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

Proposal of indicators for P1-P3
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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:
a. 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.
b. 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.

Indicators Eurydice
1.1 Is there a top-level strategy (or other major policy plan) related to social dimension, equity, inclusion or diversity in higher education currently (i.e. in 2020/21) being implemented?
1.1.1 If yes, please provide the details of the strategy (or other major policy plan)
1.1.2 If yes, please indicate if there are **any measurable targets** and provide the relevant details of up to three targets
1.1.3 If yes, does the strategy (or other major policy plan) **target higher education students and/or staff**
1.1.4 If yes, does the strategy (or other major policy plan) target **people based on any of the following characteristics?** *'Age, Gender, Sexual orientation , Labour market status prior to higher education entry (e.g. unemployed, already working), Non-standard entry qualifications, First generation, Residing in certain geographical area, People with special educational needs Disability , Ethnicity or race, Migrants or from a migrant background, Refugee status, Religious affiliation, Low socio-economic status, Family background (e.g. single parent, care home upbringing), Other*
1.2 If a strategy (or other major policy plan) related to social dimension, equity, inclusion or diversity in higher education is currently implemented, decided or prepared, please specify if a related social dialogue took (is taking) place

1.2.1 If yes, please state who participated (is participating) in the social dialogue *If yes, with whom: Top-level education authorities, Regional and/or local education authorities, Other (i.e. non-education) public authorities, HEI management (e.g. rectors). If only representing some HEIs, please explain in the Comments , HEI staff trade unions , HEI staff political associations or parties, HEI student unions, HEI student political associations or parties, NGOs, Representatives of other education levels, International organisations, Other*
1.2.2 If yes, please indicate if social group representatives (according to the following defining characteristics) were (are) invited in the social dialogue *'Age, Gender, Sexual orientation , Labour market status prior to higher education entry (e.g. unemployed, already working), Non-standard entry qualifications, First generation, Residing in certain geographical area, People with special educational needs   Disability , Ethnicity or race, Migrants or from a migrant background, Refugee status, Religious affiliation, Low socio-economic status, Family background (e.g. single parent, care home upbringing), Other*

Others
(1) How is social dimension in higher education translated/implemented? Is "**social dimension" broader** then inclusion of people with disabilities? Is there a mapping at national level of all measures in favor of inclusive HE?
(2) Is there a **clear communication and a central information** point regarding the top-level strategy targeting beneficiaries? Have the social dimension PAGS been distributed to all/relevant stakeholders?
(3) Is there a **funding** available to implement the top level strategy?
(4) Are the top level strategies **communication** prepared in an inclusive way (attention to gender bias; inclusive writing, balanced representation of under-represented students on communication documents, facilitate the translation of documents for certain categories such as migrants …)?
(5) Do the HEI system/country endorses **gender balanced/diversity plan** in the recruitment of its **staff**?
(6) Is there a **clear communication and a central information point** regarding the top-level initiatives related to the social dimension?
(7) Is there a specific **strategy for academic/researchers/staff**? (Eurydice questionnaire already targets well student population, but less staff population) (in the idea of better linking EHEA and ERA)
(8) Does the HEI system/country encourages **the self-reflection/assessment** of its inclusive practices by organizing a **feedback by its beneficiaries/ under-represented groups**? At which frequency?
(9) Ombudsman **Student Ombudsman** Institute exists on institutional level, working with HEI and relevant stakeholders to detect and prevent all forms of discrimination, working towards DEI target achievement and improvement, etc. – among other responsibilities.
(10) Strategic development plans of the HEIs include the set of **pre-defined goals** that reflect the achievement of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) targets at the institution.
(11)   A wide range of **stakeholders**, including disadvantaged and underrepresented students and social groups, **participate** in the elaboration of **strategic development plans** at HEIs.

| (12) | **Students** of diverse backgrounds actively and directly **participate** in the **self-evaluation** activity for the institutional/program accreditation procedures. |

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<tr><td>2.</td><td>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.</td></tr>
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Guidelines:

a. 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

b. 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 procedure.

Indicators Eurydice
2.1 Please indicate if top-level regulations (or guidelines) allow HEIs to provide the following study options: *Part-time, Blended learning, Distance learning, Other forms of studies*
2.2 Can candidates without an upper secondary school leaving certificate enter higher education on the basis of the recognition of non-formal and/or informal learning? *All HEIs or in Some HEIs*
2.3 Does prior non-formal and/or informal learning count towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme? *All HEIs or in Some HEIs*
2.4 If the top-level authorities promote the recognition of non-formal and/or informal learning for access and/or progression in higher education, please give an example (including details such as to which cycles and HEI types it applies to). *Access to higher education or Progression*

Others	
(13)	Does an **education offer**, **dedicated to specific target group** (ex. adult student; refugees/displaced people, …), exist?
(14)	Do students might benefit from the support of an **advisor** for the **RPL**?
(15)	Does the HEI system/country **encourages** the self-reflection/assessment of its inclusive practices by organizing a **feedback by its beneficiaries**?
(16)	Does the HEI system/country **encourages** HEI to develop **inclusive strategies/internal regulations** within each HEI?

(17)	Does the HEI system/country **encourages** HEI to have a **contact point** dealing with inclusion?
(18)	Support services exist at institutional and national levels that offer **RPL consultation to mobile and prospective students** before they apply for RPL.
(19)	**HEIs and QA agencies work jointly** to pass the final judgement on RPL cases, and the conditions for recognition avoid parallel procedures as well as additional financial burden for the students.
(20)	An **emergency RPL policy exists** at the system and institutional levels to cater the individuals who are in a dire need of educational assistance and continuity, especially in-between the admission periods.
(21)	Elaboration of **individual learning plan** at the HEIs **considers** the **RPL status** of a student.

> 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:

    a. 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.

    b. 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

Indicators Eurydice
3.1 Is there a **top-level coordination mechanism between all educational levels**?
3.1.1.4 If 'yes' in 3.1.1, are representatives of top-level authorities responsible for public budget, health, employment, social welfare, housing, migration policies typically **involved** when the top-level coordination mechanism discusses equity, diversity and inclusion in education
3.1.1.4.1 If 'yes' in 3.1.1.4, **how** are these representatives involved?
3.2 In your higher education system, are there any **top-level measures to increase the proportion of students with certain characteristics,** who are underrepresented in higher education?
3.2.1 If in 3.2 you marked 'yes, there are targeted measures..', please specify whether any of the following student characteristics are considered in targeting these measures.
3.2.2 If in 3.2, you marked 'yes, there are targeted measures...', which type of targeted measures are offered?
3.3 Are there measures funded by top-level authorities that specifically aim to **support adults who decide to return** to or enter higher education at later stages in their lives?

3.4 Do all q**ualifications confirming upper secondary level (ISCED 3) completion give access to short-cycle higher education and first-cycle study programmes**?
3.5 Please select the **access routes** through which prospective students can access higher education (short or first cycle studies) in your higher education system
3.6 Are there any short-cycle, first- and second-cycle programme qualifications that do NOT give access to the next level?
3.7 Does the higher education admissions system have **specific features facilitating the access of students with certain characteristics who are under-represented** in higher education to short-cycle, first-, second- and third cycle higher education?
3.8 Are **external quality** assurance agencies required to **monitor admissions** systems in relation to the access and admission of students with specific characteristics who are underrepresented in higher education?
3.9 In your higher education system, are there any top-level measures to support students with specific characteristics who are underrepresented in **the completion of their studies?**
3.9.1 If 'yes' in 3.10, please indicate the type of targeted measures supported by top-level authorities.
3.10 Are external **quality assurance agencies** required to **monitor how higher education institutions support the completion of students** with certain characteristics who are underrepresented in higher education?
3.11 Are students in **initial teacher education programmes (ITE) required to acquire the following competences**? (In case a top-level teacher competence framework for ITE is in place, are any of these competences included?)
3.12 Do top-level authorities organise or support the development **of continuing professional development** (CPD) activities to promote any of the following teacher competences?

Others
(22) Existence of **policy/promotion campaign** focussing on high schools students whom might not feel concerned by HE studies?
(23) Is there **reflections** about **why** certain categories of student do not feel concerned?
(24) Neutral information/guidance offer (a common website?)
(25) Are there **coordination mechanisms/shared vision** between inclusion/social dimension in the higher education system and the research systems (e.g when considering student/academic staff)?
(26) **….. % of scientific research** at HEIs **cover the social policy areas** through the lens of DEI and state as well as private financial assistance is ensured for the research projects (HEIs, Government, private companies, NGOs).
(27) **Student data is tracked through all 3 levels of education and LLL** via a well-developed digital platform that can be used by state and HEIs for joint and responsive SD policymaking.
(28) State and HEIs provide **publicly accessible and clear data** on the composition of student body, including the share of disadvantaged and underrepresented groups

Others/to be distributed to others PAGS
(29)   Communication of Erasmus+Agency inclusion policy to a broader audience?
(30)   Existence of a course/program offering dealing with **inclusion as a subject of study** (e.g. interdisciplinary master in gender studies) Does the curricula (at school or higher education level) reflect the diversity of the population (e.g avoid gender stereotypes; represent different kind of figures – foreigners; religious; age, …)? / Inclusive curriculum
(31)   How to make sure students are not stigmatised through their differences (cf. **non-discrimination policies**)
(32)   How data are been collected in order to identify students with special needs? (t registration, at a later stage, should they self-identify themselves?) (cf. data collection)?
(33)