

3-IN-AT

Social Dimension

Principles & Guidelines

By The European
Students Union

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Where are we and what happens next?

1 PAGs- What are the ministers about to adopt?

2 Follow-Up (Next Advisory Group!!)

3 COVID-19 Impact

1. AG1- Social Dimension

- The document aims to outline core principles & guidelines which the BFUG believes are fundamental to the further development of SD
- Definition in 2007 London Communiqué as starting point; However, enlarged definition by this AG
- Aimed to accompany EHEA 2020 strategy adopted in Yerevan
- Emphasis on vulnerable, disadvantaged & underrepresented groups (defined in annex)
- Document not meant as checklist

1. AG1- Social Dimension

- **Principle 1**
 - **SD central to HE strategies as system and institution level as well as EHEA & EU level**
 - **Strengthening the social dimension of higher education and fostering equity and inclusion to reflect the diversity of society is the responsibility of a higher education system as a whole and should be regarded as a continuous commitment**
 - **Guidelines:**
 - Strategic commitment to be aligned with concrete targets that can either be integrated within existing higher education policies or developed in parallel. These targets should aim at widening access, supporting participation in and completion of studies for all current and future students
 - In the process there should be a **broad-based dialogue between public authorities, higher education institutions, student and staff representatives and other key stakeholders**, including social partners, non-governmental organisations and people from vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. This broad-based dialogue is to ensure the creation of inclusive higher education strategies that foster equity and diversity, and are responsive to the needs of the wider community.

1. AG1- Social Dimension

- **Principle 2**
 - **Legal regulations or policy documents should allow and enable higher education institutions to develop their own strategies to fulfil their public responsibility towards widening access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies.**
 - **Guidelines:**
 - Allow sufficient flexibility in the design, organisation and delivery of study programmes to reflect the diversity of students' needs.
 - Higher education institutions should be enabled to organise full-time and part-time studies, flexible study modes, blended and distance learning as well as to recognise prior learning (RPL), in order to accommodate the needs of the diverse student population.
 - Public authorities should promote recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning (RPL) in higher education

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- **Principle 4**
 - **Reliable data is a necessary precondition for an evidence-based improvement of the social dimension of higher education.**
 - **Guidelines:**
 - Continuous national data collection
 - such data collection should provide information on the **composition** of the student body, **access and participation, drop-out and completion** of higher education, including the **transition to the labour market** after completion of studies, and allow for the **identification of vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.**
 - Make data comparable internationally- work at EHEA level through EUROSTUDENT or similar surveys
 - Complemented by other independent surveys from HEIs

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- **Principle 6**
 - **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.**
 - **Guidelines:**
 - Higher education funding systems **should facilitate the attainment of strategic objectives related to the social dimension of higher education.**
 - i.e. Higher education institutions should be supported and rewarded for meeting agreed targets in widening access, increasing participation in and completion of higher education studies, in particular in relation to vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.
 - Financial support systems should aim to be universally applicable to all students, however, when this is not possible, the public student financial support systems should be primarily needs-based and should make higher education affordable for all students, foster access to and provide opportunities for success in higher education.
 - Direct & Indirect Costs

1. AG1- Social Dimension

- **Principle 10**
 - **Public authorities should engage in a policy dialogue with higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders about how the above principles and guidelines can be translated and implemented both at national system and institutional level**
 - **Guidelines:**
 - Allow to develop fit-for purpose policy measures, which respect institutional autonomy, avoid any unnecessary administrative burden, and enable concrete progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.
 - peer support and exchange of good practices

1. AG1- Social Dimension

- **Principle 3:** coherent policies from early childhood education, through schooling to higher education and throughout lifelong learning.
- **Principle 5:** Policies for PA that enable higher education institutions to ensure effective counselling and guidance for potential and enrolled students in order to widen their access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies
- **Principle 7:** Public authorities should help higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity in responding to the needs of a more diverse student and staff body and create inclusive learning environments and inclusive institutional cultures

1. AG1- Social Dimension

- **Principle 8:** mobility programs 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.
- **Principle 9:** Higher education institutions should ensure that community engagement in higher education promotes diversity, equity and inclusion.

2. What comes next?

- **Current AG proposed a new AG for the working period 2021-2024**
- **Draft terms of reference accepted at the BFUG- to be approved formally in the first meeting after the Ministerial**
- **Objectives:**
 - **Developing a system of monitoring the implementation** of the *Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA*. It will **enable measuring the impact of the broadened definition of the social dimension** in the Principles and Guidelines on the work of different higher education institutions.
 - Work hand in hand with the WG on monitoring
 - **Defining indicators and benchmarks** for the principles included in the *PAG*.

Objectives continued...

- **Organizing peer support activities for social dimension** to support the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines among the EHEA members. The Advisory Group should **consider establishing partnerships for implementing Thematic Country Reviews for Social Dimension** to systematically collect country needs for peer support.
- **Organizing a seminar on the social dimension** at the end of the cycle in 2024 to discuss the progress made in developing social dimension policies

What's the impact of COVID-19?

- Makes the PAGs more relevant
- Vulnerable, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups more at risk than ever
- Incorporate the need to allow inclusive digital education- focus on equity and justice more than equality, especially in such times of crisis
- Ensure more emphasis in next cycle on Peer Learning & Monitoring- especially ensure fair distribution of funds and recognize efforts to increase diversity and enhance accessibility

Questions



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