BFUG survey on the future priorities of the EHEA

Results of the consultation of the BFUG
CI BFUG meeting
Dublin, 6th of November 2026

EHEA Secretariat

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THE RESPONDENTS

Who responded to the survey

Online survey, 6 October to 1 November 2026

35

responses

30 from BFUG members and 5 from consultative members

20 of 35 answers rest on a limited internal consultation

30 BFUG members

29 country responses covering 28 countries, plus the European Commission

5 consultative members

ESU, ETUCE/EI, EUA, UNESCO and one organisation not named

How were the responses informed?

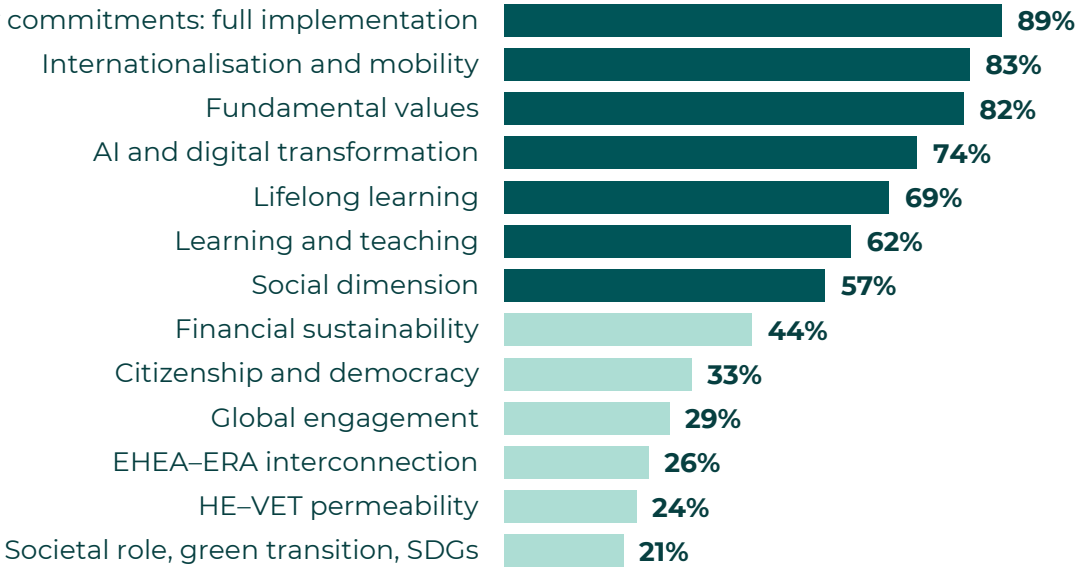


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THEMATIC PRIORITIES FOR 2030–2040

An agenda with two tiers

Share of respondents rating each area a high priority (n = 33–35 per area)



7

areas rated high by a majority (57–89%)

6

areas rated high by 21–44%

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KEY COMMITMENTS

Implementation comes first

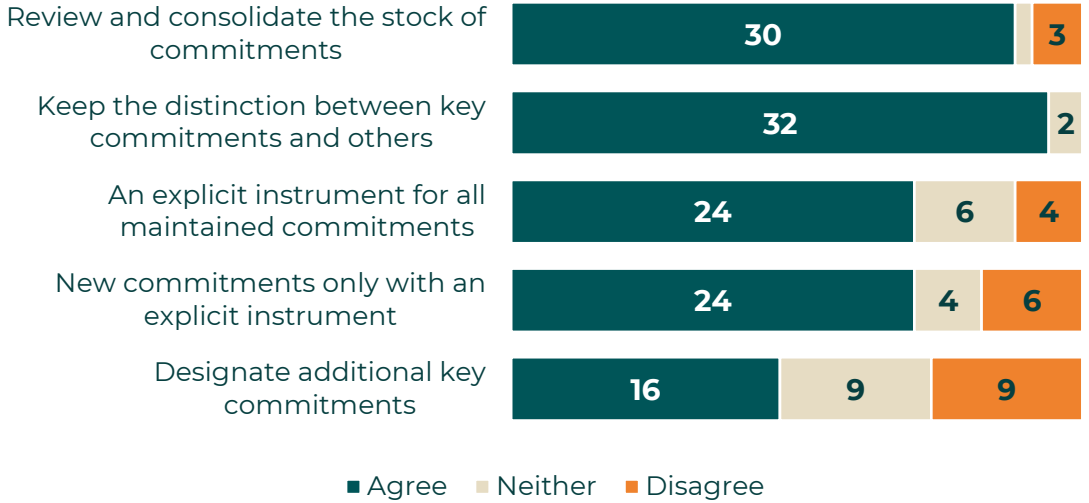
Deliver and consolidate what is agreed

66%

rank full implementation of the key commitments first

23 of 35 respondents, for the 2027–2030 Work Programme

Agreement with statements on ministerial commitments



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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI has strong support

Respondents want AI named in the 2027 Communiqué; the form of the response is open

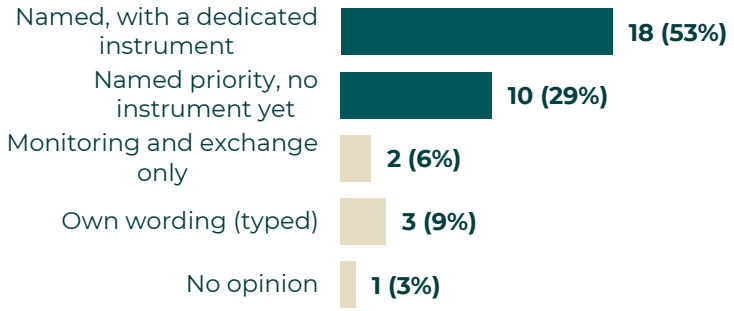
82% want AI named in the 2027 Communiqué

74% rate AI a high priority for 2030–2040. Only 2 rate it low

63% put AI in their top five areas for the 2027–2030 Work Programme

48% name cooperation on AI as an objective of the global dialogue

In what form?



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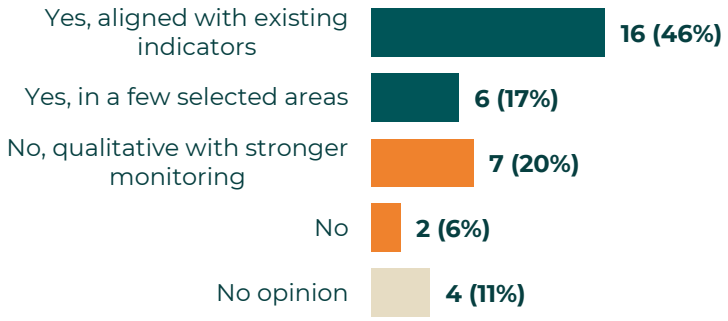
QUANTITATIVE TARGETS

Targets: yes, if few and aligned

22 of 35 (63%) support quantitative targets to 2040, most of them tied to existing indicators

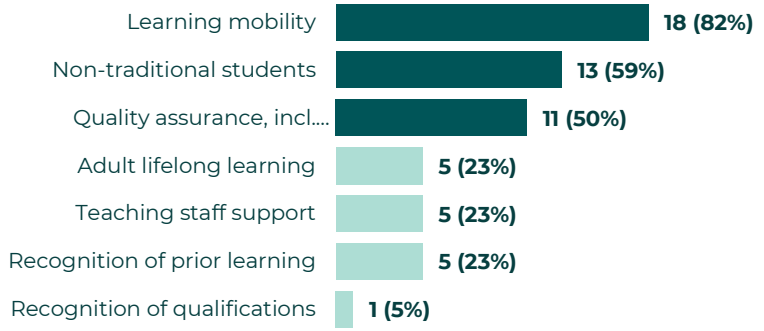
Quantitative targets to 2040

22 of 35 (63%) say yes



Where targets would work

19 of the 22 named three areas or fewer



National social-dimension targets: 8 yes (23%), 16 no (46%), 11 no opinion (31%)

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FOLLOW-UP AND WORKING METHODS

Supportive follow-up, a leaner BFUG

Answer chosen most often on each question (several answers allowed)

FOLLOW-UP OF THE COMMITMENTS

How to follow up the commitments?

53%

18 of 34

Strengthened peer support

Then BPIR follow-up (15) and coordination with other policy arenas (10). Country-level review (7) and public visibility (8) trail.

BFUG MEETINGS

How should BFUG meetings change?

76%

26 of 34

Focus on a few strategic questions

Then stronger information sharing among working groups (21). One respondent wanted no change.

MINISTERIAL AGENDA

What should change for ministers?

73%

24 of 33

A shorter, more decision-focused agenda

Then a political theme (11) and alignment with national reforms (11).

LINK WITH PRACTITIONERS

How to link up with practitioners?

60%

18 of 30

Bologna events open to practitioners

Then thematic practitioner networks (14) and national expert teams (11).

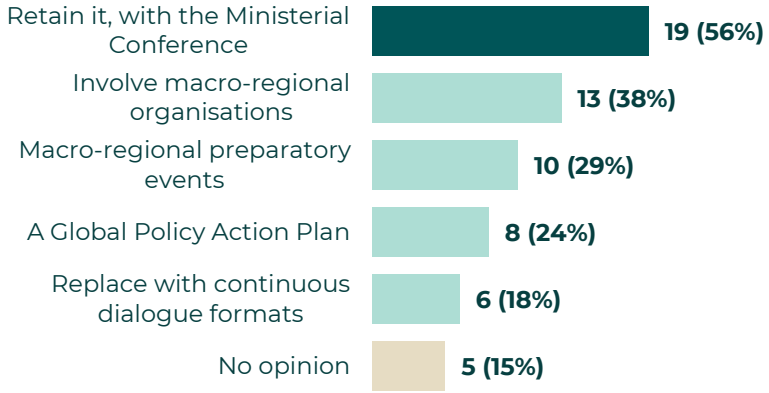
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Global dialogue

Respondents favour peer exchange and practical cooperation with other regions; AI is third

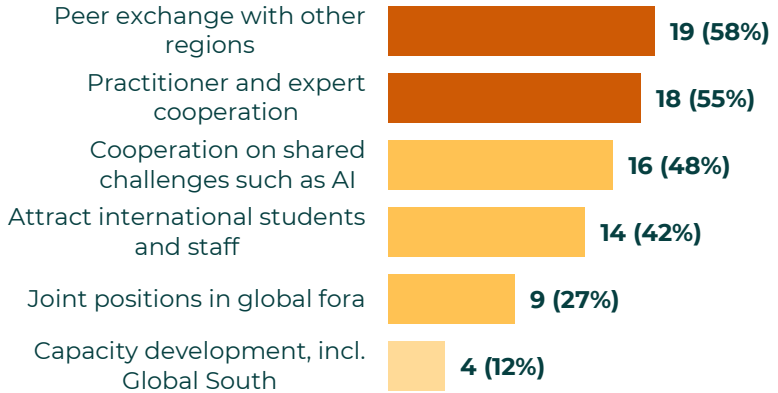
The Global Policy Forum

19 of 34 (56%) would retain it, with the Ministerial Conference



Objectives after 2027

Peer exchange 58%, practitioner cooperation 55%, AI 48%



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RELATION TO THE 2018 AND 2019 BFUG CONSULTATIONS

Continuity with 2018–2019, AI is new

Unchanged

- Implementation as a priority in its own right
- The same core themes
- Mobility and non-traditional students are again the areas named for targets
- A BFUG that concentrates on strategy and connects with practitioners

Sharper

- Focus the BFUG: now the majority choice (76%)
- Practitioner events (60%) and networks (47%) lead
- Targets backed by 63%, mostly tied to existing indicators

New or lower

- AI is the only new entrant to the agenda
- A new focus on instruments for commitments
- Fundamental values: now upper tier (82%)
- Citizenship and EHEA–ERA: lower tier. Societal role, green transition, SDGs: lowest (21%)

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CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions and questions for the BFUG

What the survey supports, and what it leaves open

1. **The consultation points to consolidation and delivery**
   Key commitments: 89% high, first for 66%; 88% back consolidation
2. **The agenda is tiered**
   Seven areas high by a majority; six others relevant but not priorities
3. **Instruments are the main open question**
   A majority wants explicit instruments for commitments
4. **AI should be named, but its form remains open**
   82% want AI named in the Communiqué; 53% a dedicated instrument
5. **Targets are acceptable if few and aligned**
   63% support targets, mostly aligned with existing indicators
6. **Supportive, voluntary follow-up and leaner BFUG methods**
   Peer support 53%; strategic focus 76%; shorter ministerial agenda 73%
7. **The results continue the 2018–2019 consultations**
   Stable agenda; AI and the focus on instruments are new

Some questions that remain open

1 Whether any commitment beyond the existing key commitments should be designated a key commitment.

2 In what form quantitative targets could be taken forward: EHEA-wide, aligned with EU or international indicators, and limited to a small number of areas.

3 What commitment and, if any, what instrument should accompany AI in the Communiqué.

4 How the lower-tier areas that respondents value but do not rank, including the links with the ERA and VET and the societal role of higher education, should be handled within other policy areas.

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