higher education. Public authorities and higher education institutions should ensure equal access for all to the learning opportunities offered by national and international learning and training mobility programmes and actively address obstacles to mobility for vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented groups of students and staff.

■ Besides further support to physical mobility, including full portability of grants and loans across the EHEA, public authorities and higher education institutions should facilitate the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support blended mobility and to foster internationalisation at home by embedding international online cooperation into courses. Blended mobility is the combination of a period of physical mobility and a period of online learning. Such online cooperation can be used to extend the learning outcomes and enhance the impact of physical mobility, for example by bringing together a more diverse group of participants, or to offer a broader range of mobility options.

9. **Higher education institutions should ensure that community engagement in higher education promotes diversity, equity and inclusion.**

Guidelines:

- Community engagement should be considered as a process whereby higher education institutions engage with external community stakeholders to undertake joint activities that can be mutually beneficial. Like social dimension policies, community engagement should be embedded in core missions of higher education. It should engage with teaching and learning, research, service and knowledge exchange, students and staff and management of higher education institutions. Such engagement provides a holistic basis on which universities can address a broad range of societal needs, including those of vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, while enriching their teaching, research and other core functions.

- Community stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, cultural organisations, non-governmental organisations, businesses, citizens) should be able to meaningfully engage with higher education actors through open dialogue. This will enable genuine university-community partnerships, which can effectively address social and democratic challenges.

10. **Public authorities should engage in a policy dialogue with higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders about how the above principles and guidelines can be translated and implemented both at national system and institutional level.**

Guidelines:

- Such policy dialogue should allow to develop fit for purpose policy measures, which should respect institutional autonomy, avoid any unnecessary administrative burden, and thus enable concrete progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.

- Within the scope of the above principles and guidelines, peer support and exchange of good practices are crucial among EHEA countries in order to facilitate progress towards the inclusiveness of higher education systems.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS[3]

This glossary defines the three central terms in this document, namely underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable students. The definitions are not to be understood as legal definitions and therefore do not conflict with any existing legal regulations, rather they are intended as explanatory definitions used in relation to the contents of the Principles and Guidelines.

Underrepresented students:

A group of learners is underrepresented in relation to certain characteristics (e.g. gender, age, nationality, geographic origin, socio-economic background, ethnic minorities) if its share among the students is lower than the share of a comparable group in the total population. This can be documented at the time of admission, during the course of studies or at graduation. Individuals usually have several underrepresented characteristics, which is why combinations of underrepresented characteristics ("intersectionality") should always be considered. Furthermore, underrepresentation can also impact at different levels of higher education – study programme, faculty or department, higher education institution, higher education system.

This definition is complementary to the London Communiqué, "that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations", but does not fully cover it.

Disadvantaged students:

Disadvantaged students often face specific challenges compared to their peers in higher education. This can take many forms (e.g. disability, low family income, little or no family support, orphan, many school moves, mental health, pregnancy, having less time to study because one has to earn one's living by working or having caring duties). The disadvantage may be permanent, may occur from time to time or only for a limited period. Disadvantaged students can be part of an underrepresented group, but do not have to be. Therefore, disadvantaged and underrepresented are not synonymous.

Vulnerable students:

Vulnerable students may be at risk of disadvantage (see above) and in addition have special (protection) needs. For example, because they suffer from an illness (including mental health) or have a disability, because they are minors, because their residence permit depends on the success of their studies (and thus also on decisions made by individual teachers), because they are at risk of being discriminated against. These learners are vulnerable in the sense that they may not be able to ensure their personal well-being, or that they may not be able to protect themselves from harm or exploitation and need additional support or attention.

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[3] This glossary is intended only for the purpose of these Principles and Guidelines.
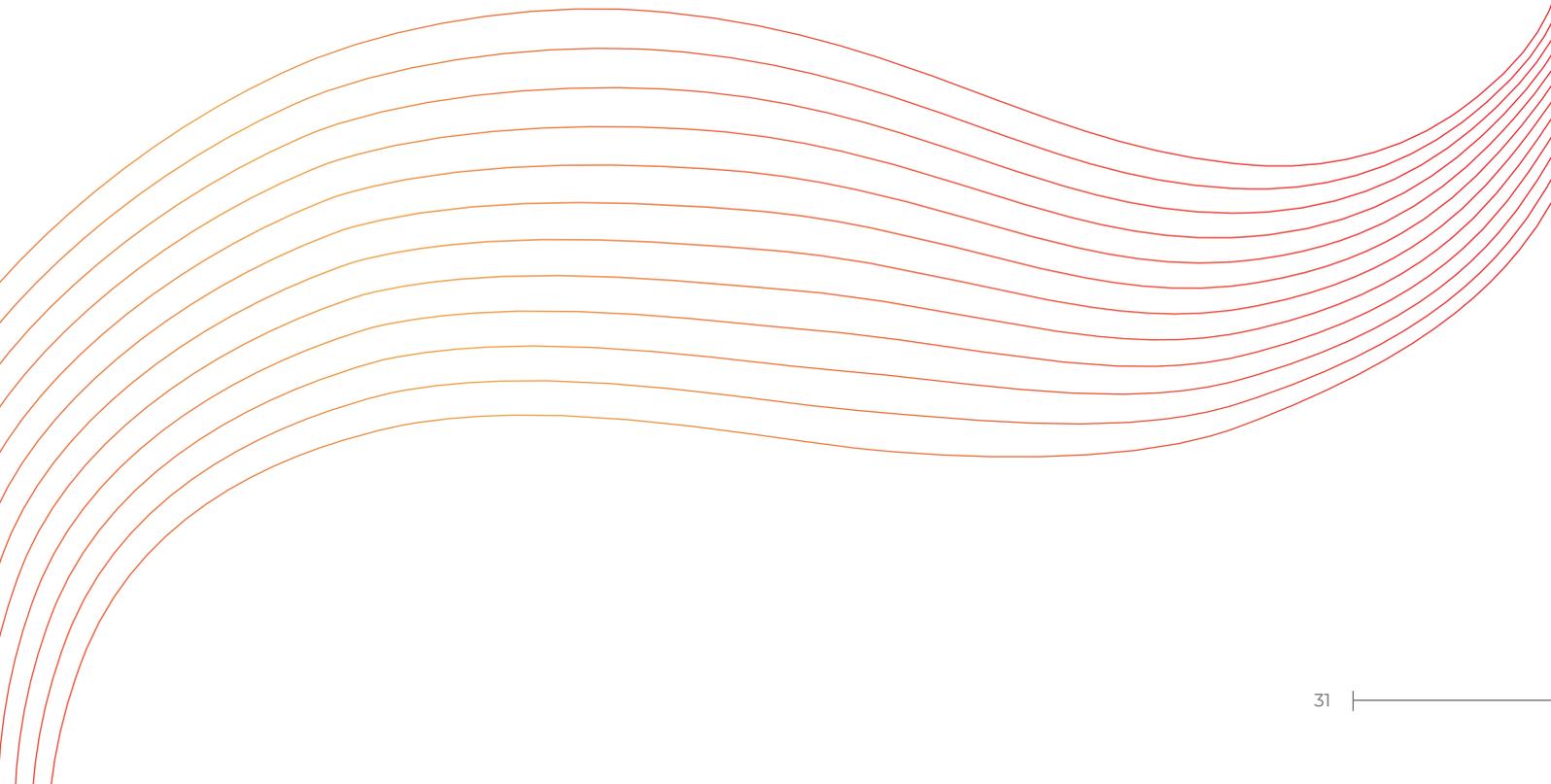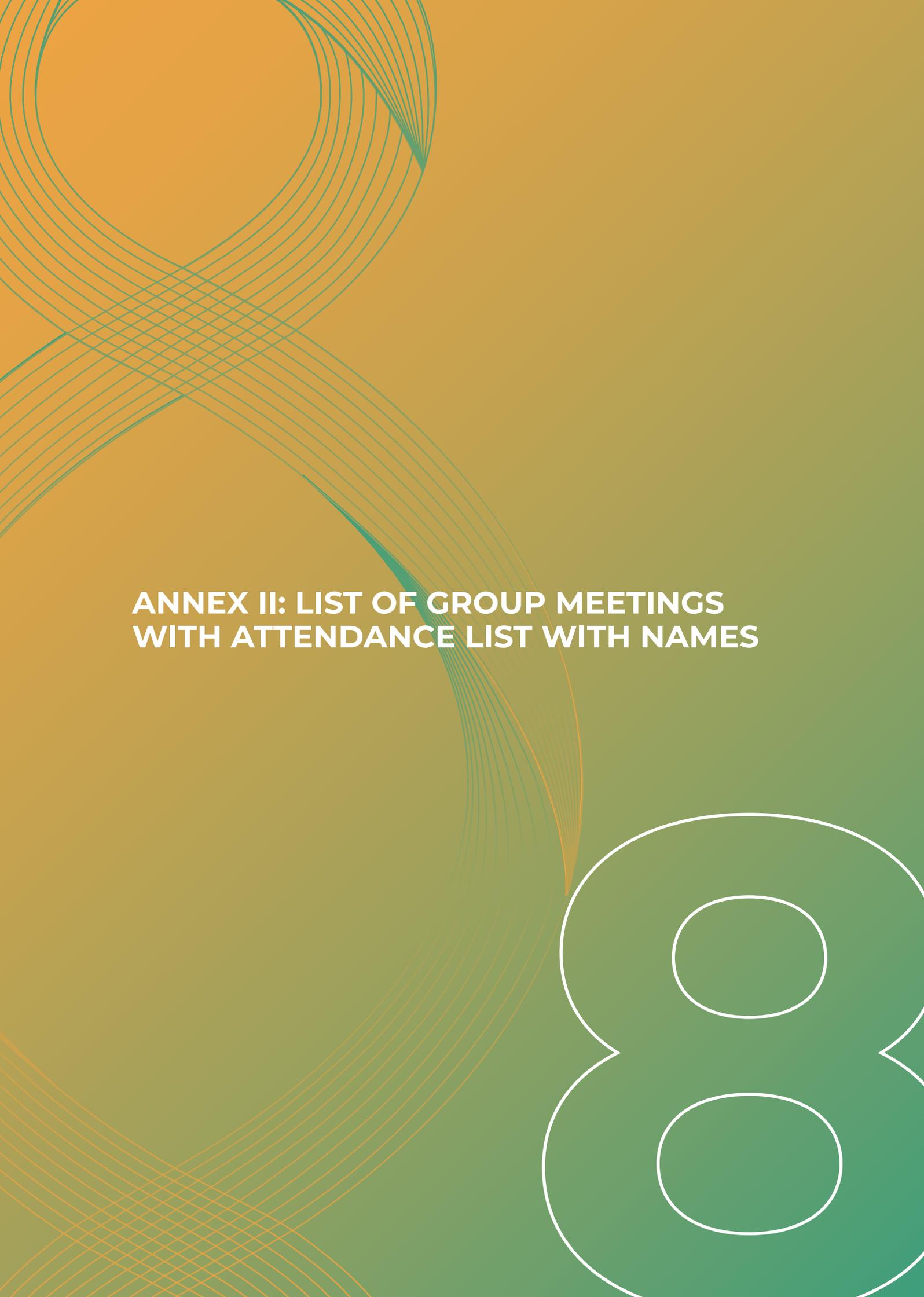
ANNEX II: LIST OF GROUP MEETINGS WITH ATTENDANCE LIST WITH NAMES

8

1. FIRST MEETING: 19 FEBRUARY 2019, ZAGREB

Austrian Student Ombudsman	Josef Leidenfrost
Austria	Marita Gasteiger
Belgium Flemish Community	Patrick Willems
Croatia (Co-chair)	Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt
Croatia	Ana Jerković
National Union of Students in Denmark	Julian Lo Curlo
EI/ETUCE	Annette Dolan
ESU (Co-chair)	Robert Napier
EUA	Henriette Stoeber
European Commission	Julie Anderson
Eurostudent	Martin Unger
Germany	Ronja Hesse
Luxembourg	Isabelle Reinhardt
Poland	Magdalena Wróbel
Romania	Mihai Cezar Hâj
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni Finocchietti
BFUG Secretariat	Susanna Taormina

2. SECOND MEETING: 29 MARCH 2019, BRUSSELS

Austrian Student Ombudsman	Josef Leidenfrost
Austria	Marita Gasteiger
Belgium Flemish Community	Patrick Willems
Croatia (Co-chair)	Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt
National Union of Students in Denmark	Julian Lo Curlo
ESU (Co-chair)	Robert Napier
ESU	Marta Sierra
EUA	Henriette Stoeber
European Commission	Klara Engels-Perenyi
European Commission	Kinga Szuly
Eurostudent	Martin Unger
Germany	Ronja Hesse
Luxembourg	Isabelle Reinhardt
Poland	Magdalena Wróbel
Romania	Mihai Cezar Hâj
United Kingdom	John Storan
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni Finocchietti
BFUG Secretariat	Susanna Taormina

3. THIRD MEETING: 5 JUNE 2019, VIENNA

Austrian Student Ombudsman	Josef Leidenfrost
Austria	Marita Gasteiger
Austria	Anna Wockinger
Bulgaria	Stanimir Boyadzhiev
Croatia (Co-chair)	Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt
National Union of Students in Denmark	Julian Lo Curlo
EI/ETUCE	Annette Dolan
ESU	Sebastian Berger
ESU (Co-chair)	Robert Napier
EUA	Anna-Lena Claeys-Kulik
European Commission	Klara Engels-Perenyi
Eurostudent	Angelika Grabher-Wusche
Eurostudent	Martin Unger
Germany	Ronja Hesse
Kazakhstan	Daniyar Alenov
Luxembourg	Isabelle Reinhardt
Slovenia	Maja Švent
Slovenia	Urška Pikec Vesel
Sweden	Lovisa Hellberg
United Kingdom	John Storan
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni Finocchietti
BFUG Secretariat	Susanna Taormina

4. FOURTH MEETING: 11 NOVEMBER 2019, HELSINKI

Austrian Student Ombudsman	Josef Leidenfrost
Austria	Marita Gasteiger
Belgium Flemish Community	Patrick Willems
Croatia (Co-chair)	Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt
National Union of Students in Denmark	Julian Lo Curlo
ESU	Helmi Andersson
ESU (Co-chair)	Robert Napier
ESU	Jenni Röynä
EI/ETUCE	Annette Dolan
EUA	Anna-Lena Claeys-Kulik
European Commission	Klara Engels-Perenyi
European Commission (Eurydice)	David Crosier
Eurostudent	Kristina Hauschildt
Eurostudent	Martin Unger
Germany	Ronja Hesse
Kazakhstan	Khanat Kassenov

Lithuania	Andrius Zalitis
Slovenia	Erika Rustja
Poland	Maria Boltruszko
Romania	Mihai Cezar Hâj
United Kingdom (Scotland)	Lynn Kilbride
BFUG Secretariat	Filippo Benedetti
BFUG Secretariat	Edlira Adi Kahani Subashi

5. FIFTH MEETING: 11 FEBRUARY 2020, COPENHAGEN

Austria	Marita Gasteiger
Belgium Flemish Community	Patrick Willems
Croatia (Co-chair)	Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt
National Union of Students in Denmark	Julian Lo Curlo
National Union of Students in Denmark	Sandi Rizvic
ESU (Co-chair)	Robert Napier
EI/ETUCE	Annette Dolan
EUA	Anna-Lena Claeys-Kulik
European Commission	Lucie Trojanová
Eurostudent	Martin Unger
Germany	Ronja Hesse
Lithuania	Andrius Zalitis
Luxembourg	Isabelle Reinhardt
Sweden	Robin Moberg
Poland	Monika Przybysz
Romania	Mihai Cezar Hâj
United Kingdom	John Storan
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni Finocchietti
BFUG Secretariat	Susanna Taormina
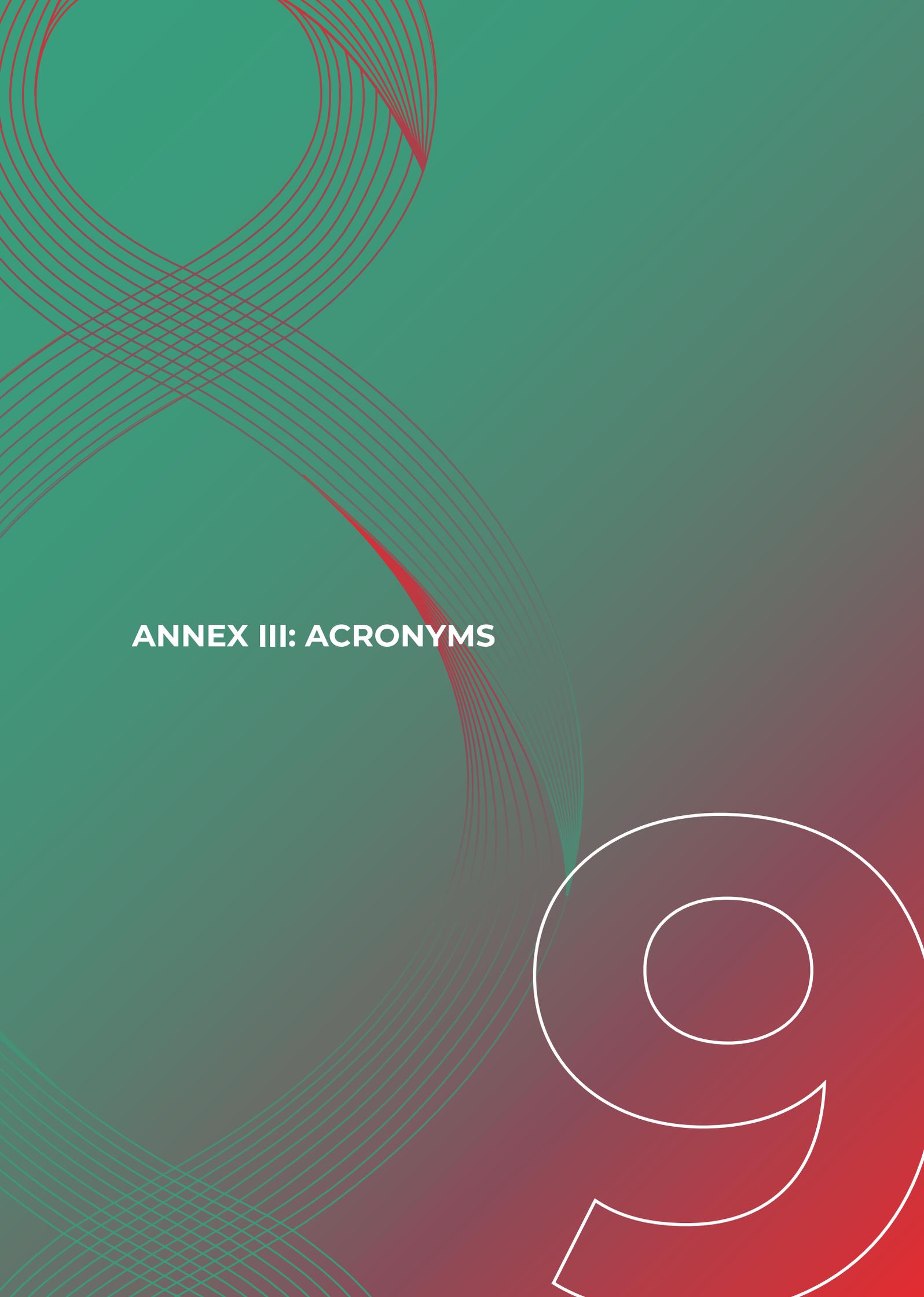
ANNEX III: ACRONYMS

AG1

Advisory Group 1 on Social Dimension

BFUG

Bologna Follow-up Group

EHEA

European Higher Education Area

ESU

European Student Union

Principles and Guidelines

Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area