

# National commitments on social dimension 2025-2027

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No actions from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium – Flemish Community, Latvia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Netherlands, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine

## Albania

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>In alignment with its commitments under the European Higher Education Area (EHEA/ZEAL) and Albania's broader EU integration process, <b>the Albanian government has significantly expanded its policy and institutional efforts to implement the principles of Sustainable Development (SD) in Higher Education.</b></p> <p>This implementation is guided by several national strategies and action plans, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>National Strategy for Social Protection 2024–2030</b></li> <li>• <b>National Strategy for Development and Integration 2030 – Policy 3</b></li> <li>• <b>National Plan for European Integration 2024–2026</b></li> <li>• <b>National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030</b>, along with its Action Plan</li> <li>• <b>Cross-sectoral Strategy on Decentralization and Local Governance 2023–2030</b></li> <li>• <b>National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2021–2025</b></li> <li>• <b>National Action Plan on Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Egyptians 2021–2025</b></li> <li>• <b>National Action Plan for LGBTI+ Persons 2021–2027</b></li> <li>• <b>Strategy for the Development of Primary Health Care Services 2020–2025</b></li> <li>• <b>Employment and Vocational Training Strategy 2021–2026</b></li> <li>• <b>National Youth Strategy 2022–2029</b></li> <li>• <b>Law No. 80/2015 on Higher Education in Albania</b></li> <li>• <b>National Education Strategy 2021–2026</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>C.5.1.1: Scholarships for excellent students and those in need</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Allocated fund: 6,600,000 ALL (from the state budget)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>MAS Guideline No. 10, dated 15.05.2019</b>, updated: Admission procedures in HEIs</li> <li>• <b>Higher Education Quality Code</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Protection of Crime Victims and Action Plan 2024–2030</b></p>	<p>Completing the database for students from special categories</p> <p>Creating synergy between stakeholders committed to implementing the social dimension in higher education</p> <p>Strengthening the monitoring system for implementing the social dimension in higher education</p> <p>Strengthening the role of HEIs in the implementation of the Social Dimension for students and staff</p> <p><b>Promotion of an institutional culture of inclusion, equality, and diversity</b>, ensuring that these values are reflected across policy and practice.</p> <p><b>Maintaining an active policy dialogue</b> on SD in higher education between all key actors: policymakers, students, academic staff, civil society, business sector, and others.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027	Provide short explanation
Improvement of the legal basis	Creating or increasing support for the implementation of the SD P&G	Removing barriers and/or improving conditions for implementing P&G	2025-2027 2027-2030	Achieved partially in 2027 Achieved partially in 2030	Some improvements related to the elements of the PS, increased funding, registration procedures in HEIs, the Quality Code, etc., are likely to be achieved within 2027.
Strengthening the SD implementation system at the central and HEI levels	Drafting, implementing and monitoring policies for SD in Albanian HE.	Establishment of structures at the central level of HEIs for the implementation of P&G in HE	2024-2027	Strengthening SD in strategic documents, including the Education Strategy, as well as strengthening the structures related to SD implementation, is feasible. 2024-2027	Strengthening the working group in the Ministry of Education for the implementation of SD in HEIs Strengthening SD in the Education Strategy after 2026 Supporting HEIs for the inclusion of SD in their strategic plan and for the enhancing of an inclusive environment Strengthening the role of the national point for SD in the Ministry of Education
Seminar/workshop/round tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Capacity building,</li> <li>➤ Creation of institutional culture</li> <li>➤ Strengthening dialogue on SD-related policy</li> </ul>	<p>Training of persons related to the implementation of P&amp;G</p> <p>Increasing student participation</p> <p>Increasing the rate of access to stud. &amp;PA</p>	2024-2027	Following the seminars held for SD, 4 other activities are planned to be held at the system level.	

Promotion and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dissemination of good practices through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publications</li> <li>• TV shows</li> <li>• Social networks</li> <li>• Other activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Publication of the guide for the implementation and monitoring of SD in HEIs</p> <p>Informing the study of other parties regarding the implementation of SD</p>	2024-2030	Activities will be carried out throughout the period, with the aim of creating an inclusive environment as a contemporary social demand.	The changes foreseen for ECTS in 2027 will affect their transfer during the period 2027-2030.
Political dialogue Monitoring	Strengthening dialogue between different institutions: MES, MShMS, ASCAL, AKFAL, HEIs, including students	Creating a synergy for the implementation of SD in HE in Albania	2024-2027 (at least one annual meeting)  2027-2030	Activities will be carried out throughout the period, with the aim of strengthening cooperation to create synergy in the implement.	The dialogue will be strengthened both at the policy-making level (MES and MShMS) and in terms of involving students, academic staff, business, and the Erasmus+ National Office as well, in the dialogue.

## Andorra

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Andorra puts special attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged students. The low number of students in higher education (although proportioned to the size of the country) makes easy to have these students well monitored. The size of the country makes easy to find solutions to every situation case by case. A good system of scholarships is offered to prevent exclusion in higher education due to financial resources.</p> <p>Portability of grants is allowed and common among students. Students have flexible ways of study (parttime, online, access based on RPL) and they enjoy of guidance and counselling services.</p>	<p>When it comes to the implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning in all HEIs, it took long to reach an agreement between the relevant stakeholders. Now, it is a matter of time to have some regulations developed and implemented by the HEIs.</p> <p>To provide student facilities and services to compensate the rising cost of living, a generous budget is needed.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027	Provide short explanation
Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in higher education institutions.	RPL is a flexible learning pathway to guarantee student-centred learning programs.	To apply learning outcomes as the chore and basis of the EHEA. To comply with the commitment: We commit to fostering flexible learning paths, which need to be flexible, properly delivered, quality assured, and recognised, in all higher education programmes. This also includes the recognition of prior learning, and new forms of education provision, such as micro-credentials. We need to ensure student-centred learning is a reality for all students.	June 2026		
To provide student housing.	A student dorm house Provides accommodation for those students coming from far and contributes to promote access to	To comply with the commitment: We, together with stakeholders and communities, commit to tackling the socio-economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living and difficulty to access student housing, that have impacted access to higher education and student life as a whole. [...]	Hopefully, 2027		

	higher education and equity among students. This action also contributes to attract foreign students and foster mobility.	We reaffirm our commitment to enabling all learners to acquire international and intercultural competencies, and we will reinforce our efforts to identify and remove barriers and promote physical mobility, also in order to achieve the benchmark of at least 20% of mobile students.			
To sign an agreement with a prestigious HEI to secure a sit for a talented Andorran student.	To provide the opportunity to study in an expensive HEI by merit-based results contributes to equity among students.	To sign an agreement with a prestigious HEI to secure a sit for a talented Andorran student.	September 2026		
To offer the possibility for professors to be trained in meritbased international programs related to democracy, education, culture and AI.	To provide the opportunity to update the staff of the HEIs trough teaching and learning activities. This action contributes to equity among professors.	To comply with the commitment:  <i>We commit to supporting the ethical, trustworthy, responsible, and rightsbased use of AI in learning and teaching, as well as in research practice, to ensure transparency, fairness, student and staff participation and well-being.</i>	June 2026		

## Austria

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	National Strategy on the Social Dimension of Higher Education is currently being evaluated (final report in Q4 2025). The strategic process will probably be relaunched after the evaluation.	The mainstreaming of the social dimension throughout all HE sectors is challenging. The so-called “implementation gap” (lack of systemic changes) must be closed. The further implementation of the social dimension in Austria will be based on the Principles and Guidelines as well as the accompanying Indicators and Descriptors.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027	Provide short explanation
<b>Evaluation of national social dimension strategy</b>		Evaluation of the strategy with recommendation for further development	Autumn 2024 until autumn 2025; presentation of results November 2025		
<b>Relaunch of national social dimension strategy</b>			Possibly 2026		
<b>Stakeholder dialogue</b>	Evaluation together with stakeholders in dialogue, workshops contributes to Principle 10 “Policy Dialogue”	Broad commitment for relaunch of the strategy	Stakeholder workshops from Q1 2025 – Q3 2025		
<b>Social dimension mainstreaming in all HE sectors</b>	Ongoing process through PA-talks; networking conferences; evaluation of strategy (survey among HE institutions; Participation in EUROSTUDENT survey May, June 2025 --> contributes to Principle 1 “Strategic approach to the social dimension”		Ongoing; results of EUROSTUDENT with policy Recommendations Spring 2027; Austrian student social survey: results in Spring 2026;		

## Belgium-French Community

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Reforming the study grants system: Introducing new criteria	This contributes to reaching principle 6 (principle on funding) of the Principles of the Social Dimension in the European Higher Education Area.	Reform of the study grants system	2028-2029		
Creating a safer and more inclusive academic environment for all: Action plan against harassment, violence, and discrimination	This contributes to reaching principle 7 (Principle on an inclusive institutional culture) of the Principles of the Social Dimension in the European Higher Education Area.	Deployment of the different measures of the action plan (specific legal framework, training, communication, monitoring, ...)	2025-2029		

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social dimension</b>	There is no strategy at the level of the State related to the social dimension in higher education (as part of the accreditation process, there are no clear criteria that include the aspect of the social dimension). The principle of inclusivity in HE is not sufficiently elaborated in practice	1. Insufficient financial investments aimed at improving the social dimension in HE Training of staff to work with categories that belong to 'inclusive' groups
	Unclear procedure for recognition of prior learning	2. The absence of a clearly defined framework of qualifications that regulates this issue
	There is no legal model (uniform/harmonized between competent educational authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina) that refers to the issue of lifelong learning	The absence of a clearly defined framework of qualifications that regulates this issue
	Insufficient financial support to the student population	

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Enhance procedures and regulations for organizing the LLL process (short courses, microcredentials, and other types of LLL)	Developing and strengthening lifelong learning and continuing education programs	Prepared procedures for carrying out certain types of continuing adult education	2027		
Continuous cooperation with the competent educational authorities with the aim of promoting and improving continuous education and improving the status of students	Raising the segment of the social dimension and responsibility of the HE towards the community		Continuously		

Strengthening inclusiveness	Enhance inclusiveness in all its aspects	Enrolment of vulnerable groups in the system throughout availability to infrastructure and programmes, technologies, materials etc.			
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## Bulgaria

The preparation of the National Action Plan is based on the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report. In the table are pointed out specific figures showing the areas that need further interventions or clarification for the current situation.

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	Figure 4.3: Recognition of prior learning in accessing and for the fulfilment of first-cycle higher education study programmes, 2022/2023	The National Action Plan provides for the endorsement of the validation and the Recognition of prior learning in accessing and other academic activities.
	Figure 4.4: Scorecard indicator n°10: P & G 2: Enabling flexible modes of lifelong learning in higher education, 2022/2023	The National Action Plan provides for enabling more flexible modes of lifelong learning in higher education.
	Figure 4.13: Support to higher education institutions (HEIs) for staff training on equity, inclusion and diversity, 2022/2023	The National Action Plan provides for training staff on equity, inclusion and diversity.
	Figure 4.14: Scorecard indicator n°15: P&G 7: Inclusive learning environment and institutional culture, 2022/2023	The National Action Plan provides for more inclusive learning environment and institutional culture.
	Figure 4.15: Top-level measures supporting vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented students in international learning mobility, 2022/2023	The National Action Plan provides for supporting vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented students.

- Legislative changes and updates are proposed to ensure better functioning Higher Education system also in terms of quality assurance, recognition procedure and social inclusion.
- More inclusive learning environments and strengthened institutional capacity for equity, inclusion and diversity.

- Structural embedding of recognition and flexible lifelong learning pathways.
- Targeted measures for improving access, participation and completion for underrepresented groups.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Pioneering the implementation of the Social Dimension Indicators for QA in the EHEA jointly developed by Bulgaria and Romania, designed to enable systematic integration of equity considerations into QA frameworks.	Introduces an innovative, structured approach to embedding the social dimension within QA systems, moving from policy commitment to measurable implementation. Strengthens evidence-based monitoring and supports operationalisation of EHEA social dimension objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced transparency and comparability.</li> <li>• Improved monitoring of participation gaps; future integration of social dimension criteria into national QA systems.</li> </ul>	2027		
Endorsement of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and introduction of more flexible lifelong learning pathways in higher education.	Improves equitable access by recognising diverse learning routes and enabling flexible participation, reducing structural barriers for non-traditional and adult learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access and participation of non-traditional learners.</li> <li>• Improved system flexibility and permeability.</li> </ul>	2027		
Training staff on equity, inclusion and diversity; integration of inclusive practices in governance and teaching.	Strengthens institutional capacity to implement equity policies systematically and mainstream inclusion across higher education structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Increased institutional accountability and awareness.</li> </ul>	2027		

Development of inclusive learning environments and targeted support for vulnerable and underrepresented students.	Addresses structural inequalities and promotes equitable access, participation and completion in line with the EHEA objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved retention and completion rates.</li> <li>• Reduced participation gaps.</li> <li>• Enhanced student well-being.</li> </ul>	2027		
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## Croatia

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>The Bologna Implementation Report (pp. 119 – 156) notes that there is a national strategy, adopted following a social dialogue, on the social dimension of higher education, which strengthens diversity, equity and inclusion of students and staff. QA agency is required to monitor HEI SD strategies and policies. RPL can contribute to the fulfilment of first-cycle programmes. Top-level coordination structures exist between different levels of education, with a mandate including questions related to diversity, equity and inclusion. There are public institutions for conflict resolution and mediation (student ombudsmen), and QA agency monitors psychological counselling and other guidance services. Need-based grants are provided for between 10 and 30% of students, and there is financial support for indirect costs of study. There is a top-level recommendation to provide training to staff, as well as within initial training of teachers, on equity, inclusion and diversity. There is financial support to HEIS to make their infrastructure accessible, and top-level support for academic mobility of vulnerable and disadvantaged students. HEIs are able to use general funding for community engagement activities.</p>	<p>The Bologna Implementation Report (p. 126) notes that it is not possible to access the first cycle based on RPL. Additionally, HEIs are required to submit study programmes to initial accreditation before they start delivering them fully online. For these two reasons, the Bologna Implementation Report notes (p. 127) that top-level regulations do not fully allow higher education institutions to offer flexible pathways like part-time studies, blended and distance learning programmes. There are no legal requirements for free psychological counselling, academic and careers guidance in higher education institutions (even though majority of HEIs do provide them; p. 136). Part-time students are not eligible for the same direct or indirect financial support as full-time students, and public funding is not attributed to higher education institutions that meet targets in widening access, increasing participation or completing higher education, in particular in relation to underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (p. 141). There is no financial support or requirements for staff training regarding diversity, equity and inclusion (p. 131 and pp. 142-144). While the Ministry does not plan any legal changes in the following period, a number of actions are planned to tackle these challenges in practice. Furthermore, the Bologna Implementation Report notes several challenges that can be tackled in the following period. Student characteristics other than age and gender are monitored at entry only; completion rates are not monitored (p. 133). There is no monitoring of the participation and experiences of beneficiaries in all types of international mobility programmes, including their background characteristics; no top-level mobility policy focused on vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented groups of staff, and no top-level support to higher education institutions to foster blended learning mobility and/or internationalisation at home (pp. 145-148). There is no additional funding or external QA for community engagement activities (pp. 150-151). There are no HEI staff organisations represented in the national body implementing the Social Dimension Principles and Guidelines (p.154).</p>

Regarding the social dimension, there will be several activities fostering data collection and monitoring, increasing completion and guidance, supporting RPL and inclusive mobility, as well as training and better involving academic staff.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027	Provide short explanation
<b>EC Technical Assistance TSI project GOAL</b>	The project lasting from September 2025 to 2028 is meant to provide expert support to the Ministry and HEIs in monitoring completion rates, as well as support inter- institutional provision of career guidance at all levels.	1.Ministry regularly monitoring completion rates for the first and the second cycle, including student characteristics 2.Primary and secondary schools provide career guidance to students, including support for access to HE for disadvantaged groups 3.Cooperation established between experts for career guidance at all levels of education	1. By 2027 2. By 2028 3. By 2027		
<b>Establishment of an RPL network coordinated by the Ministry.</b>	An ESF+ project (direct grant to the Ministry) is planned to fund the re-establishment and expansion of a national RPL network which is supposed to gather stakeholders in encouraging RPL in higher education, providing trainings and support to HEIs.	Number of HEIs implementing RPL increased.	By 2027		
<b>Training for HEI staff</b>	An ESF+ project is planned (direct grant to the Ministry) to provide funding for trainings (train the trainers) for HEI staff to better support social dimension in HE. The TSI project will also provide support to HEIs in improving completion, which will include training for SD.	HEI staff trained to implement relevant SD measures	By 2028		

<p><b>Regular cooperation established among HEIs, the Ministry and the national Erasmus agency on social dimension issues.</b></p>	<p>Croatian HEIs (Rectors' Conference and Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences) have established a working group to work on social dimension issues. In parallel, the national Erasmus agency is supporting appointment of inclusion officers at HEIs and has established the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre for Inclusion and Diversity in Education and Training whose team of expert will work on providing support/guidance/training for HEIs on how to strengthen the inclusive dimension of their educational practices, as well as in the process of establishment of inclusion and diversity officers at HEIs. All of this should support Croatia in introducing what has been missing in this aspect.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish monitoring of experiences of beneficiaries in international mobility.</li> <li>2. Top-level mobility policy focused on vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups of staff.</li> <li>3. Top-level support to HEIs to foster blended learning mobility and/or internationalisation at home.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By 2027</li> <li>2. By 2028</li> <li>3. By 2027</li> </ol>		
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## Cyprus

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Cyprus supports student mobility, with a significant number of incoming students</li> <li>•Cyprus has improved the inclusivity of higher education, including financial aid for disadvantaged students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate access to underrepresented groups in higher education, as per the recommendations of the 2024 Bologna Report, and improving outgoing mobility.</li> </ul>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Strengthen Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) commitment towards diversity by encouraging them to develop a comprehensive Equity and Diversity Action Plan. These plans should foster greater equity, diversity, and inclusion among both students and staff, ensuring a more inclusive and supportive academic environment.	Principle 1- Strategic Commitment towards diversity, equity and inclusion in Higher Education	Encourage all HEIs to develop an Equity and Diversity Action Plans and make these Plans publicly available on their institutional websites	2025-2027		
The Department of Higher Education (DHE) defines underrepresented groups and groups with specific needs in the Cyprus Higher Education System. Furthermore, the DHE will systematically monitor their participation and completion of their studies in Higher Education, through its annual administrative study "Mapping of the Educational Field for Higher Education in Cyprus"	Principle 1- Strategic Commitment towards diversity, equity and inclusion in Higher Education	Establish and implement specific targets to increase the participation and success rates of these groups in Higher Education.	2025-2027		
The DHE will initiate discussions and procedures for Public Universities to introduce flexible study modes in the first	Principle 2 – Flexibility	Legal regulations will be initiated to allow Public Universities to offer part time at the first cycle level	2025-2027		

cycle of studies. Currently, such flexibility is already available at the second-cycle level.					
DHE should create a dedicated space on its website to present the Principles and Guidelines of the BFUG on Social Dimension	Principle 10 - Policy dialogue	Increased awareness among HEIs regarding the Principles and Guidelines of the BFUG's social dimension guidelines.			

## Czech Republic

	Current situation	Key challenges			
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	Studying at public universities is free of charge, but the overall costs of learning (e.g. accommodation, food, transport) can be financially challenging for many students. We are currently identifying problematic aspects of the social dimension of the university environment for students.	The current support system is in many ways unresponsive to the rising cost of living for students, which may influence the number of those who do not enter tertiary education and the risk of early school leaving, especially for socio-economically disadvantaged groups. The key challenges are identifying key indicators that can help in social support and then grasping and supporting these indicators systemically.			
Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide a short explanation
Consider the possibility of introducing a system of student-reimbursable grants.	The action aligns with the principles and recommendations adopted in the <a href="#">Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA (2020)</a> , particularly in removing financial barriers to entry and successful completion.	Identify key factors for the introduction of student loans. This may reduce the financial barrier for students from low-income families and promote greater access to higher education.	2024-2027		
Identification of options for updating direct and indirect financial support for students.	The action aligns with Principle 6 of the <a href="#">Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA (2020)</a> .	Identified key and problem factors in direct and indirect financial support for students and a proposal for their update.	2024-2026		
Extension of data collection and monitoring of social dimension indicators	Action is consistent with Principles 3 and 10 of <a href="#">Principles and the Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA (2020)</a> .	Set up relevant indicators to monitor progress and identify gaps in support systems.	2025-2027		
Providing targeted support for learners with disabilities and specific needs.	The action aligns with Principle 5 of the <a href="#">Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA (2020)</a> .	Increase the number of learners using supported infrastructure for learners with disabilities and special needs.	2024-2027		

## Denmark

	<b>Current situation</b>	<b>Key challenges</b>
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>The principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA Strategic focus on commitment towards diversity, equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Denmark has opted for mainstreaming equity and inclusion principles into the structures, organisation and financing of higher education rather than following a policy model based on targeted strategies that could more frequently be subject to political change.</p> <p>This approach is based on the belief that 1) if social dimension conditions are favourable to all students, there is a greater likelihood of de facto equity; and 2) mainstreaming equity consideration in all policies and strategic planning is necessary in order to ensure equity and inclusion among students and staff. In this approach, free education, gender equality and the rights of people with disabilities are the norm in legislation.</p> <p>Higher education institutions should operate based on this broad legislative framework, and they need to embed these principles in their strategic planning.</p> <p>The latests Bologna presentation of the Danish model and mode of implementation is from 2024 in “The European Higher Education Area in 2024 - Bologna Process Implementation Report. <a href="https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/new-publication-european-higher-education-area-2024-bologna-process-implementation-report-2024-05-27_en">https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/new-publication-european-higher-education-area-2024-bologna-process-implementation-report-2024-05-27_en</a></p> <p><b>Update November 2025</b></p> <p>Due to the chosen governance structures in Danish HE and the Danish approach in relation to the governance of policy area “social dimension”, it is not possible for Denmark to unfold the highlighted BPIR topics further. However, please beware of [DEP opdaterer afsnittet, hvad angår “Denmark will in 2025 conduct a study of the national study grants system in relation to social mobility in higher education”]</p>	Denmark has fully implemented the principles in the legislative framework.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
<p>Denmark will closely follow discussions on the social dimension within the BFUG and take note on possible recommendations and actions.</p> <p>Denmark will conduct a study in 2025/26 examining the national student grant system in relation to social mobility in higher education.</p>	<p>The study will provide further insight to the success of the national study grant system.</p>	<p>The primary purpose of the study is to generate new knowledge about the grant and education system in Denmark. The insights gained may help inform reflections and potential considerations for future developments in this context.</p>	<p>The study is expected to be completed in 2026</p>	<p>[Partially]</p>	<p>The study is expected to be completed in 2026</p>

## Estonia

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Starting from the admission 2013 all students can study free of charge - by fulfilling certain requirements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complying with the admission criteria set by the universities (threshold, etc.)</li> <li>• Meeting 100% requirements of the curriculum (earning 24-30 ETCS credits per semester).</li> <li>• Free for programmes taught in Estonian.</li> <li>• Study support to the students from the families living below the relative poverty threshold.</li> <li>• Study loan guaranteed by the state.</li> <li>• Special grants in priority areas.</li> <li>• Monitoring student progress during the studies and graduate tracking.</li> </ul>	The student loan system is not flexible. The loan guarantor restriction limits access to loans for the most vulnerable group of students.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Participation in Thematic Peer Group D on Social Dimension (TPG D on SD)	<p>Sharing Estonian experience in the aspect of social dimension (free of charge higher education, grants and scholarships system to support students from different socioeconomic backgrounds).</p> <p>Estonia's interest is the peer learning on activities and good practices concerning social dimension.</p>				
Renewing study loan system in Estonia to increase the flexibility of the system and increase the accessibility to study	Changing the legal framework and the conditions for applying study loan.	Expected changes within the study loan system: longer repayment period, lower commercial interest rate, abolition of an alien	Academic year 2026/2027		

loan among students from different socio-economic backgrounds.		or the surety requirement. Increased number of students applying for study loan.			
Increase the access to higher education among first time students (limit the number of students studying free of charge repeatedly  Activities contributing to the social dimension agreed upon with universities in four-year performance agreements.	Changing the legal framework and the right to ask tuition fee among recurring students to increase the free access to higher education among first time students.				
Increase the access to higher education among first time students (limit the number of students studying free of charge repeatedly	Changing the legal framework and the right to ask tuition fee among recurring students to increase the free access to higher education among first time students.	Increased numbers of first-time students within higher education system.			

## Finland

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Finland has not implemented Principles and Guidelines of Social Dimension fully. Equity and enhancement of access is a long term education policy goal. The enhancement of the social dimension has been built on a model of universal student support model. There is little targeted support available for under-represented groups. There are no separate financial incentives for higher education institutions to increase the accessibility of higher education. HEIs have drawn their own accessibility plans based on national study and guidelines from 2021. The characteristics or backgrounds of student body other than age and gender are not monitored at different stages of studies. Finland has participated regularly in the Eurostudent study.</p> <p>There are no legislative obstacles to the recognition of prior learning and flexible study paths.</p>	<p>Low share of higher education students with immigrant background and other under-represented groups among those applying for and admitted to higher education.</p> <p>Deficiencies in statistics and monitoring of student population.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Participation in the Eurostudent 9 project and launch of national student research.	Better knowledge base of student population.	Produce nationally and internationally comparable data on European higher education students. The study focuses on students' socio-economic background, living conditions, international mobility, and students' livelihood and mental health.	A national survey for students will be conducted in March-June 2025 by Statistics Finland. The national student survey and study will be completed in 2026.		
Opportunities for continuous learning will be increased on the shared digital	Increase opportunities for continuous learning for all those interested in higher education	The digital Opin.fi platform is in use and contains compiled open study offer of Finnish higher education institution. Learners find opportunities for studies	In the end of 2025, the Opin.fi service will be available to all willing learners.		

Opin.fi platform of higher education institutions.	studies.	independent of time and place.			
Follow-up of the HEIs' accessibility plans.	Enhancement of access and completion of studies of the underrepresented groups.	Ongoing dialogue between HEIs and the Ministry on actions aiming to improve accessibility in higher education.	2026-2027		

## France

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top-level strategies to social dimension and QA-procedures for SD are in place. The RPL procedure for entering higher education or contributing to the completion of a course is open to everyone.</li> <li>• There is a legal obligation to provide free guidance and counselling services.</li> <li>• Support offered by top-level public authorities to HEIs to offer training on diversity, equity or inclusion to academic and administrative staff.</li> <li>• Existence of a public institution playing a formal role in conflict resolution and in mediating conflicts linked to the social dimension.</li> <li>• Existence of a grant scheme for the most vulnerable students.</li> </ul> <p>Work in progress (see below)</p>	<p>Quality of higher education.</p> <p>Opening up higher education (in terms of access, training pathways, student life and professional integration) to the diversity of society.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Special educational needs	Quality in higher education : secure the pathway for student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for inclusive university projects</li> <li>• Communication tools for students and events for professionals who work for students carers, overseas nationals and student employees</li> <li>• Promoting access to Higher education for prisoners</li> </ul>	Work in progress		
Scheme to promote access to higher education	Quality in higher education : schemes to secure career paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote education campus (Campus connecté)</li> <li>• Tutoring (included Cordées de la réussite)</li> <li>• Enhanced licences</li> </ul>	Work in progress		
Financial aid	Quality in higher education : financial measures to secure career paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarship reform (included measures for special educational needs students)</li> <li>• Help with catering (for students living far from university restaurants)</li> </ul>			
Strengthening student life	Quality in higher education : student life measures to secure career paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student health reform (including mental health measures)</li> </ul>			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measures for access to affordable catering and the 35,000 student accommodation plan</li><li>• Roadmap: developing student sports activities</li><li>• Framework agreement: campuses, territories of culture</li><li>• Promoting commitment to student success</li></ul>			
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## Georgia

	<b>Current situation</b>	<b>Key challenges</b>
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Georgia is in the process of implementation the social dimension in its national education strategy in alignment with the Principles and Guidelines on the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process. There are no specific targets and respectively there no evidence to monitor the progress and outcomes.</p> <p>There are state grants (financial assistance) on the basis of financial hardship/social-economic background or special needs of the students. There are international and regional mobilities, but it is not considered the diverse background and disparities in participation.</p> <p>State funding for Higher Education is secured through merit-based and needs-based education grants, as well funds allocated to the state universities for financing priority fields.</p> <p>State education grants, awarded to the best scoring students in the UNE entrance exam, provide secondary school graduates with an opportunity to continue their education at higher education level both at public and private universities.</p> <p>Foreign citizens passing unified national exams are funded under special program designed purposefully for them.</p> <p>20% of state education grants are annually allocated for the social grants program. Needsbased grants are awarded to students with different social background: students from highland areas; graduates from minority schools (Azerbaijani and Armenian); students of the KIA and MIA military families; repatriates; orphans and students from large families, students under the state care; students impacted by Russian aggression; students from occupied territories; students with special education needs/disabilities; socially vulnerable students.</p> <p>In addition, state scholarships for the best performing students are awarded annually, under the special support program.</p> <p>The government is working to increase access to higher education.</p>	<p>Lack of Social Dimension Policy and Monitoring Mechanisms in HE in Georgia.</p> <p>Lack of regular collection of the data about the HEIs (age, gender, disability, special education needs etc.).</p> <p>Ensuring equal access to quality education for all citizens, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with special educational needs, is a persistent challenge</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Elaboration of online university concept and external quality mechanisms	It is important to develop quality assurance mechanisms for innovative models of electronic and hybrid learning. Develop the experience and capabilities of institutions to offer a quality product to the system. It is crucial to develop mechanisms for ensuring the quality of e-learning offerings so that it is clear to universities themselves what e-learning quality assurance mechanisms mean and what requirements they impose on them at the national level.	Increased accessibility and flexibility of higher education system. Advancements in educational technology.	2025-2027		
The development of mechanisms for recognizing prior learning.	Recognizing skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning is crucial for promoting lifelong learning and ensuring that individuals can adapt to new technologies and demands, reducing the risk of social exclusion.	At the national level, mechanisms for the development, implementation, and execution of prior learning started. Increased Equity and Inclusion. Enhanced Lifelong Learning and Upskilling.	2027		
International knowledge exchange in social dimension in higher education	International knowledge exchange, participation in several PLAs and workshops. Active engagement should deepen the knowledge and effectively implement and evaluate the policies to enhance the social dimension in higher education.	Strengthening the social dimension of higher education. Creating more equitable, inclusive, and socially responsible higher education systems.	2025-2027		

## Germany

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b> <b>Other Bologna Commitments</b>	<p>There is no separate national strategy to strengthen the social dimension yet. Equality is enshrined in the constitution, the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany (<a href="#">Art. 3</a>, <a href="#">Art. 6 par. 5</a> and <a href="#">Art. 33 Grundgesetz</a>) which forms the basis of all legal regulations. The prohibition of discrimination is further detailed in the Equal Treatment Act. The federal government provides individual financial assistance (BAföG) to students in higher education that lack the financial means to support themselves. With the Coalition Agreement 2025, the governing parties have agreed on further improvements of the social benefit with the aim of further strengthening equal opportunities in higher education. Several Länder offer funding programmes to incentivise additional measures geared towards promoting action on gender, equity and inclusion. However, more precise, targeted efforts must be undertaken to foster integration of underrepresented and underprivileged groups into higher education and ensure their equal rights. The federal and Länder governments will consistently pursue the path they have taken to enable all students to study regardless of their educational background, family responsibilities, or individual disabilities, and to improve opportunities for participation in higher education.</p>	<p>(...) While higher education institutions design their curricula autonomously, they are encouraged to do so increasingly through a lens of sustainability, diversity, equity, and inclusion at both the conceptual as well as the organisational levels. Nonetheless, a good balance has to be found between tackling societal challenges and covering core requirements of the study programmes. (...)</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No /Partially)	Provide short explanation
Designing a way forward to develop and implement additional measures regarding the social dimension	Ensures a unified approach across Länder and higher education institutions with measurable progress indicators.	Proposal for additional national social dimension measures on the basis of thorough assessment and discussion in the relevant committees at the regional and national levels.	2025-2027		

Implementing the new Skilled Immigration Act adopted in 2023 and designing transparent and digitised visa application processes as well as reviewing means to expand processing capacities at visa offices and diplomatic missions abroad.	Principle 7 of the <a href="#">Principles, Guidelines and Indicators of the Social Dimension in Higher Education</a>	Facilitated stays for international students and researchers as well as expedited issuing of visas and residence permits.	Ongoing		
Creating new student accommodation and modernising student dorms in the scope of subsidised housing construction schemes such as the " <a href="#">Programm Junges Wohnen</a> " (overall budget: 500 million euros).		Provision of sufficient and affordable housing for national and international students, short-term accommodation included.	Ongoing		
Strengthening international and intercultural capacities of administrative units in higher education institutions.		Strengthened cooperation on the topic of cultural sensitisation between higher education and research institutions as well as municipalities.	Ongoing		
Assessing options to facilitate hiring criteria and employment conditions for international staff and developing recommendations on how to increase the percentage of international professors/senior teachers in higher education institutions by focusing on international appointments and transitioning international scientists in early stages of their careers.	Principle 8 of the <a href="#">Principles, Guidelines and Indicators of the Social Dimension in Higher Education</a>	Significant diversification of higher education institution staff through improved conditions for attracting, hiring, and integrating international researchers in compliance with the principle of selection on the basis of merit.	Ongoing		
Incorporating diversity as well as ecological sustainability in mobility funding schemes, while continuing strategic data collection flanked by independent scientific reporting (i. e.	Principle 8 and 4 of the <a href="#">Principles, Guidelines and Indicators of the Social Dimension in Higher Education</a>	All learners are enabled to acquire international and intercultural competencies. Reinforced efforts to identify and remove barriers and promote	Ongoing		

<a href="#">Student Survey in Germany/ “Studierendenbefragung in Deutschland”</a> )		physical mobility, to achieve the benchmark of at least 20% of mobile students. Increased measures for achieving a greener, more inclusive, and more balanced mobility.			
Assessing means of support for early career researchers interested in cooperating with the Global South and establishing programmes which take into consideration additional dimensions of diversity, knowledge justice and sustainable development.	Developing and strengthening dialogue and collaboration with macro regions in line with the Global Policy Forum. Developing transversal and future-proof skills, capacity for creative and critical thinking, as well as civic competencies, to support students’ active participation in a democratic society and a rapidly changing labour market. Ensuring student- centred learning, empowering individual learners through research-based learning, effective support and guidance and cross-disciplinary and transdisciplinary teaching approaches	Increased participation and knowledge justice in research and teaching, especially in and with countries of the Global South, to facilitate more equal and high-quality cooperation.	Ongoing		
Aligning funding and support schemes with gender- sensitive approaches to strengthen participation, resources and representation of researchers in all their diversity.	Principle 6 of the <a href="#">Principles, Guidelines and Indicators of the Social Dimension in Higher Education</a> :				
Promoting a welcoming culture towards incoming students and staff in	Principle 8 of the <a href="#">Principles, Guidelines and Indicators of</a>	Increased rate of academic success among international students			

<p>higher education institutions and regional authorities by means of tailoring degree programme starting phases to the needs of international target groups by providing specific information, consulting and mentoring services, by building specific language and technical skills and establishing anti- discrimination focal points and complaints offices.</p>	<p><a href="#">the Social Dimension in Higher Education</a></p>	<p>with particular consideration of the role of the starting phase and „Willkommenskultur“ (a host country’s welcoming culture towards international students)</p>			
<p>Elaborating a unified definition of short-term and online study phases as well as clarifying the legal implications of the student status obtained through or during these phases.</p>			2024-2034		
<p>Committing to consolidating and expanding (funding) schemes for displaced and persecuted students and researchers as well as to providing safe spaces in higher education institutions and strengthening existing support programmes and context-sensitive, critical research and teaching also with regard to existing support structures for nationals and students holding resident status.</p>	<p>Principle 2 of the <a href="#">Principles, Guidelines and Indicators of the Social Dimension in Higher Education</a></p>	<p>Principle 2 of the Advocacy for academic freedom as well as protection and support of students and researchers in crisis across the globe.</p>			

## Greece

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>The country has implemented the social dimension in its national higher education or education strategy, incorporating some objectives from the Principles and Guidelines on the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process.</p> <p>Key Progress and Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2024 &amp; 2025 National Action Plans of the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, and Sports includes key social initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGBTQ+ Equality: Implementation of actions and projects to promote inclusion.</li> <li>Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Various measures to improve accessibility and participation.</li> <li>Higher Education &amp; Society: Strengthening links between universities, society, and the economy.</li> <li>Internationalization: Expanding foreign-language study programs, enhancing cooperation with foreign institutions, and increasing participation in European University Alliances.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Additionally, under the National Strategy for People with Disabilities (2024-2030), efforts to ensure inclusion in higher education include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Accessibility Offices (by 2026): Providing support services, data collection, and policy implementation in universities.</li> <li>✓Disability Curricula (by 2026): Introducing undergraduate and postgraduate programs in disability studies.</li> <li>✓Universal Accessibility (by 2030): Improving infrastructure, inclusive curricula, digital accessibility, and support services.</li> <li>✓Internship Access (by 2026): Enhancing digital accessibility and equal participation for students with disabilities.</li> </ul> <p>These measures aim to foster a more inclusive and equitable higher education environment in Greece.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Greek HEIs Accessibility Units have been set up to provide support to students with special abilities, while many Greek HEIs also offer scholarships targeted to disabled students.</li> <li>According to recent legislation, each Higher Education Institution (HEI) must establish a Center for Psychological and Counseling Support by decision of the Senate. The Center's mission is to provide psychological and counseling services and prevent mental health issues, primarily for students at all academic levels.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involve more stakeholders in the process of monitoring the social dimension in Higher Education</li> <li>Enhance systematic data collection</li> <li>Adequate funding, creating inclusive curricula</li> <li>Raising awareness for underrepresented groups, and further improving accessibility to premises.</li> </ul>

	<p>4. Family allowances are provided to students' parents or to students who meet certain socio-economic criteria.</p> <p>According to recent legislation, the Greek Quality Assurance Agency evaluates HEIs for the allocation of state funding to HEIs. Some of the criteria taken into consideration include accessibility.</p>	
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Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Involve more stakeholders in the process of monitoring the social dimension in Higher Education / raising awareness for underrepresented groups.	Principle 1 <sup>1</sup> : 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.	The Ministry is committed to enhancing dialogue among key actors, the contribution of which is strongly recommended, so that a permanent mechanism of monitoring is established.	Mid 2026		
Enhance data collection about students' population.	Principle 4 <sup>2</sup> : Reliable data is a necessary precondition for an evidence-based improvement of the social dimension of higher education.	Targeted data-driven policies.	Mid 2026		
Creation of disability curricula <sup>3</sup> /training of academic staff on diversity and inclusion.	Principle 7 <sup>4</sup> : Public authorities should help higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity to respond to the needs of a more diverse student and staff body and	It will cover the points put forward by stakeholders regarding the creation of a more inclusive environment in Higher Education.	Development of the first study program no later than December 2026, as it is stated in the National Strategy		

<sup>1</sup> Rome Ministerial Communiqué (2020)

<sup>2</sup> Rome Ministerial Communiqué (2020)

<sup>3</sup> It is included in the National Strategy for people with disabilities

<sup>4</sup> Rome Ministerial Communiqué (2020)

	create inclusive learning environments and inclusive institutional cultures.		for people with disabilities.		
Provide support / advice to national authorities and Greek higher education institutions so that current policies and practices on social dimension can be improved.	Principle on counselling and guidance.	Mapping the current situation and make suggestions for improvement, through the use of recently developed tools such as the PAGs toolkit <sup>5</sup> .	Mid 2026: the toolkit has been introduced recently.		
On Other Bologna commitments - Internationalisation and mobility: Establish a credible data collection method for learning mobility indicators, distinguishing between degree and credit mobility data.	As the hallmark of an interconnected EHEA is seamless mobility of students and staff, we will reinforce our efforts to identify and remove barriers and promote physical mobility, to achieve the benchmark of at least 20% of mobile students	Address balanced and inclusive mobility issues with appropriate policy tools. -Identification of barriers that affect certain student groups and adoption of relevant policy tools. -Enhanced participation from underrepresented groups in mobility programmes. -	End of 2026		

<sup>5</sup> [PAGs toolkit | Inclusive Higher Education](#)

## Holy See

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
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	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.

**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.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027 (Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
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		

## Hungary

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Compensation for disadvantages in higher education - the higher education sector has a well-established system for addressing disadvantages and reducing the resulting disadvantages (among many others):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor programme (senior students mentor admitted students to university life without assistance),</li> <li>• Bursa Hungarica Higher Education Municipal Scholarship (a social benefit based on need only),</li> <li>• Regular social grants,</li> <li>• Exemption from dormitory fees,</li> <li>• Road to a Diploma Scholarship (a scholarship from the last year of primary school to graduation,).</li> </ul> <p>Due to the changes in the higher education admission procedure, it is no longer necessary to have an A-levels to start studies, but higher education institutions may set a lower minimum score. This has led to a 28% increase in the number of students entering higher education in 2023 and a related improvement in the number of first-year disadvantaged students admitted, as well as a higher number of disadvantaged students admitted in 2024, and a significant increase in the number of students from less developed regions entering higher education.</p> <p>Higher Education Action Plan 2025-2026 1.2 Objectives A to E include the following actions: Supporting the participation in higher education of students with disabilities and students of Roma origin from socially, economically and territorially disadvantaged and equal opportunities groups; encouraging applications for higher education, particularly among students from socially, economically and territorially disadvantaged groups, disabled people and people of Roma origin, supporting career guidance in higher education; strengthening nationality training; continuing and supporting the programme of Roma colleges for advanced studies; strengthening links between higher education and primary and secondary education institutions in order to create educational opportunities. In the Action Plan, a quantified commitment has been made to increase the participation rate in higher education of the above target group by 0.7 percentage points and to maintain the share of socio-economically disadvantaged people (at least 7.6%) in the enrolment rate. The Higher Education Action Plan 2025 2026 includes in point 1.1.A) the implementation of programmes to reduce student drop-outs and support learning and progression. Objective 1.6. A) includes support for students (in</p>	<p>The most significant challenge facing the social dimension in Hungary is the absence of a coherent, comprehensive strategy specifically addressing the needs of disadvantaged students. Although various regulations and targets are included in national action plans, there is no dedicated framework focused solely on this group. Another recurring issue is the lack of a clear, universally accepted definition of the social dimension. In Hungary, it is often linked to the concept of the "third mission" of higher education institutions.</p> <p>Access to higher education remains a major obstacle for disadvantaged students. Admission-related support is typically based on income and socio-economic criteria, and while institutions may award additional points to applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds, the overall accessibility remains limited. Nevertheless, once enrolled, several supportive measures are</p>

	<p>particular students from socially, economically and territorially disadvantaged, equal opportunities, disabled and Roma backgrounds) through experience abroad, international mobility: a measure committing to at least 60 students with disabilities participating in higher education mobility programmes and at least 650 socio-economically disadvantaged students per academic year receiving additional equal opportunities support.</p> <p>Disadvantaged students, especially those of Roma origin, can be provided with talent management, inclusion and community engagement services in the context of college for advanced studies to help them improve their academic performance and successfully complete their studies. A key objective is to contribute to the development of Roma intellectuals who are committed to public engagement and active in social dialogue, combining professional excellence with sensitivity to social and societal issues. One of the most significant achievements in the field of educational opportunity, which has been organised in recent years into a national network, is the network of Roma colleges, which currently comprises 11 colleges.</p>	<p>in place to promote retention, including scholarships, travel grants, and housing assistance.</p>
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Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
<p>Organising a national webinar focused on the social dimension in higher education, bringing together representatives from various institutions across Hungary. The purpose of this event is to provide a platform for sharing experiences, good practices, and challenges related to the social dimension, as well as to foster mutual learning</p>	<p>Improving evidence-based improvement of social dimension of higher education.</p> <p>Improving the dialogue between higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>As a result of the webinar, participants are expected to gain a deeper awareness of the importance of the social dimension in higher education and its relevance to institutional development. The event will provide an opportunity to exchange good practices related to inclusion, student access, and support services, while also identifying shared challenges that institutions face in addressing social inequalities. One key outcome will be the establishment of a professional network that fosters ongoing dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders. The discussions are intended to inspire the development of institutional strategies that promote equity and enhance student well-being. Moreover, participants will contribute insights and</p>	<p>2025-2027</p>		

among institutions. By exchanging insights and approaches, we aim to support the development of more inclusive and socially responsive higher education practices nationwide.		recommendations that may inform national-level policy and future initiatives. The webinar will also enhance understanding of how the social dimension is interpreted and implemented across different institutions in Hungary, potentially leading to follow-up actions such as joint projects, working groups, or further capacity-building events.			
Continuation and support of the Roma Colleges for Advanced Studies programme, including the activities of Roma Colleges aimed at supporting secondary school students. In addition, higher education institutions implement various talent development and remedial programmes targeting primary and secondary school pupils, with a particular focus on those from disadvantaged backgrounds.	Developing coherent support from early childhood education, through schooling to higher education.	The continuation and support of the Roma Colleges for Advanced Studies programme, along with talent development and remedial initiatives for disadvantaged pupils, are expected to contribute to several important outcomes. These include improved educational outcomes and increased motivation among Roma and disadvantaged students in both secondary and higher education. The programmes aim to reduce dropout rates, support smoother transitions between educational levels, and foster long-term aspirations for further education. Furthermore, they help to strengthen students' academic skills and self-confidence through targeted mentoring and support. On an institutional level, these initiatives contribute to building more inclusive and socially responsive education systems, and may serve as a basis for developing sustainable models of support for underrepresented groups in education.	2025-2026		
Strengthening the connection between higher education and primary and secondary schools in order to expand educational opportunities. This includes fostering cooperation between	Creating synergies with all education levels and related policy areas.	The strengthening of ties between higher education and primary and secondary schools is expected to lead to several impactful outcomes. These include improved educational aspirations and motivation among pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, greater awareness of higher education pathways, and increased support for students at an early stage of their academic journey. The "Let's Teach for Hungary!" programme, in particular,	2025-2026		

<p>public and higher education institutions through the implementation of the “Let’s Teach for Hungary!” programme.</p>		<p>fosters mentorship and knowledge-sharing between university students and school pupils, helping to build bridges between educational levels. In the long term, such cooperation contributes to reducing educational inequalities, promoting social mobility, and creating a more inclusive and cohesive education system.</p>			
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## Iceland

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	Generally social dimension policy is mainstreamed in overarching legislation.	The main challenge relates to gender inequalities in the HE system, with 70% of students being female, and correspondingly limited uptake of higher education places by men. Limited uptake of student loans due to unfavourable terms and conditions.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Changes to the student loan system to support access to higher education irrespective of income	Removes barriers to access to HE by more favourable terms	Reducing the financial burden of HE on students	Initial proposal to go through parliament in spring 2025		
Targeted information campaigns in HE recruitment and varied career options	Lowering the mental threshold to applying to HE and raises awareness of diverse educational provision in HE.	Increased proportion of males and students from underrepresented groups applying to HEIs	These have been employed in 2023 and 2025 with significant effect and are planned to continue in the coming year		
An impact assessment of support for students shall be carried out in accordance with Article 6, Paragraph 19 of the Act on Higher Education, No. 63/2006, taking into account universal design and human variability.	Highlights possible deficiencies in support for students with disabilities	Impact assessment report	Before 2027		

## Ireland

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	Ireland has an extensive number of strategies and supports in place for learners across the social demension including areas such as Student Accomodation, Students Supports, Access, and Inclusion. Over the period of this action plan, many of these strategies will be subject to review and renewal.	<p>Student Accommodation: Students face significant challenges in securing appropriate affordable accommodation to enable their participation in higher education.</p> <p>Cost of Education/HE Funding: Ongoing efforts are required to meet the funding and investment requirements for higher education while also ensuring the cost of education is reduced for students and their families.</p> <p>Access: Reviews are to be undertaken of key access and inclusion strategies as well of the student grant system to further strengthen supports for students.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Development and implementation of a new Student Accommodation Strategy. Implementation of policy to provide additional purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA)	Student access to education; enhance mobility for international students	<p>A new Student Accommodation Strategy will be adopted in 2025.</p> <p>Additional PBSA capacity will be added on an ongoing basis with a proportion of new beds to be available at a reduced cost to the most disadvantaged students.</p>	2025		
Rollout/implementation of Accommodation Assistance Scheme as identified in National Access Plan	Student access to education	Increase the participation and progression level of targeted cohort of socioeconomically disadvantaged students in higher level education by providing supports to meet accommodation costs.	Ongoing		
HEI led review of the implementation of Higher	Student access to education	Full implementation of HEAR review recommendations, resulting in	Q2 2025 (student admissions process		

Education Access Route (HEAR) – HE access for students from targeted socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds		improved access for targeted groups, including Irish Travellers/Roma, teen parents, applicants in the care of the state, and those who have experienced homelessness.	begins) Q3 2025 (Central Applications Office opening)		
HEI led review of Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)	Student access to education	Revised DARE scheme which ensures that HE offers to target those students whose post-primary education has been most impacted by their disability, and which are least represented in HE.	2027		
Review Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025 and develop a new five-year strategy 2026-2030.	Access to tertiary education	Review existing action plan and its commitment to reach 10,000 new apprentice registrations per year by 2025.  Develop new Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2026-2030	2026		
Implementation of ‘Funding the Future’, a landmark policy on the future of higher education funding and reducing the cost of third level education for families.	Access to education	Engagement on annual option papers to identify measures and plans that can be adopted and implemented by Government to invest in higher education and reduce costs for students.	Ongoing		
Midterm review of the National Access Plan (NAP): A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028	Support student outcomes in the areas of diversity, equality and inclusion.	Completion of a progress review of the NAP and the identification of revised targets to support its twin ambitions that: (i) the higher education student body reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland’s population, and	2026 Q1		

		(ii) that higher education institutions are inclusive, universally designed environments.			
Review of the Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) Grant System	Support student outcomes in the areas of diversity, equality and inclusion.	Completion of a review targetted at the modernisation of the Grants System including consideration of ICT upgrade projects to platform.	2026		
Development of enhanced Career Guidance for those in workforce	Lifelong learning and Career Guidance.	Development and launch of sectoral portals to provide more focused Career Guidance for those in workforce.	2026 Q1		
Learner Research Projects: (i) Completion of behavioural research on how students and their families make educational decisions. (ii) Reestablishment of Transitions Group to examine and identify enhancement options to improve information for learners.	Access to education	Development of recommendations for the enhancement of information provisions for learners.	2025 Q4		

## Italy

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Promote inclusive pathways for asylum seekers and refugees to enter and succeed in higher education thanks to two MUR financed FAMI projects (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) which focus on capacity building of the HEI, scholarship for refugees and enhancing the technological tools for academic qualifications recognition.</p> <p>Work on the “educational and digital poverty” supporting different projects at national level (<a href="https://povertaeducativadigitale.it">https://povertaeducativadigitale.it</a>).</p> <p>Support for students with disabilities, including accessibility services and inclusive learning environments (also based on the result of the new ANVUR working group).</p> <p>Creating bridges between secondary schools and universities for orientation and access for students from underrepresented backgrounds.</p> <p>Developed of mental health services, counseling, and well-being initiatives to support students' holistic development, such as the Proben initiatives by Italian MUR <a href="#">Nuove risorse per il benessere psicologico degli studenti: pubblicato l'avviso Pro-ben 2024   Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca</a></p>	<p>Further support for students with disabilities, including accessibility services and inclusive learning environments.</p> <p>Strengthen bridges between secondary schools and universities to facilitate orientation and access for students from underrepresented backgrounds</p> <p>Further promote the implementation of mental health services, counseling, and well-being initiatives to support students' holistic development.</p> <p>Promote the collection and the analysis of data on student demographics, academic progression, and dropout rates, disaggregated by socio-economic background, disability, gender, and other relevant factors.</p>

### Progress to be achieved by 2027

- New enrolment procedure for refugees and grants;
- Portal on educational and digital poverty.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Development of two FAMI projects: grants for refugees and portal for enrolment in HEIs	Refugees' qualifications and inclusion	National portal and min. 100 grants.	Starting from the second half of 2025		
Portal on educational and digital poverty and funded projects	Educational and digital poverty	National portal and funds min. 5 projects	Starting from the second half of 2025		

## Kazakhstan

	<b>Current situation</b>	<b>Key challenges</b>
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>An Inclusive Education Model has been developed – an innovative methodological guide that offers a systematic approach to educating children with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms, covering all levels of education.</p> <p>Over 500 university faculty members, teachers, and specialists from secondary education institutions (including more than 250 university faculty members) have been trained in the Inclusive Education Model.</p> <p>More than 65 university faculty members and educators from special education institutions (including 45 university faculty members) have been trained in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and early autism diagnosis techniques (ADOS-2).</p> <p>Fourteen universities offering programs in "Special Pedagogy" have been equipped with modern interactive tools and materials for inclusive education (Braille keyboards, hearing devices, speech therapy simulators, etc.).</p>	<p>There are no rules for the assessment and monitoring of inclusive policies in universities.</p> <p>There is also a lack of stakeholder interaction in the development of inclusive education.</p>

<b>Action</b>	<b>Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment</b>	<b>Expected outcome(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)</b>	<b>Provide short explanation</b>
<p><b>Development of a New Law on Comprehensive Support for Children (Individuals) with Disabilities.</b></p> <p>Development of draft guidelines for the evaluation and monitoring of inclusive policies in universities.</p>	<p>Building an inclusive EHEA by 2030.</p> <p>The adoption of the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education</p>	<p>Draft of the New Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Comprehensive Support for Children (Individuals) with Disabilities"</p>	2027		

## Liechtenstein

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Participation of all representative groups of the HEIs, in particular students, faculty staff, professors and administrative and technical staff, in developing quality assurance systems as well as the promotion of equal opportunities and gender equality for staff and students are key elements for accreditation in Liechtenstein as per the Decree on Higher Education.</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.gesetze.li/konso/pdf/2011337000?version=2">https://www.gesetze.li/konso/pdf/2011337000?version=2</a> )</p> <p>In order to effectively address the social dimension of higher education, continuous efforts are being made to enhance data collection processes. Various options have been evaluated, with particular consideration given to participation in the EUROSTUDENT survey. Discussions with national stakeholders are ongoing to determine the most suitable approach moving forward.</p> <p>The scholarship system in the country is well-developed and plays a significant role in supporting education and personal development. In recent years, legislation has been adjusted to ensure greater inclusivity. One major change has been the removal of age restrictions.</p>	<p>Response rates to questionnaires in HE in Liechtenstein have historically been quite low, with an average return rate of around 20% expected. Upon reviewing the questions from EUROSTUDENT 8, it became clear that the questionnaire—or more specifically, many of its items—would need to be significantly adapted to reflect the particular context of Liechtenstein, such as its small size and unique characteristics.</p> <p>The current legislation requires further revisions to ensure it fully effectively address the social dimension of higher education.</p>

Actions	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Enhancing data collection processes	Improved decision-making and policy development	Increased inclusivity in higher education	2025-2027		
Evaluation of the Law on Scholarships	Identification of possible gaps and ensuring accessibility and equity	Increased access to higher education and greater equality and inclusion	2026-2027		

## Lithuania

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>In 2023, the National strategy and priorities for social dimension of higher education have been adopted.</p> <p>The strategy aims for inclusion, diversity and equity in higher education, consists of actions from integrating the social dimension into structured higher education processes, ensuring support for higher education institutions implementing institutional accessibility policies to revision of the student support system.</p> <p>Since 2024 additional entry route into higher education for underrepresented groups was created. Around 10% of state-funded study places are allocated to this entry route by the order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport.</p> <p>The route is open to applicants who meet the threshold requirements set by the higher education institution for all applicants and meeting at least one of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has short study cycle qualification;</li> <li>- have at least 24 months of practical experience and are applying for 6 EQF level study program;</li> <li>- is a cohabitant or a single person entitled to or receiving a social allowance under the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Cash Social Assistance for Poor Families and Single Residents;</li> <li>- has a severe or moderate disability (lower than 45% ability);</li> <li>- is under 25 years old and has been placed under guardianship (custody) or both parents (or the parent who was the only parent) are deceased.</li> </ul> <p>The student support system is set to revision. The support model for the renovation of dormitories to ensure housing accessibility for students from low socio-economic status is set to revision.</p> <p>All new buildings must include the criteria of universal design, while all infrastructure renewal projects must fulfil criteria related to accessibility if public money is to be awarded.</p>	<p>Systematic implementation of the National strategy and priorities for social dimension of higher education requires lots of resources and political support.</p> <p>Individualisation of studies has regulatory restrictions.</p> <p>Fully online provision of study programmes is not possible as at least 10% of first cycle and 5% of second cycle studies should take place face-to-face.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Analysis and data collection on effectiveness of the additional entry route made; adjustments	This would contribute to EHEA commitments on inclusion, diversity and equity in higher	Proportion of underrepresented groups as a share of all graduates	Due by 2027		

on the model made based on data.	education.	increased.			
Increase expenditure GDP per student	This action address sustainable financing in quality education, enabling the system to support inclusive and high-quality provision across all study cycles.	GDP per student reaches 36 percent of GDP per capita.	Due by 2030		
Create a legal financial support model for the renovation of dormitories	This would contribute to EHEA commitments on inclusion, diversity and equity in higher education.	The Support model for the renovation of dormitories created	Due by 2026		

## Luxembourg

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Luxembourg has legally established the key commitments of the social dimension, which includes quality assurance, recognition of prior learning, and the provision of flexible lifelong learning options. However, it is important to highlight that Luxembourg follows a bottom-up approach to the implementation of these commitments, where each higher education institution is responsible for integrating and executing the principles related to the social dimension.</p> <p>Additionally, the government plays an active role in ensuring equal opportunities for students through a range of support services. These include free academic guidance and counselling services available to students across all higher education institutions. Furthermore, Luxembourg established and offers access to a comprehensive grant system, which aims to financially support students in pursuing their studies both locally and internationally. This system is designed to take individual social circumstances into account, providing financial assistance to students from disadvantaged backgrounds to help alleviate the barriers to higher education.</p> <p>In line with the promotion of lifelong learning, Luxembourg recognises the importance of reskilling and upskilling throughout one's career to meet the dynamic needs of the job market. In this context, Luxembourg has launched initiatives to enhance the offer of continuing education in higher education, including the establishment of the Competence Centre at the University of Luxembourg. As mentioned above, the country has also initiated a pilot project to explore the feasibility of a national framework for micro-credentials, in alignment with the European approach on this topic.</p>	

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment (key)	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Revision of the law on financial aid for students - Structural adjustments and integration of social dimension criteria are under consideration	Social dimension Grants/mobility	Regulatory updates: - Increase in annual amount allocated for the mobility grant - Indexation will be applied	The draft law is planned for 2025, with its implementation targeted no later than the academic year 2026/27		

## Malta

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) has developed the Malta's National Strategic Action Plan for Further and Higher Education 2022-2030 with Pillar 6 focusing on Social Dimension: Widening Participation and Adult Learning. As a result, MFHEA has set up a dedicated Working Group (WG) to lead the co-design of a comprehensive policy approach on the social dimension in Malta.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch a review of the social dimension of FHE</li> <li>• Identify areas requiring urgent action</li> <li>• Unlock required resources from public and private sectors</li> <li>• Develop mechanisms for monitoring and securing the social dimension of FHE</li> </ul>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
<b>Principle 1: Strategic approach to the social dimension</b> Malta's National Strategic Action Plan for Further and Higher Education 2022 - 2030	Setting up a WG on Social Dimension	Sub-groups of the WG: report on SD measures and initiatives of HEIs (private and public)	2025-2027		
<b>Principle 2: Flexibility of higher education systems</b> Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Revision and Update of the RPL Guidelines	Updated RPL guidelines will accelerate qualification attainment, expand educational access, enhance workforce mobility, foster lifelong learning, optimize training resources, and promote social inclusion	2024- 2025		
<b>Principle 2: Flexibility of higher education systems-</b> Online teaching and learning	Update of the Online teaching and learning regulations	Enhancing the quality of online teaching and learning provision in Malta	2024-2026		

<b>Principle 2: Flexibility of higher education systems</b> Quality assurance procedures for Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNFIL)	Quality assurance guidelines for the VNFIL	Promoting a comprehensive lifelong learning framework where formal and non-formal education are equally valued, ensuring inclusive access to diverse learning opportunities that foster personal growth, social cohesion, and adaptability in a changing world	2024		
<b>Principle 2: Flexibility of HE systems- Use of Micro-credentials (Awards)</b>	Adoption of flexible options for education (public and private HEIs)	Awards (Micro-credentials): Report based on the use, stackability, etc of micro-credentials (awards)	2025-2027		
<b>Principle 3: The inclusiveness of the entire education system</b>	Report on current state of play for coordination between Secondary, Upper Secondary and Higher Education (including policy). Lifelong Learning, Adult Learning	Strategies: MFHEA, MEYR, DLLE. Preparation of an overview report	2030		
<b>Principle 4: Monitoring and data collection</b> 1. Participation in the EUROGRADUATE Survey 2. Graduate tracking	1. Collection of internationally comparable data 2. Change in a respective legislation	1. Internationally comparable data 2. Evidence-based improvement of SD of HE	2025-2027		
<b>Principle 4: monitoring and data collection</b> Participation in EUROSTUDENT 9 project	Reliable data collection: essential foundation for supporting evidence-based enhancements in the social dimension of higher education	The availability of comprehensive data on students' demographic composition, access, participation, mental health, and financial and housing situations will lead to deeper understanding of their transition into the labor market and enable the effective identification of vulnerable, disadvantaged, and underrepresented groups	2024-2027		

<b>Principle 5: Counselling and guidance-</b> collaboration with Euroguidance	Collaboration and cooperation with Euroguidance	More specific collaboration/cooperation with Euroguidance (monitoring and reporting on career guidance)	2025-2027		
<b>Principle 7 Inclusive Institutional Cultures:</b> preparing a report on systems that address how SD is reflected within the institutional missions and strategies	Prepare a report on systems that evaluate how HE institutions incorporate the social dimension into their missions/ strategies	Report from WG (and sub-WGs) on SD on 1. the training of staff and students 2. Inclusion of the SD in the mission/strategy of HEI	2025-2027		
<b>Principle 8 – International Mobility</b> International mobility programmes in HE should be structured and implemented in a way that foster diversity, equity and inclusion and should particularly foster participation of students and staff from vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds.	WG on mobility: data collection (support blended mobility, etc)	Report: International mobility programmes in HE shall be structured and implemented to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, with a particular focus on increasing participation from students and staff from vulnerable, disadvantaged, or underrepresented backgrounds.			
<b>Principle 9 – Community Engagement</b> Community stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, cultural organisations, other relevant stakeholders) should be able to meaningfully engage with HE actors through open dialogue	WG on SD	Throughout the lifecycle of the WG on SD, relevant stakeholders will have the opportunity to engage in open dialogue, fostering the development of partnerships that effectively address social and democratic challenges	2025-2027		

<p><b>Principle 10- Policy dialogue</b> Initiate a policy dialogue with HEIs and relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>WG on SD</p>	<p>Summary report on the discussion of principles and guidelines for the implementation of SD and how it can be effectively translated and implemented at both the national system and institutional levels.</p>	<p>2025-2027</p>		
<p><b>Principle 10- Policy dialogue:</b> International level</p>	<p>Dialogue on the Principles and Guidelines with the international stakeholders</p>	<p>Participation in PLA's (attending TPG D meetings). Participation in the INSPIRE project</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>		

## Netherlands

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>The Netherlands has a longstanding tradition of Social Dimension (SD) policies in Higher Education, in line with Bologna commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2020, the National Action Plan for Diverse and Inclusive Higher Education and Research (DIHOO) was developed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the field.</li> <li>• The ministry further has an action plan for improving social safety, stimulating HEI's to take their responsibility on this topic.</li> <li>• However, we consider SD policies primarily within the institutional autonomy of HEI's and generally provide lump-sum funding to HEI's facilitating them to meet their social responsibilities; only occasionally do we provide additional subsidies for specific projects.</li> <li>• It is up to institutions themselves how they want to shape their D&amp;I policy, taking into account the ambitions from the action plan DIHOO.</li> <li>• HEI policies focus on accessibility, such as financial accessibility, removing bias in selection, barriers to progression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research shows that students with a migration background and first-generation students are less likely to pass selection procedures for numerus fixus programmes.</li> <li>• In recent years, there has been much attention from the field for undesirable effects in selection due to which awareness and knowledge on the issue has grown. The next step is to translate this knowledge into practice and policy.</li> <li>• Specific societal groups often desire specific policies for targeted groups, while we tend work with generic policies.</li> </ul>

## Norway

	Current situation	Key challenges			
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>The social dimension policy is in general mainstreamed in overarching legislation.</p> <p>The requirement for universal design and individual accommodations, as outlined in the Higher Education Act, is acknowledged and followed by the institutions</p>	<p>The main challenge relates to gender inequalities in the HE system, with 60 % of students being female. There are also challenges related to diversity in recruitment to Professional Studies.</p> <p>We observe that there is an increased number and new types of accommodation needs that institutions are facing. This is a challenge that Norwegian institutions need to continue to work on, to ensure that students receive sufficient and reasonable accommodations.</p>			
Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
The Ministry will continue to follow up on our statutory provisions on learning environments and inclusion in the governance dialogue with HE institutions.	Clarification of expectations and requirements the ministries expect HE institutions to take.	More awareness and continuous work.			
Follow up on the white Paper on Professional education throughout the country (2024).	Follow up on the proposed measures that address more equality and diversity in professional education.	More awareness about diverse recruitment to professional education programs.			
The Mandate for the Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research (KIF) will also include HE from 2026-2029.	The KIF committee works both to provide relevant knowledge about barriers and effective measures, and to raise awareness among institutions through, among other things, institutional visits. The committee will include issues related to equality and diversity in higher education in the next committee period 2025 - 2029.	The expected outcome of the KIF committee's work is an increased understanding of the challenges and effective measures to strengthen gender balance and diversity in higher education, with an improved gender balance in higher education as a result.	From 2026		

## Poland

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment (key)	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Data collection: analysis of the existing data sources and quality, establishment of new data collection mechanisms, development of new mechanisms of data analysis (through the establishment of a permanent research team)	Implementation of the Principles for Social Dimension of Higher Education (in particular Principles 1 and 4).	Better understanding of the existing data sources, establishment of new data collection mechanisms, better use of data to inform decisions.	By the end of 2026.		
Inclusive dialogue: a series of events and online material involving the HE community in discussing different aspects of the social dimension of higher education (conferences, workshops, etc.)	Implementation of the Principles for Social Dimension of Higher Education (in particular Principles 1, 9 and 10).	Better and more common understanding and appreciation of the social dimension in the HE community; new ideas of how to implement the principles; creation of an environment which facilitates the implementation of the principles.	By the end of 2026.		

## Portugal

Commitment Area	Action ID	Action Description	Contribution to Commitment / Justification	Expected Outcome(s)
Social Dimension of HE	SD-1	Implement specific social support mechanisms targeting vulnerable and under-represented student groups.	Promotes equal opportunities, equity, and inclusion; Combats exclusion; Supports academic success for all students.	Increased access, participation, and completion rates for under-represented groups; Reduced inequalities.
	SD-2	Establish a system for collecting, analyzing, and publishing disaggregated data on equity in HE access, participation, and completion.	Provides evidence base for effective equity policies; Allows monitoring of progress and identification of persistent gaps.	Availability of reliable, disaggregated data on social dimension indicators.
	SD-3	Create specific, structured support mechanisms for displaced students and students with refugee status.	Addresses the specific needs of students in emergency/vulnerable situations, facilitating integration and academic continuation.	Operational and standardized support procedures for displaced/refugee students nationwide.
	SD-4	Develop and implement training programmes on inclusive pedagogies and diversity awareness for academic and technical staff.	Enhances the capacity of HEIs to provide an inclusive learning environment for diverse student populations.	Increased use of inclusive teaching practices; More welcoming and supportive institutional culture.
	SD-5	Develop and implement affirmative action policies/measures to address persistent inequalities (where appropriate and legally sound).	Complements general support measures by actively targeting structural barriers faced by specific under-represented groups.	Progress towards fairer representation of diverse groups in HE.

## Republic of Moldova

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>According to the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova No. 152/2014, citizens, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, mother tongue, religion or disability, are guaranteed access to higher education: to places financed from the state budget, within the limits set annually by the Government; and to places with tuition fees, paid by individuals or legal entities.</p> <p>Over the past few years, the Ministry of Education and Research has taken concrete steps to ensure access to higher education for orphans, children with disabilities, children of Roma origin, etc.</p> <p>Higher education in the Republic of Moldova can be accessed either on a state funded position or on a tuition fee position. Yearly, the Government offers around 5000 state funded places, distributed to the 6 wider professional fields, according to the requirements of the labour market and the requests from public higher education institutions.</p> <p>Universities have applied different managerial and financial strategies regarding renovation living and auxiliary spaces in student dormitories such as current and capital repairs in-house with the attraction of students and collaborators, or economic agents specialized in repairs or construction. Financial means in this sense were identified from state budget sources, own or from the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure access to higher education for orphans, children with disabilities, children of Roma origin, etc.</li> <li>• To continue investment in the infrastructure of higher education institutions and dormitories;</li> <li>• Reconceptualizing scholarship in higher education to respond to tackling the socio-economic challenges of students;</li> <li>• Revised accommodation fees in the dormitories of public institutions of higher education.</li> </ul>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
1. Implementation of the of subprojects through the Higher Education Improvement Program for systemic interventions to support the Government's efforts for an improved, more efficient, more accessible and better-quality higher	Public authorities should provide sufficient and sustainable funding and financial autonomy to higher education institutions enabling them to build adequate capacity to embrace diversity and contribute to equity and inclusion in higher education; Measuring progress in the implementation of the Principles and	Investment in the infrastructure of higher education institutions (laboratories, learning premises with furniture, ICT equipment, teaching materials and/or specialized equipment etc.);	2025-2027	yes	

education system	Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA.	Renovation of the student dormitories;			
2. Development of the Methodology regarding the stability of the minimum ceiling of study fees in higher education	Together with stakeholders and communities, commit to tackling the socio-economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living and difficulty to access student housing, that have impacted access to higher education and student life as a whole	Elaboration of the Methodology regarding the establishment of the minimum ceiling of study fees in higher education to ensure access to higher education	2025	yes	
3. Reconceptualizing scholarship in higher education to respond to tackling the socio-economic challenges of students	Together with stakeholders and communities, commit to tackling the socio-economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living and difficulty to access student housing, that have impacted access to higher education and student life as a whole.	Reconceptualizing scholarship in higher education to respond to tackling the socio-economic challenges of students	2025	yes	
4. Elaboration of the Regulation regarding the accommodation fees in the dormitories of public institutions of higher education	Together with stakeholders and communities, commit to tackling the socio-economic challenges, such as the rising cost of living and difficulty to access student housing, that have impacted access to higher education and student life as a whole.	Revised accommodation fees in the dormitories of public institutions of higher education to ensure access to higher education and student life as a whole	2025-2026	yes	
5. Ensuring the access of young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities to higher education through the development and implementation of the methodological framework for inclusion at this level	Public authorities should help higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity to respond to the needs of a more diverse student and staff body and create inclusive learning environments and inclusive institutional cultures	Ensuring the access of young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities to higher education through the development and implementation of the methodological framework for inclusion	permanent	yes	

## Romania

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Ministry of Education and Research implements measures to facilitate the access to higher education for learners from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and to ensure an equitable and inclusive environment in higher education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social scholarships funded from the state budget.</li> <li>• counselling services offered by career counselling and guidance centres in higher education institutions.</li> <li>• inclusive educational services for making higher education accessible to persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• allocation of state-funded places dedicated to disadvantaged categories (persons with special educational needs/disabilities, persons coming from the social protection system, Roma candidates, graduates of high schools located in rural areas).</li> <li>• subsidies for transportation, subsidies for accommodation, other subsidies covering indirect costs of studies.</li> </ul> <p>The Higher Education Law no. 199/2023 has introduced new measures to foster the social dimension of higher education, including the establishment of the National Program for Reducing University Dropout, financed through the Ministry of Education's budget. This program aims to increase student retention in higher education by supporting the transition from high school to university, funding career-counselling centres, and implementing early warning systems for learners in academic risk. The law also foresees the development of policies for students' reintegration, remedial education, and institutional engagement in dropout prevention.</p> <p>Based on the university autonomy, higher education institutions develop and adopt their own strategy regarding the inclusion and accessibility in higher education for persons with disabilities/special educational needs.</p> <p>Romania has established several mechanisms to monitor progress in higher education, primarily through national reporting. The monitoring includes: Annual Reports on the State of Higher Education, The National Student Register (RMU), ANS Platform - The National Platform for Collecting Statistical Data, as well as participating in the EUROSTUDENT study.</p> <p>According to the law, higher education institutions are implementing measures to make academic mobility opportunities accessible to students at risk, students with disabilities and non-traditional students.</p>	<p>Despite the applied measures, the university dropout remains high especially among students from vulnerable groups, such as those from families with a low level of education or with economic difficulties.</p> <p>The lack of an early warning mechanism exacerbates the risk of dropping out, as students do not receive the necessary help at the right time.</p> <p>More efforts have to be carried out to train and support academic staff in adopting inclusive teaching practices.</p>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Implementing the National Plan for Reducing University Dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-widening access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies, in particular for learners coming from underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups;</li> <li>-decreasing the number of students who dropout the university education;</li> <li>-sustainable funding to higher education institutions enabling them to build adequate capacity to contribute to equity and inclusion in higher education;</li> <li>- support academic staff in adopting inclusive teaching practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- development of an early warning mechanism for the risk of dropout at the national level;</li> <li>- development of a dynamic mechanism for monitoring university dropout;</li> <li>-anonymised data regularly published on students' socioeconomic backgrounds, dropout rates, and labour market outcomes to inform evidence-based policymaking;</li> <li>- development of a set of good practices/models of measures to reduce university dropout;</li> <li>- development of policy analyses on improving the legislative framework in order to combat the university dropout;</li> <li>- ensuring adequate funding to support the implementation of measures to reduce dropout</li> </ul>	2027		
Monitoring the implementation of the measures established by ministerial order regarding the access of persons with disabilities to higher education	<p>Development of inclusive educational services to make higher education accessible to persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Monitoring the participation and progress of students with disabilities in higher education</p>	The development and implementation by higher education institutions of measures regarding the inclusion and accessibility of higher education for persons with disabilities/special educational needs	2027 (annually)		

Implementing the "First Student in the Family" Programme	Enhancement of counselling and guidance services with special regard to transitions between different educational levels, educational institutions and into the labour market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- development of a mechanism to identify and monitor students' needs within Career Counselling and Guidance Centres;</li> <li>- implementing remedial programs for learners with learning difficulties;</li> <li>- purchasing IT equipment and developing educational tools</li> </ul>	2027		
Improve the dataset of indicators to be reported at national level by higher education institutions regarding the student population characteristics	It will contribute to the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA (Principles 4: Reliable data is a necessary precondition for an evidence-based improvement of the social dimension of higher education)	Interoperable registries of data regarding student population characteristics	2026		
Support the access and participation of students in mobilities, especially for students from underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups	Fostering participation in mobilities of students from vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds.	Increasing the number of students with fewer opportunities participating in ERASMUS+ international mobilities	2027		
Analysing the activity of the Career Counselling and Guidance Centres in higher education institutions and developing recommendations in order to improve their functioning	Developing the activities of Career Counselling and Guidance Centres in higher education institutions in order to address students' needs, especially of those from underrepresented, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups	<p>Increasing the number of students accessing the counselling services offered by the centres.</p> <p>Increasing the quality of activities organised by the counselling centres</p>	2027		

## Slovak Republic

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	Multiple structures and policies are already in place to support inclusion in HE (scholarships, measures for students with specific needs etc.). The strategic document for HE for 2023-2027 foresees introduction of a new concept of support measures for all students at all HEIs based on their distinct needs (not a diagnosis). New funding has been launched to expand provision of mental health at HEIs. Analyses and data gathering is taking place to inform further policy design and implementation.	Expanding representation of non-traditional students, also in the light of disparities in outcomes that already start forming at lower levels of education; building consensus and identifying effective interventions; designing new system of comprehensive student support at HEIs and securing sustainable funding; continuous data collection and monitoring.

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
4.1 Developing a comprehensive system and funding mechanism of support / counselling services and measures for HEIs to address various student needs, as envisioned the Slovak HEIs strategy (The Slovak Ministry's long- term plan 2023-2027)	Effective and available provision of counselling services (principle on counselling and guidance)	Increasing representativeness of student population at HEIs, reducing drop-out	2026- 2027		
4.2 Implementing funding call for HEIs to provide mental health services, staff training and methodological resources on topics such as inclusive teaching, as well as helping to increase the availability of information on social support, promoting social support activities and helping with student integration, for example through peer support called Buddies.	Effective and available provision of counselling services (principle on counselling and guidance), principle on inclusive institutional culture (staff training)	Improving student mental health, reducing drop-out	2025-2027		-
4.3 Developing and publishing national strategy on social dimension of higher education, including corresponding data gathering and	Principle on strategic approach and on	Alignment of stakeholders on the importance of social	by the end of 2027		

target setting (or integrating these topics into other relevant education strategy documents of the Ministry of Education)	monitoring and data collection	dimension, starting point for data monitoring and evaluation of policies			
4.4 Strengthening connections between HE and lower levels of education, incl. outreach to potential students with information about available support at HEIs	Principle on the inclusiveness of the entire education system	Increasing representation of non-traditional students at HEIs	2025-2027		
4.5 Analysis and development of investment plans to remove online barriers and physical barriers in the higher education institution	Principle on the inclusiveness of the entire education system	Clear plan to guide investments into higher accessibility of HEIs	2025- 2026		
4.6 Management of a national stakeholder working group, active participation in international events and forums.	Principle on policy dialogue	Stakeholder alignment and dialogue; inputs for development of effective policy measures in the social dimension	2024- 2027		
From Other Bologna Process commitments: 6.8 Analysis of wellbeing and career development needs of HEI staff and development of concrete measures (incl. through legislative changes)	Commitment to social dimension - principle on counselling and guidance (includes staff); high quality teaching and learning	List of ideas and changes to implement to support HEI staff	2025		

## Slovenia

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>QA agencies should monitor HEI Strategies on the Social Dimension: Slovenia does not currently require HEIs to systematically integrate social dimension (SD) policies into their internal QA processes, and the national QA agency does not explicitly evaluate these strategies (BPIR 2024 ref.: 4.2)</p> <p>Inclusive Learning Environment and Institutional Culture: Slovenia still has opportunities to further develop an inclusive learning environment and institutional culture at HEIs. Although relevant accessibility standards are already embedded in external QA regulations, there is no formal requirement for HEIs to integrate inclusivity into their institutional missions, nor is there widely developed institutional support for DEI (BPIR 2024 ref.: 4.14)</p> <p>Support for Staff Training on Equity, Inclusion, and</p>	<p>As part of the upcoming revision of regulations following the revision of the HE Act, the QA agency will consult with key stakeholders to determine whether and how monitoring of HEIs' SD strategies should be integrated into external QA evaluations to improve diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). The challenge will be to reach a consensus on the best option. The QA agency expects to propose this as an additional standard of excellence within the assessment of strategic planning and HEI governance which would also ensure systematic monitoring of the standard's uptake.</p> <p>The revision of the HE Act will include expanded provisions on safe study environments, as well as rights and obligations of students with special needs and special status. As part of the upcoming revision of QA regulations, the national QA agency will consult stakeholders to determine how inclusivity can be best integrated into institutional missions. A possible approach under consideration is based on a standard of excellence, which would allow inclusivity to be evaluated as part of strategic planning and institutional governance. Additionally, Slovenia will aim to use EU cohesion funds (CF) to help HEIs further develop their support environments, including services for students with special needs and training for staff on DEI. After the development stage, the support environment at public HEIs would transition to long-term financing from lump sum financial resources. Therefore, several conditions will have to be met and milestones reached for impactful progress in this area.</p> <p>Slovenia will provide targeted financial support through CF to assist HEIs in developing DEI training and support initiatives for staff. Additionally, the interim revision of the National Programme on Higher Education for 2030 (NPHE30) will consider introducing formal recommendations encouraging HEIs to implement DEI staff</p>

	<p>Diversity: There are no formal requirements, recommendations, or targeted financial support mechanisms for training HEI staff on DEI (BPIR 2024 ref.: 4.13)</p> <p>Participants in policy dialogue should implement the principles and guidelines on the social dimension, and the corresponding policy dialogue on implementation of principles and guidelines: Slovenia currently lacks a specific strategy on SD and a coherent formal policy dialogue on the implementation of the SD (BPIR 2024 ref.: 4.19 and 4.20)</p>	<p>training as part of their strategies for human resource and institutional development. The impact of this action will strongly depend both on the compromise of key stakeholders when revising NPHE30, as well as on the negotiated provisions of the public call for the allocation of CF.</p> <p>The interim revision of NPHE30 will consider introducing the development of a special SD strategy, based on the EHEA Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension. This process would formally engage all relevant stakeholders for a comprehensive policy dialogue that could build on the achievements of the existing bodies like the Council for Student Issues of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. The strategy would also serve as a foundation for policy developments in the SD of higher education. Slovenia will furthermore explore the opportunities to strengthen participation in international peer-learning activities on SD policies. In this aspect, the key challenge lies in successful organisation and cooperation of relevant stakeholders to achieve anticipated results.</p>
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Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
The national QA agency consults with key stakeholders to determine whether and how monitoring of HEIs' SD strategies should be integrated into external QA evaluations to improve DEI	4.2: Strategic commitment to the social dimension of higher education: requirement for quality assurance agencies to monitor HEIs – full compliance	Amended accreditation and evaluation criteria of the QA agency	March 2026		
1) Expand legal provisions on safe study environments, as well	4.14: Inclusive learning environment and	1) Revised HE Act	1) September 2025		

<p>as rights and obligations of students with special needs and special status</p> <p>2) The national QA agency in cooperation with stakeholders considers revising accreditation criteria to ensure that HEIs formally embed inclusivity in their institutional missions</p> <p>3) Financial support to develop support environments at HEIs in the field of DEI</p>	<p>institutional culture – of considerable improvement of compliance</p>	<p>2) Amended accreditation and evaluation criteria of the national QA agency</p> <p>3) Public call to HEIs for projects: setting up a comprehensive support environment for successful study (CF)</p>	<p>2) March 2026</p> <p>3) During 2025–2028</p>		
<p>1) Targeted financial support through CF to assist HEIs in developing DEI training and support initiatives for staff</p> <p>2) During the revision of NPHE30 consider introducing formal recommendations encouraging HEIs to implement DEI staff training as part of their strategies for human resource and institutional development</p>	<p>4.13: Support to HEIs for staff training on equity, inclusion and diversity – full compliance</p>	<p>1) Public call to HEIs for projects: setting up a comprehensive support environment for successful study (CF)</p> <p>2) Revised NPHE30</p>	<p>1) During 2025–2028</p> <p>2) Until 2026</p>		
<p>1) Consider introducing the development of a special SD strategy based on formal engagement of all relevant stakeholders for a comprehensive policy dialogue</p> <p>2) Explore opportunities to strengthen participation in international peer-learning activities on SD policies</p>	<p>4.19: Participants in policy dialogue to implement the principles and guidelines on the social dimension – full compliance</p> <p>4.20: Policy dialogue on implementation of principles and guidelines – full compliance</p>	<p>1) Revised NPHE30 with a deadline to prepare a special SD strategy</p>	<p>1) Until 2026 for NPHE30 revision, and 2027 for SD strategy and corresponding activities</p>		

## Spain

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	As previously mentioned, Spain joined the EQPR initiative in January 2025. There are Ministerial Orders for recognition of refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine to facilitate their processes of recognition	A key challenge regarding the social dimension of HE is represented by the current housing situation, where rising prices in practically all the cities that host university students make it difficult for students to find adequate accommodation, thus limiting equitable access to university programmes and the overall mobility of students.

### Progress to be achieved by 2027:

- To seek full implementation of the EQPR and get universities involved in this initiative with the possible elaboration of a common protocol for refugees.
- To create a national repository where micro-credentials offered by universities are registered.
- To create a collaborative community for the exchange of information among stakeholders of micro-credentials.
- To issue new general measures for qualifications in the fields of STEMS by the “CATHYDE” in collaboration with ANECA
- To improve housing conditions for university students (TBC)

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved in 2027 (Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Reform of the Royal Decree 905/2025 expanding monitoring and data collection in higher education ( <a href="https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2025/10/07/905">https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2025/10/07/905</a> )	The collection of data will be expanded beyond gender and age after a comprehensive reform: new Royal Decree 905/2025 (approved in October 2025)	Following the entry into force of Royal Decree 905/2025, the Integrated University Information System (SIIU) will include detailed information on students enrolled and graduated in/from official degree programmes and lifelong learning programmes, including variables such as sex, age, nationality, habitual residence and residence during the period of study, as well as the route of access and admission to university. In addition, it will record academic results, tuition fees,	2025-2027		

		scholarships and grants from both public administrations and universities, research and knowledge transfer activities, data on university staff (workforce size, professional characteristics, accreditations and teaching workload), facilities and equipment, academic programmes offered and available places, annual accounts and funding sources, national and international mobility, doctoral theses defended, admission processes and entrance exams, as well as information on foreign institutions operating in Spain. All of this will be collected and compiled with the necessary level of disaggregation to enable longitudinal analyses and ensure the monitoring of quality indicators within the Spanish university system.			
Reform of the Royal Decree 640/2021 for the creation and recognition of universities in the Spanish University System ( <a href="https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2021/10/07/905">https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2021/10/07/905</a> )	This legal reform was approved in October 2025. The new Royal Decree 905/2025 of creation, recognition and authorisation of universities strengthens the social mission of Spain's university system by ensuring that new universities (and new degrees) are created only when they genuinely respond to public needs and contribute to equal opportunities, employability and social and territorial interests. It also mandates that new universities must provide accommodation for at least 10% of the students that they are expected to enrol. Taken together, these measures reinforce the idea of universities	This measure aims at ensuring that the current housing problems of Spanish students ameliorate. One of its most important measures is the new student-housing requirement: every newly created university must provide residential places for at least 10% of its expected student body by its third year of activity. The aim is to make it easier for students to move between regions and to reduce the housing-related inequalities that often limit access to higher education. The decree also introduces a stronger link between higher education planning and social needs. Any new university or degree programme must demonstrate its relevance in terms of public demand, employability, territorial development and social interest. In other words, the higher education offer must not only be academically	2025-2027		

	as a public good: institutions that should guarantee quality, equity and meaningful contributions to society.	valid but also socially useful and aligned with real societal challenges.			
Increase and improvement of the scheme for public scholarship for higher education	Every year, a Royal Decree signed in conjunction by the Ministry of Science, Innovation, and Universities and the Ministry of Education establishes the income thresholds of scholarship recipients, the amounts of these scholarships, and the deadline for application. These three aspects of the scholarship system have been improved since 2024. The future Royal Decrees establishing the parameters for scholarships, currently under discussion, will introduce significant improvements aimed at strengthening equity and adapting the system to the real needs of students. It will expand access to income and residence grants for part-time students, updating family wealth thresholds, making requirements for students with disabilities more flexible, and modifying the	It is expected that these measures contribute to improving the equity in access to higher education. As for the draft Royal Decree establishing the income and family wealth thresholds and the amounts of scholarships and study grants for 2026-2027: - Among the most relevant measures is the extension of access to income-related and residence-related grants for students from universities and higher arts institutions enrolled part-time with between 48 and 59 credits. The decree also updates family asset/wealth thresholds, in line with recent reforms to income thresholds, and provides greater flexibility in course-load requirements for students with disabilities between 25% and 64%. - The text further incorporates the necessary amendments to Royal Decree 1721/2007 to integrate these improvements, adjust the assessment of university entrance grades, update the distribution of competences between administrations, and strengthen the economic regulation of grants. Together, these measures	2024-2027		

	overall scholarship framework to make it more flexible, coherent, inclusive and student-centred.	consolidate a more inclusive, accessible, and student-centred scholarship system.			
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## Sweden

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>Chapter 1, Section 5 of The Swedish Higher Education Act<sup>6</sup> states that the HEIs are responsible for promoting sustainable development to assure for present and future generations a sound and healthy environment, economic and social welfare, and justice.</p> <p><b>UKÄ's work with Principle 4</b> on monitoring and data collection.</p> <p>The Student Mirror (a national student- and doctoral student survey) has been given semi-regularly over the last decade. Previous surveys were conducted in 2024, 2021 and 2016. Aside from general questions regarding students' study situation and satisfaction, the surveys have typically also had specific themes, for example studying during the pandemic in 2021 and adjustments for special needs students in 2024. The survey serves as an important basis for further analysis by UKÄ. The survey is currently being developed with the aim of increasing comparability between surveys over longer periods of time, as well as conducting them more regularly</p> <p><b>Widening participation/recruitment</b> – UKÄ has conducted an evaluation at the Swedish HEIs to gain a picture at a national level of how higher education institutions work with the issue of widening participation to contribute to knowledge and development in the area.</p>	<p>There is no need to change national legislation as the social dimension is mainstreamed in the higher education sector through legislation.</p> <p>One challenge for UKÄ is the need for further work on coordinating the input of all interested parties regarding the Social Dimension (Ministry, authorities, HEIs etc).</p> <p>Continuing to develop monitoring and data collection.</p> <p>Continue to work with widening participation and inclusiveness in higher education.</p>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/>

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
Peer learning – UKÄ hosts Staff Exchange Week 2025 and 2027 (Social dimension and QA).	Sharing of knowledge among peers (within QA-agencies) to learn from each other on implementing Social Dimension in the quality assurance system.	Gained knowledge and expertise of Social Dimension.	2025 and 2027		
ESG revision – Monitor the possible implementation of Social Dimension in the ESG.			2024-2026		
UKÄ's work with Principle 3 on the inclusiveness of the entire education system. Widening participation/recruitment	UKÄ has conducted a thematic evaluation at the Swedish HEIs to gain a picture at a national level of how higher education institutions work with the issue of widening participation to contribute to knowledge and development in the area.	Implementation of the knowledge gained from thematic evaluation and share this knowledge on the situation in Sweden.			
	UKÄ has recently revised its process for student union reports for its institutional reviews, with the aim of providing more support to student unions and to make writing the report less cumbersome and time consuming for the student unions.	Improvement of the student union report's value for UKÄ's assessors and easing of the burdens for its authors at the student unions.	2023-2024		
UKÄ's work with Principle 7 on inclusive institutional culture	UKÄ has recently revised its contract for student recruitment with SFS (the national union of students) to improve student recruitment for UKÄ's evaluations	Improvement of the process of student recruitment to be more effective. Facilitation of SFS the proper conditions for SFS in their job with recruiting student assessors.	2025-2026		

UKÄ's work on principle 8 on international mobility	UKÄ is currently undertaking a project analysing HEI language policies and how they are applied, to gain an understanding of how HEIs work to include non-Swedish speaking staff and students.	To gain insight into how non-Swedish speaking staff and students are given opportunities to participate in HEI governance, and how non-Swedish speaking students and doctoral students are given opportunities to exercise their student influence.	2025		
	UKÄ is currently revising its work with the student perspective to increase internal coordination and to create new vectors of communication with students to ensure that their needs are met. This is done through various activities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An annual conference for student unions with the aim of creating a forum for information exchange and student influence.</li> <li>b. A guide to the national quality assurance system for students and student unions with the aim of ensuring they are familiar with the system and their role in it.</li> <li>c. Regularly occurring workshops to help student unions write student union reports during institutional reviews.</li> </ul>	Improvement of UKÄ's connection to the national student body. Ensure that students are aware of their rights, the national quality assurance system and their place in it and ensure that they are given the necessary support to participate.	2023-202		
UKÄ's work with Principle 4 on monitoring and data collection.	UKÄ conducts a semi-regular national survey of students and doctoral students in Sweden to gain an understanding of their study situation, which challenges they face	Improved knowledge about the challenges facing the student population.			

	and their level of satisfaction with their studies.				
UKÄ's work with Principle 7 on inclusive institutional culture.	UKÄ is conducting a project focusing on support for special needs students in higher education, with special focus on analysing and monitoring the needs and challenges of disabled and special needs students and creating a system that will allow continual updates of the situation of special needs students.	Knowledge implementation on the support for special needs students at various stages of their education and create a system for follow-up.	2021-2031		
Participate in TPG D working groups and/or projects addressing the revision of the ESG concerning the social dimension.	Contribute to flexible, enhancement-oriented and fit-for-purpose quality assurance that is relevant across the EHEA.	Establishment of a national QA framework that is flexible, accurate, and resource-efficient for HEIs as well as UKÄ regarding the social dimension.	2024-2027		

## Switzerland

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p><b>Participation</b> of all representative groups of the higher education institutions, in particular students, mid-level faculty staff, professors and administrative and technical staff, in developing quality assurance systems as well as the promotion of <b>equal opportunities</b> and gender equality for staff and students are key elements for accreditation in Switzerland (<a href="#">HEdA Accreditation Ordinance</a>).</p> <p>Since 2000, the Confederation has been supporting financially coordinated projects that aim to promote and implement equal opportunities at higher education institutions.</p> <p>Moreover, according to the <a href="#">Higher Education Act, HedA</a>, there is one delegate representing the interests of students, one delegate representing the interests of mid-level faculty and one delegate representing the interests of professors participating in an advisory capacity in the meetings of the Swiss Conference of Higher Education institutions, the highest body for higher education policy.</p>	<p>The implementation of these requirements lies with the higher education institutions.</p>

## Türkiye

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic commitment to the social dimension of higher education: top-level targeted strategies, action plans and measures (Top-level strategies addressing the social dimension for both students and academic staff)</li> <li>• Strategic commitment to the social dimension of higher education (Quality assurance agencies are required to monitor HEI strategies on the social dimension)</li> <li>• Recognition of prior learning in accessing and for the fulfilment of first-cycle higher education study programs (RPL can contribute to the fulfilment of first cycle study programs in some HEIs)</li> <li>• Enabling flexible modes of lifelong learning in higher education (Enabling flexible modes of lifelong learning in higher education through two of the four mentioned elements.)</li> <li>• Top-level coordination structures and mechanisms between different levels of education ( Top-level coordination structures or mechanisms between different levels of education, with a mandate including questions related to diversity, equity and inclusion)</li> <li>• Facilitating synergies for an inclusive lifelong learning (3 out of 4 commitments are fulfilled)</li> <li>• Monitoring student characteristics other than age and gender at higher education (HE) entry, at the completion of the first cycle, and at the end of the first year of the first cycle (Monitoring student characteristics at HE entry, at completion of the first cycle and at the end of the first year of the first cycle)</li> <li>• Monitoring and data collection (Monitoring and data collection in higher education by the following four means)</li> <li>• Legal requirement for free guidance and counselling services for actual and/or potential students in higher education (Legal requirement for free psychological counselling in higher education institutions)</li> <li>• Effective guidance and counselling services (Three of the four mentioned elements are implemented)</li> <li>• Grants awarded in the first cycle of higher education (Need-based grants for &lt;10% of students)</li> <li>• Sustainable funding for equity, inclusion and diversity in higher education (Three of the four mentioned elements are implemented)</li> <li>• Support to higher education institutions (HEIs) for staff training on equity, inclusion and diversity (Top-level requirement or recommendation to provide training to staff on equity, inclusion and diversity)</li> <li>• Inclusive learning environment and institutional culture (Three of the four mentioned elements are</li> </ul>	

	<p>implemented)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top-level measures supporting vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented students in international learning mobility (Top-level recommendations/incentives to HEIs &amp; Top-level measurable targets)</li> <li>• Supporting vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented groups of students and staff in participating in international mobility (4 out of 4 commitments are fulfilled)</li> <li>• Top-level funding of higher education institutions (HEIs) for community engagement activities (Additional funding available to HEIs for community engagement activities &amp; HEIs able to use general funding for community engagement activities)</li> <li>• External quality assurance requirements for community engagement activities (External quality assurance of community engagement activities is required)</li> <li>• Participants in policy dialogue to implement the principles and guidelines on the social dimension (HEIs involved in policy dialogue, students involved in policy dialogue &amp; staff involved in policy dialogue)</li> <li>• Policy dialogue on implementation of principles and guidelines (Three of the four mentioned elements are implemented.)</li> </ul>	
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## United Kingdom

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
The Office for Students (England) requires HE providers to produce an access and participation plan if it charges fees above a given level for certain courses and students. These plans set out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups.	Supports diverse student populations and promotes equity.	Increased participation from underrepresented groups.	Ongoing		
From September 2026, learners in England will be able to apply for lifelong learning entitlement (LLE) funding for the first time for courses and modules starting from January 2027 onwards.	Encourages continuous education and skill development.	The LLE will allow people to develop new skills and gain new qualifications at a time that is right for them.	September 2026		

## United Kingdom – Scotland

	Current situation	Key challenges
<b>Social Dimension of HE</b>	<p>The Commission on Widening Access to Higher Education in Scotland concluded with their Blueprint for Fairness (2016) which included recommendations to progress equality of access to higher education for people from socio-economically deprived areas. All recommendations were accepted by Scottish Government, including the creation of an independent Commissioner for Fair Access. As part of the progression of the recommendations, the Scottish Framework for Fair Access was launched by the Commissioner in 2019. The Framework has been developed to help access practitioners to plan and evaluate new ways of helping people from disadvantaged backgrounds access higher education. The Commissioner for Fair Access publishes an annual report, the most recent report can be found <a href="#">here</a>. The Scottish Government’s response to the recommendations set out in the report, can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal requirement for public authorities and organisations carrying out public functions in England, Wales and Scotland. Scotland’s universities and colleges fall within the definition of public organisations and must adhere to the PSED, as outlined in Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).</p> <p>In 2023, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) identified persistent inequalities in Scotland’s tertiary education system and asked institutions to address them by contributing to a set of National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) as part of the PSED. The full list of the NEOs can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	

Action	Contribution of the action to the implementation of the (key) commitment	Expected outcome(s)	Timeline	Achieved by 2027(Yes/No/Partially)	Provide short explanation
<p>The Commission for Widening Access developed a series of milestones to improve access to improve access to higher education for those from socio-deprived backgrounds. The overall target is that, by 2030, students from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland will represent 20% of Scottish entrants to full-time first degree courses at university. The shorthand for this group is SIMD20. The target is to be met via a series of milestones, including a 2026 milestone of 18%.</p>	<p>Meeting these targets will deliver equality of access for those from socio-deprived backgrounds.</p>	<p>Continued engagement across the Further and Higher Education sectors, together with a series of interventions and targeted activities, are designed to meet the 2030 target.</p>	<p>The outcomes of the activities will be recorded in official statistics on intake for AY 2030/31.</p>		