

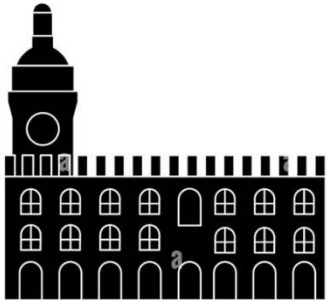
# **MONITORING PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN THE EHEA**

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**Daniela Crăciun – CHEPS, University of Twente**

Peer Learning Activity -

Bucharest, 24.02.2026



**BOLOGNA**

1999

2001

2018



*"As the Bologna Declaration sets out, Ministers  
(...) supported the idea that higher education  
should be considered a public good and is and will  
remain a public responsibility"*

(Prague Communiqué, 2001, p.1)

Academic  
freedom

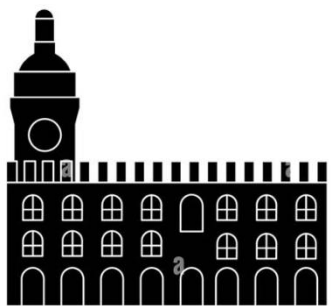
Institutional  
autonomy

Participation of  
students & staff  
in governance

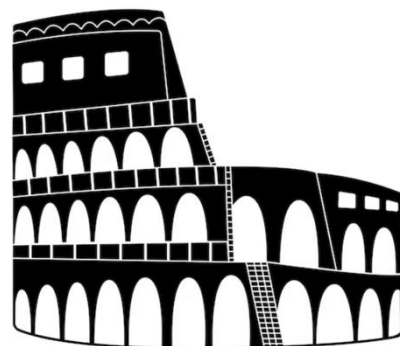
Academic  
integrity

Responsibility  
*of* HE

Responsibility  
*for* HE



**BOLOGNA**



ROME

1999

**2001**

2018

2020

2024



**PRAGUE**



**PARIS**



**TIRANA**

*"As the Bologna Declaration sets out, Ministers (...) supported the idea that higher education should be considered a public good and is and will remain a public responsibility"*

(Prague Communiqué, 2001, p.1)



TIRANA  
EHEA MINISTERIAL  
CONFERENCE  
29 - 30 MAY 2024

Tirana Communiqué



## Public responsibility *for* higher education

“a set of duties, mainly exercised at the level of the national higher education system, which public authorities must fulfil as part of their overall responsibility for the education sector and society as a whole.”

→ Annex provides further details



- Monitor “commitment to promoting and protecting our shared fundamental values in the entire EHEA” (Rome Communiqué, 2020)
- “BFUG to develop a framework for the enhancement of the fundamental values across the EHEA that will foster self-reflection, constructive dialogue and peer-learning across national authorities, HEIs and organizations, while also making it possible to assess the degree to which these are honoured and implemented in our systems”

*(Rome Communiqué, p.5, 2020)*



- “We adopt the statements on the fundamental values annexed to this Communiqué. While each value is essential, all six of them need to be implemented as a coherent whole. As a reliable monitoring of their implementation within all our education systems is required, we welcome the work on creating a technical monitoring framework, and we ask the BFUG to report back to us at our 2027 Ministerial Conference.”

*(Communiqué Tirana, p.2, 2024)*

# HOW TO GO ABOUT MONITORING FUNDAMENTAL VALUES IN THE EHEA?

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# The European Higher Education Area in 2024

*Bologna Process  
Implementation Report*



European Education  
and Culture  
Executive Agency

## 3.5. Public responsibility for and of higher education

The two last fundamental values were not formulated as specific sections in the BFUG questionnaire, as they are both very broad values referring to a number of policy issues covered to some extent by other parts of the report. Public responsibility for higher education represents the obligation of the public sector to higher education systems – especially regarding public funding of higher education. Public responsibility of higher education focuses on the obligation of higher education towards the society – especially in its mission to share knowledge, as a public good, and to empower students with civic engagement and active citizenship skills.

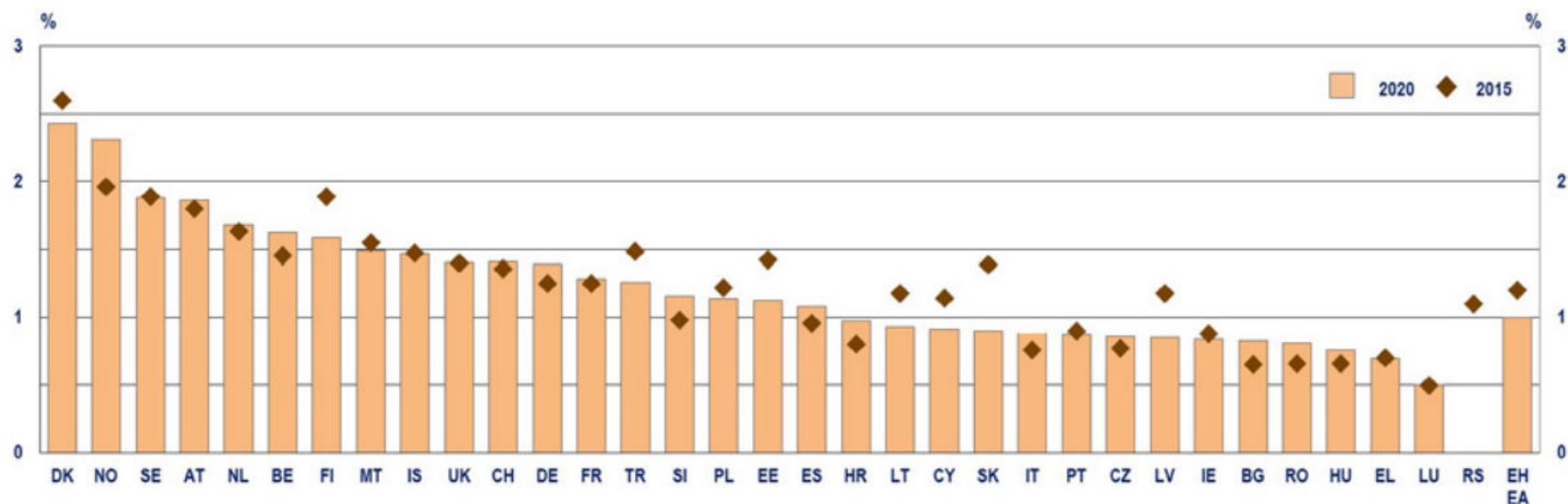
Much of the information presented throughout the report can be considered relevant to public responsibility for higher education. In Chapter 1, information on public investment in higher education provides a basis for assessing whether the level of expenditure indicates a high level of public responsibility and provides sufficient funding for higher education institutions to fulfil their missions. Chapter 4 on the social dimension addresses the public responsibility for ensuring equitable access to higher education, ensuring student welfare and support services, supporting lifelong learning, and as a consequence fostering societal development. Meanwhile information on quality assurance presented in Chapter 2 on Key Commitments also relates to the public responsibility for higher education.

With regard to the issues of public funding, a useful additional source is the EUA's Public Funding Observatory <sup>(36)</sup> which captures the latest funding trends. The data is laid out in a series of reports and the interactive online tool <sup>(37)</sup>, which is updated regularly, currently contains data from 34 systems, with the latest data from 2020/2021. Public responsibility for higher education, mainly exercised at the level of the national higher education system, encompasses also political, public policy, regulatory and legal obligations as proposed by the BFUG's draft statement under development for adoption in the Tirana Ministerial conference. The draft statement also refers to the responsibility of safeguarding all proclaimed fundamental values, so all previous sections of this chapter provide further insight into the level of involvement in protection and promotion of fundamental values by national authorities.

Public responsibility for higher education is also exercised at regional and local level, as well as at supra-national level. Public authorities are also expected to ensure the implementation of freedom to learn and the provision of anti-discrimination frameworks that enable this. Relevant data analysis on this aspect can also be found in Chapter 4 on the social dimension.

Regarding the public responsibility of higher education, analysis in chapter 4 focuses on support to community engagement. This addresses a part of the public responsibility of higher education institutions to engage actively with the local community and society at large. This may involve partnering with community organisations, addressing social issues, providing expertise and resources to solve community problems, and promoting civic engagement. Issues tackled at local level may also be mirrored by broader engagement with societal challenges at national, regional and global level. The draft statement also invites higher education institutions to be at the forefront of implementation and promotion of all other fundamental values. This involves bearing a responsibility in communicating research results, sharing knowledge with the wider society and actively engaging in tackling challenges of our contemporary world. While this report focuses more on the national and system level situation, further monitoring would have to also encompass activities of higher education institutions in promotion of fundamental values and communication of research results within society.

**Figure 1.16: Annual public expenditure on tertiary education as a % of GDP (including R&D), 2015 and 2020**



%	DK	NO	SE	AT	NL	BE	FI	MT	IS	UK	CH	DE	FR	TR	SI	PL	EE
<b>2020</b>	2.4	2.3	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1
<b>2015</b>	2.6	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.0	1.2	1.4
	ES	HR	LT	CY	SK	IT	PT	CZ	LV	IE	BG	RO	HU	EL	LU	RS	EHEA
<b>2020</b>	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.5	:	1.0
<b>2015</b>	1.0	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.4	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.5	1.1	1.2

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

**Notes:**

Countries are arranged in descending order by the annual public expenditure on tertiary education as a % of GDP, 2020.

EHEA: refers to the EHEA median calculated based on countries with available data for both reference years.

Builds on the EHEA monitoring tradition and the BPIR and...

Core design elements:

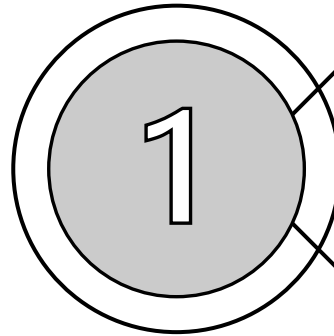
- **Commitments vs. values**
- **Set of values vs. individual values**
- **Types of values:** rights/freedoms vs. duties/obligations
- **de jure & de facto monitoring**
- **Protection & promotion**
- **Quantitative & qualitative elements**
- **Current situation vs. outlook**

# Monitoring Framework Proposed

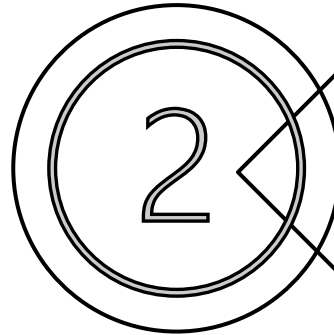
VALUES	TYPE OF MONITORING	
<b>Rights/Freedoms</b>		
-Academic Freedom -Institutional Autonomy -Participation of students & staff in governance	<i>De jure</i>	
	Protection	Outlook
	Promotion	
	<i>De facto</i>	
	Infringements	
	Threats	
Positive developments		

VALUES	TYPE OF MONITORING	
<b>Duties/Obligations</b>		
- Academic integrity - Responsibility for HE - Responsibility of HE	<i>De jure</i>	
	Protection	Outlook
	Promotion	
	<i>De facto</i>	
	Fulfilment	
	Threats	
Positive developments		

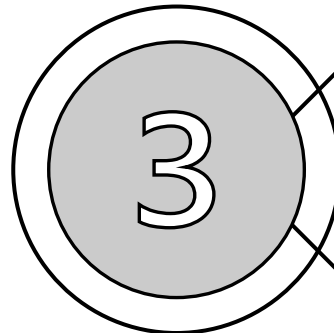
# Conceptual dimensions for monitoring public responsibility FOR higher ed



**PURPOSES OF HIGHER ED:** preparation for the labour market; preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, personal development, development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base



**SYSTEMIC FRAMEWORKS:** Qualifications frameworks, QA, recognition of foreign qualifications, transparent information provision, sustainable funding, social dimension (equity, inclusion, access)



**PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE:** The higher education sector, internal university constituencies, relevant external stakeholders

# Multiple sources of data

## Public authorities

- Self-reporting on commitments
- Provide system level information
- Regulatory and policy inputs (de jure)

## National stakeholders

- Input from established national stakeholders ( student union, EUA/EURASHE members, rector's conference)
- Reporting on implementation of commitments from their perspective
- Provide system level information in regulation (including outlook) & in practice

## Open platform

- Provide bottom-up input

## National operators

- Provide expert input and aggregate/validate different sources of data to report on commitment implementation
- USE:
  - (1) Desk research
  - (2) Secondary sources (e.g., data from other reports, evaluations, or monitoring exercises)
  - (3) Primary sources (e.g. stakeholder input)

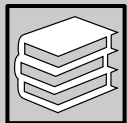
# The goal of the EHEA monitoring framework on fundamental values



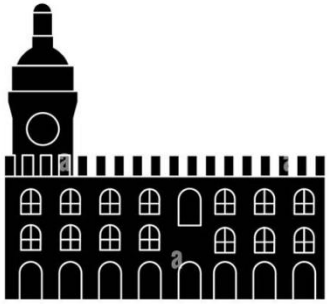
Enable assessment of how commitments are implemented



Support dialogue, self-reflection, and peer learning



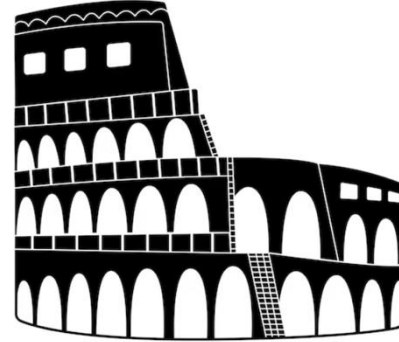
Help sustain promotion and protection of higher education values across the EHEA



**BOLOGNA**

1999

2018

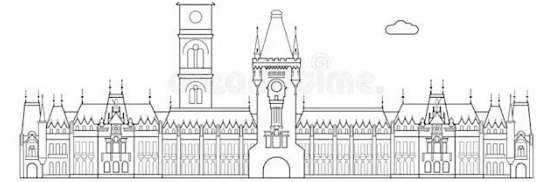


ROME

2020



CHISINAU



IASI

2024



TIRANA

**2027**

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Questions & comments

Contact: [d.craciun@utwente.nl](mailto:d.craciun@utwente.nl)