bologna process

EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area

Fundamental Values Working Group

FINAL REPORT

MAY 2024

25 YEARS OF BOLOGNA PROCESS

EHEA: Transforming Education together

TIRANA 2024 ehea

Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) Working Group on Fundamental Values has developed the statements for those fundamental values that were not further explored in the Rome Communiqué: academic integrity, institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in higher education governance, public responsibility *for* higher education, and public responsibility *of* higher education. These five statements are the main results of the WG on Fundamental Values for the period 2021-2024. Together with the statement on academic freedom included as an annex to the Rome Communiqué, they aim at providing a common understanding and reference for all fundamental values and for all EHEA members. As requested in the Rome Communiqué, the statements will support the design of a fully functional monitoring system of indicators to measure the extent to which members uphold these values, protect and promote them. This report outlines the process that the WG on Fundamental Values implemented in order to accomplish the ambitious goal of developing the monitoring system. Also, the report explains that the WG on Fundamental Values sees a clear need to continue with a working group or advisory group on Fundamental Values in the period 2024-2027 in order to continue and complete the work of developing the monitoring system.

2. INTRODUCTION & MANDATE OF THE GROUP

The Working Group on Fundamental Values is co-chaired by Mihai Cezar Haj (Romania), Tone Flood Strøm (Norway), Rose Anne Cuschieri (Malta) and David Akrami Flores (Germany). Previously, as representatives of Germany, Marit Metternich (until October 2022) and Frank Petrikowski (until October 2021) also chaired the Working Group. Nineteen other members and stakeholders are part of the Working Group on Fundamental Values: Austria, Council of Europe, Croatia, EI – ETUCE, ENQA, ESU, EUA, European Commission, Finland, France, Holy See, Iceland, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom (Scotland).

The mandate of the WG on Fundamental Values set in the Terms of Reference, defined by the BFUG, was to develop a comprehensive framework to further the monitoring and implementation of the fundamental values of the EHEA in the higher education systems of its members as stated in the Rome Ministerial Communique. The Working Group was tasked to fulfill this objective in order to foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which the fundamental values are honoured and implemented in the EHEA. The WG was tasked to develop indicators on de jure and de facto implementation of academic freedom based on the definition of academic freedom adopted by the ministers in the Rome Communiqué; On the basis of consultation with academic experts and relevant stakeholder organisations, the WG was tasked to consider how the additional fundamental values listed in the Paris and Rome Communiqués – academic integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility *for* and *of* higher education - can be defined, understood and implemented in the EHEA. For this reason, the WG on Fundamental values dedicated important resources and time to provide ministers with statements that should provide a common understanding within EHEA and beyond.

Another task set out by the BFUG for the Working Group on Fundamental Values was to continue to develop and test a comprehensive, effective and evidence-based monitoring framework for future reporting on the implementation of the fundamental values in the EHEA through the Bologna Process Implementation Report, a system that takes into account both the de jure and the de facto aspects of the fundamental values of the EHEA. In this sense, the working group has worked closely with the Monitoring WG in order to provide inputs on the data collection process for the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report.

The final task from the terms of reference is to develop options for the monitoring of fundamental values, including data to be explored and methods for collecting and processing data as well as recommend indicators of fundamental values and the evidence required to fill them including the source for such evidence as part of the comprehensive framework to further the monitoring and implementation of the fundamental values of the EHEA.

3. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING GROUP

3.1 EVENTS ORGANISED

The group had a total of ten meetings between June 2021 and April 2024:

1. First Meeting: June 18, 2021, Malta - Online
2. 2nd Meeting, 29 October 2021, Malta – Online
3. 3rd Meeting, 11-12 July 2022, Malta
4. 4th Meeting, 20 October 2022, Romania, Online
5. 5th Meeting, 6-7 December 2022, Bucharest, Romania
6. 6th Meeting, 16-17 March 2023, Berlin, Germany
7. 7th Meeting, 3-4 July 2023, Romania, Online
8. 8th Meeting, 6 -8 November 2023, Bucharest, Romania
9. 9th Meeting, 23 – 25 January 2024, Brussels, ESU
10. 10th Meeting, 5th of April, (online) Norway.

In order to support the debates within the working group, the group also welcomed a number of guests and experts during the meetings, who helped with the drafting of the deliverables and provided key presentations on the issues related to Fundamental Values in higher education.

The first meeting was dedicated to clarifying the objectives of the WG as stated by the ToR, establishing clear working methods for the working group while acknowledging the work done before by the BFUG, specifically the task force on Fundamental Values as well as other good practice examples (such as the AFI Index). The WG members agreed to hold expert hearings in order to take advantage of the work done by experts and researchers in fulfilling the WGs objectives.

The second meeting highlighted the need to establish initial definitions of all fundamental values, recognizing that they are interdependent and that a holistic approach should be taken. The importance of drawing upon existing documents and literature as a foundation for these definitions was emphasized, with a clear plan to involve field experts and researchers in the process. The role of the WG in reporting on fundamental values and constructing a monitoring framework based on these definitions was highlighted, underscoring the need for careful organization and expert input. It was proposed that the WG should seek support from organizations such as DAAD to aid in organizing processes, including expert hearings and stakeholder discussions.

The third meeting discussed critical aspects related to the development of statements on fundamental values within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the corresponding indicators for the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR). The primary focus was to identify relevant indicators to assess the implementation of these fundamental values. The meeting aimed to align the BPIR with the overall draft dimensions of the statements on fundamental values. The working group addressed the need to gather data for a limited number of indicators while ensuring their operational and political significance. Rather than attempting to collect extensive new data, the group emphasized the importance of utilizing existing indicators and data sources. This approach aimed to streamline the assessment process and make it more feasible within the given timeframe. The discussion also highlighted the distinction between the de jure and de facto aspects of fundamental values. While members acknowledged that BFUG could provide information on the de jure component, collecting data for the de facto component presented challenges.

The fourth meeting centered around the discussion and development of indicators related to fundamental values, with debates regarding the de jure and de facto indicators for each value. A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy where the discussions focused on both the legal protections and practical dimensions of these values. There were considerations on the balance between internal and external members of governing bodies, the role of public authorities, and the importance of preserving academic freedom while ensuring legal provisions. Another important part of the meeting was dedicated to the examination of academic integrity where the participants debated the development of ethical cultures, transparency, and methods to address violations of academic integrity. The need to monitor staff participation in training programs and the importance of understanding national guidelines were also discussed. The meeting also addressed public responsibility of and for higher education where the discussions touched upon aspects such as funding frameworks, financial support by public authorities, and the stability of funding. The aim was to determine how public responsibility can contribute to stimulating and advancing higher education systems.

The fifth meeting revolved around crucial discussions and debates concerning the fundamental values statements and indicators, including the phrasing, content, and relevance of these statements, with an emphasis on ensuring clarity and inclusiveness. The goal was to draft statements that reflect the shared values and principles within the EHEA while addressing the complex challenges and nuances of modern academia.

The sixth meeting centered around critical discussions and developments regarding the establishment of a monitoring framework for fundamental values within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). One significant aspect discussed was the NewFAV Project[1] mapping on the existing indicators and tools related to fundamental values through literature reviews and expert consultations as well as the project task force consultations aimed at testing the feasibility of using existing indicators. It was acknowledged that only the Academic Freedom Index indicator was found effective, and new indicators would need to be developed over time. Another critical topic of discussion revolved around tailoring the indicators to the commitments made to ministers, enabling cross-country comparisons, and considering the interplay of fundamental values. The importance of de facto data gathering and crowdsourcing data was also highlighted. It was suggested that the most practical approach would be to use existing sources for monitoring purposes, with careful assessment of their feasibility and legitimacy, especially for de facto indicators that require more qualitative measures. Color-coded scorecards were proposed as a way to present the data effectively to ministers. The delicate balance between values and indicators was acknowledged, with the understanding that indicators for one value cannot be established in isolation.

The seventh meeting continued the discussion on what a proposal for a monitoring framework for fundamental values in higher education within the EHEA would look like. This framework aimed to assess the integration and usability of previously identified indicators for monitoring these values. It encompassed both de jure and de facto monitoring aspects, proposing a traffic light system to assess academic freedom protection and promotion in different countries. Additionally, the meeting emphasized the importance of aligning the proposed monitoring framework with the Tirana Communiqué, explicitly referencing the need for its continuation in the next mandate. It was agreed that the report from the

[1] New building blocks of the Bologna Process: fundamental values (NewFAV) is an Erasmus+ Funded project: ERASMUS-EDU-2021-EHEA-IBA (European Higher Education Area (EHEA) – Initiative to support to the implementation of the reforms) - 101060970

meeting should include the monitoring framework, dimensions, indicators, and approaches, which will be presented and validated by the BFUG.

The eighth meeting was dedicated to finalizing the academic integrity statement based on the feedback received from the BFUG as well as finalizing the introductory section. The WG adopted the annex to be proposed as an annex to the Ministerial Communique. During the meeting, based on the proposal from the Drafting Committee, the proposal for the Tirana Communique text was adopted. An important part of the meeting was dedicated to the presentation of the monitoring framework and the debates regarding the future monitoring system.

The ninth meeting was dedicated to exploring the intra-relations between the fundamental values and between different frameworks that aim at defining/monitoring Fundamental Values. The Group had informal discussions with experts from DGRTD, DGEAC and European Parliament regarding the complementarity of different initiatives. The WG also finalized the statements based on the feedback from the BFUG as well as how the monitoring methodology will be piloted.

In addition to the regular WG meetings, the group members were also involved in five events organized by DAAD or within the NEWFAV project:

- 28th of October 2021 – DAAD Conference - Fundamental Academic Values in the European Higher Education Area. Strengthening Cooperation through Fundamental Academic Values? - online
- 7-8 February 2022 - Expert hearing – online
- 5th of December 2022, Romania Peer Learning Activity – institutional autonomy
- 15th of March 2023, Germany Peer Learning Activity – academic freedom and integrity
- 6th of November 2023, Romania Peer Learning Activity - student and staff participation in HE governance
- 23rd of January 2024, Brussels Peer Learning Activity – intra relations between fundamental values.

3.2 DRAFTING THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES STATEMENTS

The process of drafting the fundamental values statements has taken into account the work done by the Task force on Fundamental Values from the previous work period. In this sense an expert hearing was organized with the support of DAAD in order to start the discussions with practitioners and experts and pave the way for the development of the statements.

This has been followed by regular meetings/events prior to the meetings of the Working Group on Fundamental Values

All statements have gone through a rigorous process of drafting with the support of experts in the field, under the coordination of the Co-chairing team, and were distributed to the working group members for written feedback. Each new revised version has been further debated within the working group where the feedback has been further integrated in the statements. At the end of this process, the agreed statements have been sent to the BFUG for feedback and approval.

The main results have been sent/presented to the BFUG for consultation and feedback as follows:

1. BFUG Meeting in Stockholm (11.05.2023) – statements on Institutional Autonomy, Student and Staff Participation in HE Governance and Public Responsibility for and of Higher Education.

2. BFUG online consultation (11.05.2023-25.05.2023) on statements presented (in general) in the Stockholm BFUG Meeting as agreed with the BFUG.
3. BFUG Meeting in Madrid (16.11.2023) - feedback received on all statements and main elements of the monitoring framework.
4. BFUG online consultation (24.11.2023- 15.12.2023) on monitoring framework part of the WG report as agreed in the Madrid BFUG.

3.3 TECHNICAL MONITORING FRAMEWORK AND PILOTIN METHODOLOGY

Annex 5.5 presents the Technical Monitoring Framework of Indicators and a Piloting Methodology for monitoring the fundamental values of higher education in the EHEA.

- In the previous phase of New Fav project (New Fav, Phase II), a complete draft **Technical Monitoring Framework of Indicators** was presented to the WG on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education at its meeting of 7-8 November 2023. Extensive feedback received during this two-day meeting as well as further feedback from the BFUG have been incorporated in the enclosed document with the final proposal for a **Technical Monitoring Framework of Indicators for the Fundamental Academic Values of Higher Education in the EHEA.** A synopsis of the monitoring framework (type of monitoring and the main indicators) is presented in Figures 1a and 1b, as follows:

Figure 1a: Monitoring framework and indicators for rights/freedoms values

TYPE OF MONITORING and INDICATORS		VALUES		
		Rights/Freedoms		
De jure				
Protection *(adequate, intermediary, inadequate)*	Outlook *(negative, unchanged, positive)*	Academic freedom	Institutional autonomy	Participation of students and staff in university governance
Promotion *(absent, limited, significant)*				
De facto				
Infringements				
Threats				
Positive developments				

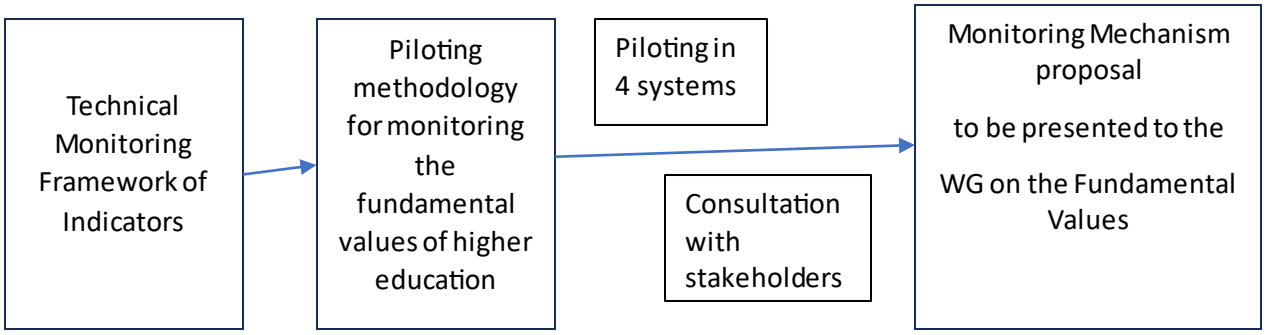
Figure 1b: Monitoring framework and indicators for obligations/duties values

TYPE OF MONITORING and INDICATORS		VALUES		
		Obligations/Duties		
De jure				
Protection *(adequate, intermediary, inadequate)*		Academic integrity	Public responsibility	Public responsibility

Promotion *(absent, limited, significant)*	Outlook *(negative, unchanged, positive)*		*for* higher education	*of* higher education
De facto				
Fulfilment of obligations				
Threats				
Positive developments				

- Annex 5.5. also presents a **Piloting Methodology for monitoring the fundamental values of higher education in the EHEA** developed during the current phase of New FAV project **(**New FAV Phase III). A proposal for a **Piloting Methodology** was presented to the WG on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education at its meeting of 24-25 January 2024. The proposal was revised after this meeting to include extensive feedback from the WG. The Piloting Methodology proposes to test a monitoring mechanism, which is developed based on the Monitoring Framework of Indicators. The pilot will take place between February and April 2024 and will include four EHEA systems agreed upon with the WG on Fundamental Values.

Figure 2: New Fav project outline (Phases II and III)



- The proposal for a monitoring mechanism will be finalized through additional consultations with stakeholders and taking into account the lessons learned during the piloting phase, including in terms of feasibility. A final proposal will be then presented to WG and the BFUG. The detailed project calendar is unchanged, it remains as initially approved.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TIRANA COMMUNIQUE - UPDATED

Fundamental values

While the respect of its fundamental values is a necessary condition for higher education to achieve its missions, they are now more threatened than they were a decade ago. We affirm our understanding of a**cademic freedom** as defined in the Rome Communiqué. Furthermore,

- 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 on 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, mainly exercised at the level of the national higher education system, that public authorities must fulfil as part of their overall responsibility for the education sector and society as a whole.
- **Public responsibility *of* higher education** denotes the obligations of the higher education community to the broader society of which the higher education community is a part.3

We adopt the statements on the fundamental values annexed to this Communiqué. We underscore that while each value is essential, all six values need to be implemented as a coherent whole. To make the fundamental academic values a cornerstone of the EHEA, we ask the BFUG to continue its work to protect and further our fundamental values. As a reliable monitoring of their implementation within all our education systems is required, we endorse the pilot technical monitoring framework proposed by the Fundamental Values Working Group and ask the BFUG to further the implementation of this framework based on the piloting and report back to us at our 2027 conference.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT WORK PERIOD

The work of the Fundamental Values WG should continue during the next period and work programme as a stand-alone working group or advisory group. The monitoring framework provides valuable insights on how fundamental values should be monitored, but more work needs to be done in order to develop, adapt and implement indicators to cover all dimensions included in the fundamental values statements.

The framework for monitoring fundamental values should be continuously developed to take into account new development and new data sources. This work should be carried out by this working group in close cooperation with the Monitoring Working Group. This cooperation should be extended towards other relevant working groups including any structure responsible for overseeing the implementation of the monitoring framework for fundamental values.

This working group should continue discussions and cooperation with other structures part of similar initiatives in order to provide the know how and to advocate the use (where possible) of the statements adopted within the EHEA and subsequent indicators, in order to avoid parallel reporting and/or different understandings under different frameworks.

This working group should support the work towards the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA with the aim to foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, higher education institutions and organizations. The concept for peer-learning for fundamental values and promotion of activities needs to take into account the challenges towards the

common understanding of these values and should be piloted by the FV WG by 2027 before moving the work towards the thematic WG within the 2027-2030 mandate.

The rationale for continuing the work on fundamental values as a separate group focused on these issues, resides in the need for the technical framework for monitoring to be adapted depending on the piloting exercise that will finish in may 2024, the need for the first monitoring process to have a group of experts to advise on the technical issues that will arise in the implementation phase, issues that will benefit by the knowledge that was developed within the working group as part of the development process. The size of the group should take into account the balance between efficiency and legitimacy.

5. ANNEXES

5.1. ACRONYMS[2]

- BFUG Bologna Follow-up Group
- EHEA European Higher Education Area
- ESGs European Standards and Guidelines on Quality Assurance
- ESU European Student Union
- UN

[2] To be added based on the acronyms used in the final version of the report

5.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE 2018-2020

Working Group on Fundamental Values

Name of the Working Group

Working Group on Fundamental Values

Contact persons/Co-chairs

- Frank Petrikowski (until October 2021)/ Marit Metternich (since October 2021) / David Akrami Flores (since October 2022)
- Rose Anne Cuschieri
- Mihai Cezar Hâj
- Tone Flood Strøm

Composition

Austria; Council of Europe; Croatia; EI – ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA - European University Association; European Commission; European Commission/ Eurydice; Finland; France; Germany; Holy See; Iceland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; The Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russia; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; United Kingdom (Scotland); United Kingdom.

A representative of the working group on Monitoring should be a member of the working group, preferably one of the co-chairs of WG1, to establish a link between the work done in the two groups.

Purpose and/or outcome

- To develop a comprehensive framework to further the monitoring and implementation of the fundamental values of the EHEA in the higher education systems of its members. The system should foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these fundamental values are honoured and implemented in the EHEA.

Reference to the Rome Communiqué

"We reaffirm our commitment to promoting and protecting ***our shared fundamental values in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation*** *as the necessary basis for quality learning, teaching and research as well as for democratic societies. We commit to upholding institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education.*

We ask the BFUG to develop a ***framework*** *for the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA that will 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. We adopt the **definition of academic freedom** as freedom of academic staff and students to engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in and with society without interference nor fear of reprisal"*

Specific tasks

- To develop indicators on *de jure* and *de facto* implementation of academic freedom and integrity based on the definition of academic freedom adopted by the ministers in the Rome Communiqué;
- On the basis of consultation with academic experts and relevant stakeholder organisations, to consider how the additional fundamental values defined in the Paris and Rome Communiqués - institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education - can be defined, understood and implemented in the EHEA;
- To continue to develop and trial a comprehensive, effective and evidence-based monitoring framework for future reporting on the implementation of the fundamental values in the EHEA through the Bologna Process Implementation Report, a system that takes into account both the *de jure* and the *de facto* aspects of the fundamental values of the EHEA;
- To liaise with the working group on Monitoring to ensure that the collection of data related to *de jure* monitoring of the fundamental values takes place, and that this data is reported in time for the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report;
- To develop options for the *de facto* monitoring of fundamental values, including different options for types of data to be explored and methods for collecting and combining data;
- To recommend indicators of fundamental values, as well as the evidence required to fill them, and the source for such evidence;
- In cooperation with the BFUG, take the initiative to a policy dialogue and peer learning activities in the areas concerned, with all relevant higher education policy makers, institutions and stakeholders.

Reporting

Regular progress report will be given to the BFUG. A final report with recommendations will be presented to the BFUG and to the ministerial meeting in 2024.
Minutes of working group meetings will be made available by the Bologna Secretariat.

Meeting schedule

Dates will be decided upon by the working group at a later stage.

Liaison with other WGs' activities

- WG on Monitoring

5.3 ANNEX TO THE TIRANA MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUE (FUNDAMENTAL VALUES STATEMENTS) - UPDATED

EHEA STATEMENTS ON FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

INTRODUCTION

The Paris Communiqué specifies the fundamental values of the European Higher Education Area. The Rome Communiqué reconfirms these and also details the shared understanding of one of these: academic freedom.

This document, developed in consultation with a range of experts and stakeholder organisations, complements the Rome Communiqué. Together the documents make explicit the shared understanding of these six values, which are equally important: academic freedom, academic integrity, institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in higher education governance, public responsibility *for* higher education, and public responsibility *of* higher education. These values need to be reflected in laws, regulations, and frameworks, and also to be put into practice. Public authorities are responsible for creating conditions conducive to making these values a reality.

The fundamental values of the EHEA constitute a coherent whole and are interconnected. Even if the values often align, they are sometimes in conflict. The way any single value is put into practice can impact the way other values are realised. As a consequence, the EHEA Implementation Report should seek to assess not only the state of each value but also how the fundamental values of the EHEA are put into practice as a whole. The indicators should therefore make it possible to assess the extent to which members of the EHEA respect and practice the values on which the EHEA builds. Countries or education systems cannot be considered to observe the fundamental values of higher education unless they respect all the values. They need to provide an environment which encourages making the values a reality, which gives equal importance to all values and which ensures that they are upheld in equal measure.
Higher education institutions and organisations, students, and staff as well as public authorities are encouraged to make the fundamental values on which the EHEA builds a reality through legislation, policy and practice as well as through self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning in the implementation of these values across the European Higher Education Area.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity denotes a set of behaviours and attitudes in the academic community internalizing 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. The duties and rights associated with the fulfilment and protection of academic integrity apply to all members of the academic community, who should develop a shared understanding of the concept and be guided by it. This also requires the engagement and development of a culture of collegiality and solidarity, in particular support and encouragement of early career researchers.

Ensuring that the academic community observes ethical standards in higher education, academic integrity underpins societal trust in higher education and research. It is essential to the legitimation and reputation of higher education and to enable the academic community to inform the public debate on the results, standards and methods of academic research with authenticity and intellectual rigour. Academic integrity plays a major role in ensuring the quality of all types of activity in higher education. It is central in building trust between higher education systems, which is crucial for all forms of international cooperation and mobility.

Academic integrity includes but is not limited to honesty, transparency, fairness, trust, responsibility, respect and courage. These qualities underpin an ethical and professional approach in all areas of activities of the academic community, conducted inside or outside the higher education institution. Academic integrity needs to be actively promoted within and across higher education and lead to the development of a culture of integrity, ethics and transparency from the earliest stages of education and research training.

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.

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 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESGs).

Special attention needs to be paid to ensure academic integrity in the context of emerging digital technologies, such as the use of artificial intelligence, 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.

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.

Institutions should consider developing 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.

Academic staff have a special responsibility in adhering to and promoting academic integrity, setting an example from which students can learn. Teachers are responsible for creating a safe learning environment for students where a healthy error and quality culture is developed that recognises that making and identifying shortcomings and errors is an integral part of quality learning, teaching and research. Administrative staff and institutional leaders should ensure fairness and transparency in their work. While it needs to be acknowledged that due to their nature students are members of the academic community still in training, they nonetheless have the same obligation to promote and respect academic integrity as other members of this community. For academic integrity to be successfully fostered, it is important not only to pursue and redress academic misconduct, but also to create an environment that prevents it and that nourishes integrity. 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. 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.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY

Institutional autonomy denotes 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 as concerns organisation, finance, staffing and academic affairs.

Higher education institutions play a central role in democratic societies. Institutional autonomy is a precondition for academic freedom and a prerequisite for higher education institutions to fulfil both their democratic mission and to provide high quality learning, teaching and research for the benefit of society.

Institutional autonomy must be furthered by public authorities as well as the academic community itself. While broader society has legitimate expectations of higher education and the role it can and should play in addressing pressing societal concerns, higher education can fulfill this role only if it enjoys the autonomy to identify longer term developments and challenge established doctrines.

Public authorities should ensure the conditions required to make institutional autonomy a reality. It is incumbent on them to enable higher education institutions to fulfill their missions without undue interference. Governance frameworks and arrangements should safeguard institutional autonomy and the self-governance of academic institutions. Public authorities should ensure quality learning, teaching, research and dissemination.

The different dimensions of autonomy – organisational, financial, staffing and academic autonomy – co-exist with and need to be balanced against the public responsibility for higher education and the public responsibility of higher education towards society.

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.

Higher education institutions must be funded adequately to fulfill their missions. They should be able to 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.

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.

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.

Arrangements for ensuring and assessing public responsibility and accountability should be consistent with institutional autonomy. This applies especially to funding provided by public authorities, but also to fundamental values as well as human rights in general. Irrespective of enjoying a high degree of autonomy, higher education institutions are accountable for their decisions. At the same time, accountability and responsibility should not serve as a pretext for undue or excessive interventions by public authorities or other actors.

STUDENT AND STAFF PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

The 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; elect and be elected in open, free and fair elections; have their views represented and taken into account; initiate and participate in all debates in all governing bodies; and through their representative organisations, be duly consulted on issues concerning the governance and further development of the relevant higher education institutions and system.

The implementation of a partnership model of higher education governance is necessary to make all stakeholders in higher education accountable and responsible. Student and staff participation strengthens higher education governance. It enhances the sense of ownership and community and of common responsibility for the development of high quality, socially responsible higher education.

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.

Student and staff participation in higher education governance may take different forms, depending on national and institutional structures and practices.

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.

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.

Measures to further meaningful engagement of students and staff in higher education governance need to take into account the diverse socio-economic conditions of different student and staff members and in particular focus on early career academics and students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. 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. This comprises academic staff at all stages of their career in all the varieties of the current contractual modalities within higher education systems – full time, part time, fixed term and "on demand" staff.

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. Staff and student representatives and their organisations need to be consulted on and to be in a position to influence decisions.

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.

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.

Successful higher education governance requires the participation of a variety of stakeholders including institutional leaders, students and academic and administrative staff as well as cooperation with external stakeholders. Such 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.

A partnership principle of collegiality requires participation continuously at the various stages of decision-making and decision-taking processes, including setting agendas, drafting decisions, voting and veto, implementation and monitoring. 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.

Student and staff organisations should respect democratic principles and processes in their own elections and governance and join forces with institutions and systems in encouraging participation of students and staff. 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. Student and staff representatives remain accountable to their constituencies.

PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY *FOR* HIGHER EDUCATION

Public responsibility *for* higher education denotes a set of duties that public authorities must fulfill as part of their overall responsibility for the education sector and society as a whole. Public responsibility *for* higher education is mainly exercised at the level of the national higher education *system*. It includes political, public policy, regulatory and legal obligations, including with regard to funding, and is in its details defined by each EHEA member in accordance with the principles that have been agreed jointly through the EHEA and other relevant contexts. It is exercised with due regard to the other fundamental values of the EHEA and involves the responsibility to help safeguard all the fundamental values of higher education. It includes the core responsibility for the proper functioning of the higher education system, for the benefit of the broader society and individual development, as well as to the members of the higher education community.

While in most EHEA member states the public responsibility for higher education is mainly exercised at national level, this responsibility (or parts thereof) may also be exercised at regional and local level. Increasingly, there is also a justified perception of public responsibility for higher

education being exercised at supra-national level, also in accordance with commonly agreed principles.

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.

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 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. They should, however, 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. 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[3].

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[4].

PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY *OF* HIGHER EDUCATION

[3] Cf Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the public responsibility for higher education and research, para. 7. Recommendations by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers have been accepted by all EHEA member States except the three that are parties to the European Cultural Convention without being Council of Europe members. While Russia is no longer a member of the Council of Europe, it was at the time the Recommendation was adopted.

[4] Cf Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the public responsibility for higher education and research, para. 5.

Public responsibility *of* higher education denotes the obligations of the higher education community to the broader society of which the higher education community is a part.

While public authorities have final responsibility for the relevant regulatory and policy frameworks at all levels, higher education institutions should engage in the design and implementation of these frameworks. More directly, however, public responsibility *of* higher education denotes the obligations of the higher education community to the broader society of which the higher education community is a part. The higher education community encompasses all staff and students as well as institutional leaders, and the members of higher education organisations (e.g. university, student, and staff associations).

Through its own actions, internal regulation and policies, the higher education community should ensure that the fundamental values of higher education are respected, furthered, and implemented. It should pursue truth and the production, transmission, dissemination, curation, and use of knowledge as a public good by upholding and developing the standards of teaching, learning, and research within and across academic disciplines.

The higher education community should continuously inform broader society of its work and results. It should engage in the identification, analysis, and understanding of the problems that confront broader society and individual constituencies. The higher education community should also participate in designing solutions to these problems and provide expertise to meet these challenges, in accordance with its own standards and values.

The higher education community should seek to foster and disseminate, and should itself be guided by, a culture of democracy, solidarity, and ethics. It should provide information publicly about societal risks related to action or inaction, when such risks can be determined on the basis of research and scholarship. The higher education community should design and pursue its policies and activities in ways that are consistent with fairness, non-discrimination, and transparency. It should 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.

Major challenges of modern societies, including those relating to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable development more broadly, the survival of our planet, issues of war and peace, democracy, and living together cannot be met without a strong contribution by the higher education community through research, learning and teaching, societal outreach and innovation and technology transfer. In the words of the Magna Charta Universitatum (2020), universities acknowledge that they have a responsibility to engage with and respond to the aspirations and challenges of the world and to the communities they serve, to benefit humanity and contribute to sustainability. The higher education community should therefore contribute to the development of society on the basis of scholarship and research as well as teaching and learning.

The higher education community should 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. It should work with the society of which it is part, including with its local community, to help improve opportunities for all members of society, in accordance with the democratic and social missions of higher education.

The higher education community should equip its 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.

5.4 LIST OF GROUP MEETINGS AND PARTICIPANTS

First Meeting: June 18, 2021, Online

1. Austria Liviu Matei
2. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
3. Croatia Leonardo Marušić
4. EI - ETUCE Rob Copeland
5. ENQA Anna Gover
6. ESU - European Students' Union Matteo Vespa
7. EUA - European University Association Monika Steinel
8. European Commission Kinga Szuly
9. Eurydice David Crosier
10. Finland Maija Innola
11. France Carle Bonafous-Murat
12. Germany (Co-chair) Frank Petrikowski
13. Holy See Melanie Rosenbaum
14. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
15. Italy Luca Lantero
16. Malta (Co-chair) Rose Anne Cuschieri
17. Norway (Co-chair) Tone Flood Strøm
18. Poland Ewa Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik
19. Romania (Co-chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
20. Sweden Robin Moberg
21. Switzerland Aurélia Robert-Tissot
22. Turkey Aslı GÜNAY
23. United Kingdom (Scotland) Michael Watney
24. EACEA Susanna Zellini
25. BFUG Secretariat (Head) Enida Bezhani
26. BFUG Secretariat Irma Sheqi
27. BFUG Secretariat Kristina Metallari

2nd Meeting, 29 October 2021, Malta - Online

1. Austria Liviu Matei
2. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
3. Croatia Leonardo Marušić
4. EI - ETUCE Rob Copeland
5. ENQA Anna Gover
6. ESU - European Students' Union Matteo Vespa
7. EUA - European University Association Anna Lena Claeys Kulik
8. European Commission Kinga Szuly
9. European Commission/ Eurydice David Crosier
10. Finland Maija Innola
11. France Mathieu Musquin
12. Germany (Co-chair) Marit Metternich
13. Holy See Melanie Rosenbaum
14. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
15. Malta Rose Anne Cuschieri
16. Norway (Co-chair) Tone Flood Strøm

17. Poland Ewa Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik
18. Romania (Co-chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
19. Turkey Aslı GÜNAY
20. United Kingdom (Scotland) Michael Watney
21. EACEA Susanna Zellini
22. DAAD (Guest) Hans Leifgen
23. BFUG Secretariat Kristina Metallari
24. BFUG Secretariat Aida Myrto
25. BFUG Secretariat Alesia Gegushi

3rd Meeting, 11-12 July 2022, Malta

1. Austria Liviu Matei
2. Austria Milica Popović
3. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
4. Croatia Leonardo Marušić
5. Croatia Dijana Mandić
6. EI-ETUCE Rob Copeland
7. ENQA Øystein Lund
8. European Commission Kinga Szuly
9. European Commission Svein Hullstein
10. European Commission/Eurydice David Crosier
11. European Students Union (ESU) Matteo Vespa
12. European University Association (EUA) Monika Steinel
13. France Mathieu Musquin
14. France Carle Bonafous - Murat
15. Germany (Co-Chair) Marit Metternich
16. Holy See Melanie Rosenbaum
17. Malta (Co-Chair) Rose Anne Cuschieri
18. The Netherlands Sophie Duijser
19. Norway (Co-Chair) Tone Flood Strøm
20. Poland Piotr Kulicki
21. Romania (Co-Chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
22. Sweden Robin Moberg
23. Switzerland Aurélia Robert-Tissot
24. Scholars at Risk Network (Guest) Robert Quinn
25. BFUG Secretariat (Head) Oltion Rrumbullaku

4th Meeting, 20 October 2022, Romania, Online

1. Austria Milica Popović
2. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
3. Croatia Leonardo Marušić
4. EI-ETUCE Rob Copeland
5. European Commission/Eurydice David Crosier
6. European Students Union (ESU) Matteo Vespa
7. European University Association (EUA) Monika Steinel
8. ENQA Anna Gover
9. Finland Maija Innola
10. France Carle Bonafous - Murat

11. France Mathieu Musquin
12. Germany (Co-Chair) David Akrami Flores
13. Holy See Melanie Rosenbaum
14. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
15. Norway (Co-Chair) Tone Flood Strøm
16. Poland Agnieszka Lekka Kowalik
17. Romania (Co-Chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
18. Sweden Robin Moberg
19. Switzerland Aurélia Robert-Tissot
20. Turkey Asıı Günay
21. Scholars at Risk Network (Guest) Robert Quinn
22. DAAD (Guest) Hans Leifgen
23. Rector at King's College London (Guest) Liviu Matei
24. BFUG Secretariat Aida Myrto
25. BFUG Secretariat Jora Vaso
26. BFUG Secretariat Patrik Bardhi

5th Meeting, 6-7 December 2022, Bucharest, Romania

1. Austria Milica Popović
2. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
3. Croatia Leonardo Marušić
4. EI-ETUCE Rob Copeland
5. European Commission/Eurydice David Crosier
6. European Commission* Kinga Szuly
7. European Commission Sven Hullstein
8. European Students Union (ESU) Matteo Vespa
9. European University Association (EUA) Monika Steinel
10. Finland Maija Innola
11. France Sara Thornton
12. Germany (Co-Chair) David Akrami Flores
13. Holy See* Melanie Rosenbaum
14. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
15. Malta (Co-Chair) Rose Anne Cuschieri
16. Norway (Co-Chair)* Tone Flood Strøm
17. Poland Agnieszka Lekka Kowalik
18. Romania (Co-Chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
19. Romania Cristina Fit
20. Sweden Robin Moberg
21. Switzerland Aurélia Robert-Tissot
22. King's College London (Guest) Liviu Matei
23. The Netherlands Sophie Duijser
24. BFUG Secretariat Jora Vaso
25. BFUG Secretariat Patrik Bardhi

6th Meeting, 16-17 March 2023, Berlin, Germany

1. Austria Milica Popović
2. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
3. Croatia Leonardo Marušić

4. DAAD (Guest) Bettina Rosen
5. DAAD (Guest) Hans Leifgen
6. EI - ETUCE Rob Copeland
7. ENQA Anna Gover
8. ESU Matteo Vespa
9. EUA Monika Steinel
10. European Commission Svein Hullstein
11. Eurydice* David Crosier
12. Finland Maija Innola
13. Germany (Co-Chair) David Akrami Flores
14. Germany - Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany (Guest) - Maria Hochstadter
15. Holy See Melanie Rosenbaum
16. Iceland Una Strand Vidarsdóttir
17. Norway (Co-Chair) Tone Flood Strøm
18. Poland Ewa Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik
19. Romania (Co-Chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
20. Romania (Guest) Cristina Fit
21. Sweden Robin Moberg
22. Switzerland Aurélia Robert-Tissot
23. Turkey* Aslı Günay
24. King's College London (Guest) Liviu Matei
25. NewFAV Project (Guest) Elizaveta Potapova
26. NewFAV Project (Guest) Daniela Craciun
27. BFUG Secretariat (Deputy Head)* Edlira Subashi
28. BFUG Secretariat Jora Vaso
29. BFUG Secretariat Aida Myrto

7th Meeting, 3-4 July 2023, Romania, Online

1. Austria Milica Popović
2. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
3. Croatia Leonardo Marušić
4. European Commission Svein Hullstein
5. EI – ETUCE Rob Copeland
6. ENQA Anna Gover
7. ESU Matteo Vespa
8. EUA Monika Steinel
9. European Commission Svein Hullstein
10. Eurydice David Crosier
11. Finland Maija Innola
12. Germany (Co-Chair) David Akrami Flores
13. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
14. Malta Rose Anne Cuschieri
15. Poland Ewa Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik
16. Romania (Co-Chair) Mihai Cezar Hâj
17. Romania Cristina Fit
18. Sweden Robin Moberg
19. Switzerland Aurélia Robert-Tissot
20. Turkey Aslı Günay

21. King's College London (Guest) Liviu Matei
22. NewFAV Project (Guest) Elizaveta Potapova
23. NewFAV Project (Guest) Daniela Craciun
24. BFUG Secretariat (Head) Edlira Subashi
25. BFUG Secretariat Jora Vaso
26. BFUG Secretariat Aida Myrto

8th Meeting, 7 -8 November 2023, Bucharest, Romania

1. Austria Milica Popovic
2. BFUG Secretariat Blerina Caslli
3. BFUG Secretariat Jora Vaso
4. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
5. European Commission- DG EAC Svein Hullstein
6. European Students Union (ESU) Iris Kimizoglu
7. European University Association (EUA) Monika Steinel
8. Finland Maija Innola
9. Germany (Co-Chair) David Akrami Flores
10. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
11. Poland Ewa Agnieszka Lekka-Kowalik
12. Romania (Co-Chair) Cezar Haj
13. Sweden Robin Moberg
14. Romania (Guest) Cristina Fit
15. NewFAV Project (Guest)Daniela Craciun
16. NewFAV Project (Guest) Elizaveta Potapova
17. King's College London (Guest) Liviu Matei
18. Norway (Co-Chair) (online) Tone Flood Strøm
19. Malta (Co-Chair) (online) Rose Anne Cuschieri
20. the Netherlands (online) SophieDuijser
21. Switzerland (online) Aurelia Robert-Tissot
22. Holy See (online) Melanie Rosenbaum
23. Croatia (online) Leonardo Marušić
24. Turkey (online) Aslı Günay
25. BFUG Secretariat (online) Adi Kahani

9th Meeting, 24-25 January 2024, Brussels, Belgium

1. BFUG Secretariat Blerina Caslli
2. BFUG Secretariat Jora Vaso
3. Council of Europe Sjur Bergan
4. EI – ETUCE Rob Copeland
5. ENQA Anna Gover
6. Eurydice David Crosier
7. European Commission- DG EAC Svein Hullstein
8. European Students Union (ESU) Iris Kimizoglu
9. Finland Maija Innola

10. Germany (Co-Chair) Tim Machuw
11. Iceland Una Strand Viðarsdóttir
12. Romania (Co-Chair)Cezar Haj
13. Sweden Robin Moberg
14. Romania (Guest) Cristina Fit
15. NewFAV Project (Guest)Daniela Craciun
16. NewFAV Project (Guest) Elizaveta Potapova
17. King's College London (Guest) Liviu Matei
18. Norway (Co-Chair) Tone Flood Strøm
19. Switzerland Aurelia Robert-Tissot
20. Croatia Leonardo Marušić

5.5 PILOT TECHNICAL POLICY FRAMEWORK OF INDICATORS FOR FUNDAMENTAL VALUES & PILOTING METHODOLOGY FOR MONTIORING THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

This Annex presents the Policy Framework of Indicators for the Fundamental Values of Higher Education and an outline of the Piloting Methodology for Monitoring the Fundamental Values of Higher Education developed as part of the NewFav project using broad and systematic consultation with stakeholders, and under the guidance of the Working Group on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education and the BFUG.

I. WHY MONITOR THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE EHEA? JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVES.

EHEA members have made explicit ***commitments*** to ***protect*** and ***promote*** the fundamental values of higher education.

The Rome Communiqué underlines the commitment of all EHEA members to "fully respect the fundamental values of higher education and democracy and the rule of law". This commitment signifies a voluntary assumed obligation to implement fundamental values, as jointly defined, in their respective higher education systems.

EHEA members have also made an explicit commitment to adopt *shared definitions* of the fundamental values and a *system of indicators* for monitoring their respect, which in turn will help with their implementation.

A shared definition of academic freedom was adopted in the 2020 Rome Communiqué; shared definitions of the remaining five values are proposed for adoption with the 2024 Tirana Communiqué.

This proposal for a monitoring framework is designed specifically and directly in order to answer the request from the EHEA Rome Communiqué that the BFUG develop a framework for the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA that "will 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" at the system level.

II. WHAT TO MONITOR? A TECHNICAL POLICY FRAMEWORK OF INDICATORS FOR THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

This is a proposal for a workable and beneficial EHEA monitoring mechanism. It is not a generic monitoring mechanism, but a specific EHEA one, as required in the Rome Communiqué. In line with the Rome Communiqué, what is proposed to be monitored is the implementation of the **explicit commitments** made by the members (*de jure monitoring)* and **the state of respect for each value** *(de facto monitoring),* as explained below.

The following commitments assumed by EHEA members, as explicitly formulated in the Rome Communiqué, served as a basis for developing the policy framework of indicators and the piloting methodology:

A. "The EHEA of our vision will fully respect the fundamental values of higher education and democracy and the rule of law. (…) We recognise that accomplishing this will require enacting policies and implementing measures in our national frameworks, some of which will go beyond our higher education systems and will entail alignment of wider national economic, financial and social strategies."
B. "We reaffirm our commitment to **promoting** and **protecting** our **shared fundamental values** in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation as the necessary basis for quality learning, teaching and research as well as for democratic societies" (*emphasis added*).
C. "**We commit to upholding** institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education".
D. "**We ask the BFUG to develop a framework** for the enhancement of the fundamental values of the EHEA that will 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**" (*emphasis added*).

For the purpose of monitoring, the EHEA values can be grouped in two categories: values that are primarily about freedom and rights (academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and participation of students and staff in governance) and values that are primarily about obligations and duties (integrity, responsibility for higher education, and responsibility of higher education).

The proposed technical policy framework of indicators (type of monitoring and indicators) is as follows:

Figure 1a: Monitoring framework for rights/freedoms values

TYPE OF MONITORING Indicators		**VALUES**		
		Rights/Freedoms		
De jure				
Protection *(adequate, intermediary, inadequate)*	Outlook *(negative, unchanged, positive)*	Academic freedom	Institutional autonomy	Participation of students and staff in university governance
Promotion *(absent, limited, significant)*				
De facto				
Infringements				
Threats				
Positive developments				

Figure 1b: Monitoring framework for obligations/duties values

TYPE OF MONITORING Indicators		**VALUES**		
		Obligations/Duties		
De jure				
Protection *(adequate, intermediary, inadequate)*		Academic integrity	Public responsibility	Public responsibility

Promotion *(absent, limited, significant)*	Outlook *(negative, unchanged, positive)*		*for* higher education	*of* higher education
De facto				
Fulfilment of obligations				
Threats				
Positive developments				

***De jure* indicators. Monitoring the implementation of commitments regarding fundamental values of higher education**

Considering the commitments listed above, the following are proposed to be monitored as part of an EHEA-wide system:

a. **Protecting the fundamental values of higher education.**
   This part of the monitoring will focus on *de jure* aspects of protection of the fundamental values.
   i. The existence in each system of legislation and regulations to protect the fundamental values as specifically defined in the statements adopted by the EHEA ministerial conferences.
   ii. Depending on the existence of legislation to protect all values and their dimensions as specified in the EHEA statements, the degree of *de jure* protection in each system will be qualified as **adequate**, **intermediary** or **inadequate** (traffic light system).
   iii. Many values are new in the EHEA or their definitions are new, at least to some extent. As a consequence, it cannot be expected that legislation to protect the fundamental values as jointly defined exist already in all systems and is fully developed. For this reason and also considering that the implementation of these commitments is a matter of process that cannot be achieved from one day to another, monitoring will also look at existing plans (the "outlook") regarding the protection of each value. The **outlook** in *de jure* protection will characterise the plans and expectations with regard to changes in legislation that might affect the current level of protection of fundamental values. The outlook will be qualified as*:* **negative**, **current level not expected to change**, or **positive**. An evaluation of the degree of realization of the estimates regarding outlook will be undertaken and reported in the subsequent monitoring round.

b. **Promoting the fundamental values of higher education**

- The Rome Communiqué (II.B above) includes an explicit commitment to actively **promote** the fundamental values, not just "passively" protect them through legislation and regulations. This commitment will be monitored looking at the presence/absence (adoption and implementation) of policy and other initiatives to promote the fundamental values in practice. As specified in the Rome Communiqué, promotion involves measures that do not change the legal frameworks but constitute important practical measures to further the fundamental values of higher education, such as funding policies, committing policy statements (*e.g.,* White Papers), institutionalised dialogues with higher education institutions, student and staff organisations, etc. Particular attention in this context will be given to the existence and participation in activities of "self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, higher education institutions and organisations" (commitment II.1.D, above)
- The degree of implementation of this commitment ("actively promote the fundamental values") will be qualified as **absent, limited,** or **significant.**

- Here too, the **outlook** in promoting the fundamental values will be added, with the same justification as for legal protection (many values/their definitions are quite new, there might not be actual policies in all cases, but plans are important). Outlook will be characterized as **negative, current level not expected to change,** or **positive.**

***De facto* indicators. Monitoring the state of respect of each fundamental value in the EHEA.**

The distinction between freedom/rights and duties/obligations values is particularly relevant for the *de facto* monitoring.

The indictors prosed for *de facto* values defined as rights and freedoms (separately for each) are:

i. Infringements of the respective rights/freedoms
ii. Threats to the respective rights/freedoms
iii. Positive developments.

For values defined as duties or obligations (separately for each) the proposed indictors for *de facto* indicators are:

i. Fulfilment of the obligations resulting from the adoption of shared definitions for the respective values.
ii. Threats to the fulfilment of these obligations.
iii. Positive developments.

Exact aspects, dimensions and conditions for monitoring each value are extracted from the respective statement/definition. This section of the monitoring report will be narrative, there will be no scoring. It is important to note that, for the purpose of supporting peer learning across the EHEA, positive developments will be identified and discussed, not just negative aspects, such as infringements or threats.

Synergies and tensions among values

The EHEA monitoring system can and must take advantage of the existing set of reinforcing values. It should not be limited to the individual and separate monitoring of each value. The presence of a set of values can be helpful both conceptually (better understanding and definition of values) and instrumentally (more effective monitoring). For example, the fact that EHEA values include both academic freedom and student and staff participation in governance could help to avoid the trap that is evident in other monitoring exercises focusing on academic freedom alone, where it is not clear whether governance is a dimension to be included into the scope of academic freedom or not.

It is essential to recognise that there could be both synergies and tensions in the codification and implementation of the fundamental values, which may have a corresponding positive or negative impact. For this reason, the EHEA monitoring system for the fundamental values will pay attention to and indicate in each *de jure* and *de facto* category whether tensions and/or synergies are identified.

III. HOW TO MONITOR THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

A piloting methodology has been developed, which articulates in detail how the monitoring is proposed to will realized in practice, including an identification of exact types of data sources. A succinct presentation of this methodology is included in the following section. The methodology will be piloted in four EHEA systems in February-April 2024, after which it will be revised, and a final proposal will be presented to the WG on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education and the BFUG.

IV. A PILOTING METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF HIGHER EDUCATION -SUMMARY PRESENTATION.

Monitoring six fundamental values, each with several sub-dimensions, and in all systems of the EHEA can be a demanding exercise. In addition, monitoring values can be challenging in itself, methodologically and politically.

The clear and relatively simple framework of indictors summarized above helps significantly to make this a feasible exercise. It clarified what is monitored - not values, for example, which are notoriously elusive, but explicit shared commitments (listed above in this annex) and their implementation. It also helps significantly to operationalize how to collect information for each indicator, from what sources, by who, etc. The piloting methodology relies significantly on the exiting mentoring experience in the EHEA/Bologna Process and makes use largely of already exiting information and data, including from other monitoring exercises.

A full piloting methodology has been developed based on this framework, involving extensive consultation with stakeholders from across the EHEA, under the guidance of the WG on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education.

This methodology will be piloted in February-April 2024 in four EHEA systems: Belgium-French Community, Czech Republic, Finland, and *Türkiye*.

Data collection:

- For each country, a national operator will help collect data in each of the four pilot countries.
- For *de jure* monitoring (promotion, protection and outlook indicators) information will be collected using a questionnaire. Questions will address the subdimensions of each value, as listed in the respective EHEA statement/definition. This tool will allow to collect information about the existence of legislation and regulations for the **protection** of the respective value, and the existence of policies and other initiatives for their **promotion** (see detailed explanations in section II above). The information collected will include links to the respective documents, legislation, policies, etc., not just yes/no answers. Information will be sought regarding the promotion and protection of each value as jointly defined within the EHEA, not just in general.
- For each country, respondents will include a public authority representative and four stakeholder representatives (student organisation representative, trade union representative, an individual academic with experience in the area of fundamental values, a university leader/administrator). National operators and respondents are identified in coordination with the WG on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education.
- To simplify the work of respondents, the questionnaire will be pre-filled by the national operator using already exiting information, for example from the monitoring conducted by Eurydice. Respondents will check and, if needed, amend this information and answer the questions for which there is no information.
- For *de facto* monitoring, information will be collected by the national operator looking at reports from other monitoring initiatives (such as EUA Autonomy Scorecard, ESU reports, Scholars at Risk reports. Etc.), databases, press reports, etc. In addition, a simple online repository of information will be open for two weeks during this phase for stakeholders to add information about infringements/fulfilment of obligations, threats and positive developments.

The national operator will have the obligation to cross-check the information collected for each indicator and clarify any contradictions. Public authorities in each system will be shown the final draft picture and will be given the chance to comment on eventual inaccuracies regarding facts or interpretations.

For *de jure* indicators, data will be processed, and results will be visualized using a traffic light method (as discussed in section II above). Coding follows the Bologna monitoring tradition and is detailed in the piloting methodology. A hypothetical map is included below, for illustration regarding this aspect. The monitoring report will also include narrative sections explaining the findings. They will include country profiles (different configurations of levels of protection and promotions for different values can be expected) and also thematic discussions (*e.g,* how are particular commitments regarding a particular value implemented across the EHEA).

For *de facto* indicators, there will be only narrative reporting.

At the end of the piloting phase, the methodology will be revised, and a final proposal will be submitted to the WG on the Fundamental Values and the BFUG. As it was discussed in the FVWG, Eurydice is best placed, in all respects, to coordinate the monitoring once the final methodology is approved.

Figure 2: How the results will be visualized (hypothetical map)