

HOLY SEE

National Action Plan 2024-2027

The Holy See Higher Education system has its defined identity in the disciplines connected with Christian Revelation and those which serve in a direct way to the Church's evangelising mission (cf. Art. 3 of the [Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis gaudium*](#)). Furthermore, the system extends over 80 countries, within and beyond the EHEA.

Therefore, the situation is very different from that of other EHEA members, and presents particular challenges also with regard to an ever more global approach necessary.

	Current situation	Key challenges
ECTS and Qualifications Frameworks	The Holy See Qualifications Framework follows the QF-EHEA, currently not referenced to the EQF. Self-referencing in process to the EQF and other regional (overarching) Qualifications Frameworks.	Reconciling European and other regions' developments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aiming at synergies with other macro-regions and the global dimension; - supporting the development of globally shared standards, such as for credit points, microcredentials, and of overarching (regional) Qualifications Frameworks.
Recognition	Full implementation of all the recognition conventions the Holy See is State Party to, particularly the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) and the Global Convention, but also the Tokyo Convention, the Addis Convention, and the Buenos Aires Convention on Recognition. Partially digitalized recognition procedures. Automatic recognition de facto in place for several countries, in others due to bilateral agreements.	Strengthening the digitalization procedures for recognition without eliminating the added value of the human credential evaluator. Finding shared approaches to alternative learning pathways, including microcredentials, within and beyond the EHEA.
Quality Assurance	Fully implemented. The Holy See QAA, AVEPRO, is ENQA and INQAAHE member and fully aligned with the ESG.	Reconciling European and other regions' developments, including working towards the establishing of common

		standards for the quality assurance of microcredentials.
Social Dimension of HE	The implementation of a system of higher education which is catering for students, teachers and researchers within a global and interconnected system presents particularities due to the necessary respect also of the approach to the social dimension of the countries the Holy See institutions find themselves in.	Promoting a holistic approach to education and the global dialogue also on the social dimension, and the promotion of the fundamental values outlined, taking into account the particularities of the various educational systems globally, including their national, cultural, and religious diversity. Fostering the availability and recognition of flexible learning paths for a globally mobile student body.
Other Bologna Process Commitments	The Holy See works incessantly for the ever more global mobility of students, teachers, and researchers.	Aiming at fostering further internationalisation and mobility, always in a student-centred perspective. While acknowledging the importance of benchmarking, maintaining the integrity of the Catholic educational vision and avoidance of more utility-based models.

The main progress to be achieved by 2027, based on the detailed action plans below, includes:

- Intensifying synergies with the other macro regions supporting the implementation of the EHEA and Holy See education policies in a global dimension;
- Fostering and recognising flexible and alternative learning paths with a focus on micro credentials and informal learning, establishing also common standard for their quality assurance;
- Enhancing the process of digitalization, especially related to the Diploma Supplement;
- Fostering the internationalization and mobility for students;
- Moving toward the establishment of a student-centred learning as one of the hallmarks of an integral and holistic approach to education, rooted in the human dignity and Christian anthropology.

1) ECTS and Qualifications frameworks

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027 (Yes/No/Partially) [to be filled in 2027]	Provide short explanation [to be filled in 2027]
Self-referencing of the Holy See QF to the QF-EHEA, EQF and potential other regional QFs	Contribution to more transparency, better understanding of the Holy See system and, consequently, facilitated recognition	Self-referencing process (Internal report and external validation process) completed	By the end of 2028		
Emanation of a framework legislation for qualifications that are not academic degrees (such as micro-credentials, other awards)	Regulating/easing framework conditions for HEIs will incentivise and foster more flexible learning paths and their recognition	Framework Legislation, more flexible learning paths, micro credentials' and other awards' recognition	By the end of 2028		

2) Recognition

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027(Yes/No/Partially) [to be filled in 2027]	Provide short explanation [to be filled in 2027]
Work towards the digitalization of the Diploma Supplement and of the procedures for the verification of qualifications	Simplification of the procedures for recognition and verification; strengthening of the interoperability and transparency for recognition	Centrally awarded/stored digital Diploma Supplements with verification features.	First phase (project exploration and initial implementation within the EHEA) until 2027, to be mainstreamed globally by 2030		
Participate at joint endeavours for fostering the recognition of flexible and non-formal learning	Contribute to establish common/shared approaches to recognising alternative learning	Implementation of the Global Convention Operational Guidelines next to the LRC and its subsidiary texts.			

3) Quality assurance

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027 (Yes/No/Partially) [to be filled in 2027]	Provide short explanation [to be filled in 2027]
Collaborating at joint endeavours to establish and promote common standards for the quality assurance, reconciling European and regional dimensions	Fostering a culture of quality not only regionally within the EHEA but also globally, taking into account the Holy See criteria for quality education, that next to the orientation at the kerygma promotes wide-ranging dialogue and networking, inter-and cross-disciplinarity.	Common/shared global standards for Quality Assurance, including of TNE	By mid 2027		
Active participation and fostering ethical engagements, especially within ETINED but also beyond and globally, including guiding documents on academic integrity for HEI	Ethical behaviour is key not only to a quality culture within learning, teaching and research but also for recognition. Guidelines help setting benchmarks for ethical-moral behaviour	Contributing to setting global standards for an ethical and holistic Education, including the elaboration of guiding documents on aspects of ethical behaviour and academic integrity for HEI.	By end of 2026		

4) Social dimension

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027 (Yes/No/Partially) [to be filled in 2027]	Provide short explanation [to be filled in 2027]
Offer and promote platforms for HEI and other stakeholders to exchange and foster best practices in the field of integration of disadvantaged groups and development of future skills	Fostering the international mobility of students, especially of disadvantaged groups and integrate them better.	Increased global mobility, extended use of the service-learning concept	No end date, continuous task		

5) Enhancement knowledge sharing

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027 (Yes/No/Partially) [to be filled in 2027]	Provide short explanation [to be filled in 2027]
Round table and conferences within the context of the Jubilee of Educational World, including an Educational Fair.	Provide a platform to rectors, deans and teachers, students and researchers, to discuss current Bologna Process evolution and necessities. Sharing best practices of Catholic Educational responses to diverse cultural and social contexts.	Gaining clarity about priorities and promoting the dialogue between stakeholders on Bologna Process. Increased awareness of the importance of local contextualised responses and creation of informal networks to complement the activities of the Dicastery	By the end of 2025		
Offer and promote platforms for HEI and other stakeholders to exchange and foster best practices, such as the IFCU* or regional joint rectors' conferences	Connect stakeholders more regularly and globally around key topics to foster exchange and knowledge development	Enhanced and established collaboration and sharing practices, regionally and globally	No end date, continuous task		

- IFCU-FIUC, the [International Federation of Catholic Universities](#).

6) Other Bologna commitments

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)[to be filled in 2027]	Provide short explanation [to be filled in 2027]
Implement guidelines for more holistic and student-centred approaches, especially in curriculum design	Fostering student-centered learning as one of the hallmarks of an integral and holistic approach to education, rooted in the human dignity and Christian anthropology, and promoting student ownership in higher education curriculum design will also contribute to more flexible learning paths.	Supporting students in becoming ever more active in their own learning, promoting a proactive and human-centred approach	No end date, continuous task		
Integrate sustainability aspects in a major share of HEI programmes/activities	Foster the sustainability aspect and generate a “greener” mobility as an aspect of a culture of sustainability	Create a “culture of respect for our common home” and mainstream sustainability aspects.	No end date, continuous task		