

International Peer Learning Activity

Perspectives on national strategies to promote learning and teaching

Wednesday, 3 November – Thursday, 4 November 2021 (lunch to lunch), online

Preparatory questionnaire

*“We adopt the **“Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching in the EHEA” (Annex III)** and commit to follow them, supporting higher education institutions in further implementing student-centred learning and teaching. The recommendations comprise increased support for all learners, and for teaching and non-teaching staff. Academic staff, including junior academics, require stable employment and career opportunities, parity of esteem for teaching and research, attractive working conditions, access to up-to-date staff development, and recognition of their achievements. In all these respects we will foster dialogue and collaboration on learning and teaching in our national systems and at EHEA level.”*

Bologna Rome Communiqué 2020

Given the adoption of said Annex III, we would now like to engage in a **discussion about countries’ strategies or strategic measures to promote learning and teaching** and stakeholders’ perspectives on these activities. Therefore, we are organizing the **international Peer Learning Activity** which you have been invited to.

To be able to **design the programme** of the event and adjust it to the participants’ interests and needs, we have prepared this **questionnaire**. In addition, the filled in questionnaires **will be distributed to all participants before the event** to provide them with in-depth information about the participating countries and thereby support their preparation for the PLA. They will as well be **included in the publicly available online documentation** of the event afterwards to make content and result of our discussions available to the wider public.

In our PLA we want to **consider different perspectives** on national strategies or strategic measures. This is, why we ask you to **fill in the questionnaire together with the other participant of your country** who will represent a stakeholder and may have different views regarding some questions.”. **Developing and implementing strategies** on a national level is challenging; activities, their conduct and impact **might be perceived differently by different groups** involved. Therefore, we provide a field for **additional comments on diverging views** for certain questions. Please make sure to make use of these fields as needed and to answer the questions as concisely as possible, respecting the given character limits. We will not edit the questionnaires before distributing and publishing them, therefore make sure to structure your answers well, providing continuous text and making use of lists where appropriate.

This event is co-funded by the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Research, as well as by the project „INternationalisation/INclusion/INnovation: Towards high-quality inclusive mobility and innovative teaching & learning in an internationalised Austrian Higher Education Area – 3-IN-AT“ – a KA3-activity of the European Commission. We thank the University of Applied Science St. Pölten for their friendly support.

Armenia

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

Currently the draft strategy for education development in the republic of Armenia for 2021-2025 is under development.

Based on the priorities, as well as other national strategies and international commitments, the ultimate goal of the Strategy is to ensure and promote accessible, inclusive and adequate quality education and life-long learning opportunities for everyone in Armenia, aimed at the development and realization of human potential. The development of human capital presupposes the making of the human as a proactive, creative and responsible member of the society and the person's professional maturity and realization, resulting in public development in all sectors.

To achieve this strategic goal by 2025, the following targets are set as strategic goals.

Strategic objective 1. To create a universally inclusive, learner-centered educational environment, which at the different stages of human life will provide all across the Republic of Armenia with quality and effective educational services, customized to one's individual development and personal characteristics.

Strategic objective 2. To raise the effectiveness and efficiency of education, which will ensure the maximum, optimal and results-based distribution of resources (including human resources), to increase the procedural, expenditure and management efficiency of the system.

Strategic objective 3. To internationalize and export education services and products which will be anchored on the complete and content-wise integration of the Armenian education system in the international education domain and systems; and the export of Armenian educational services and products, beneficially transforming the role of Armenia in the global educational ecosystem. Besides, a successful attempt has already been made in this aspect, namely in terms of emerging international interest towards the already established extracurricular creative centres.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed**? Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

It is still under development.

Development of the national strategy on education started on 2019. Because of the COVID-19 situation and the war in Artsakh in 2020, development has been slow and still is undergoing.

Several working groups has been formed with involvement of different stakeholder institutions by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Armenia for developing the Strategy.

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organizations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

Several stakeholder organizations have been involved at different stages of development process.

Research on an international practice has been carried on by working groups and brain storming sessions has been organized before drafting the Strategy.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement the national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

In the Action plane of the Strategy are indicated different tools: legislative regulations, financial mechanisms, subsidies, incentives for collaborations with different sectors and PPP.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The range of monitoring indicators of the strategy is set.

It is fixed in the Strategy that the state authority for education administration (namely Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports) shall publish an annual progress report on the implementation of the action plan for this Strategy.

It is also fixed in the Strategy that the state authority for education administration shall ensure a participatory and transparent monitoring of the action plan.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The draft strategy for education development in the republic of Armenia for 2021-2025 is not directly stipulating the development of institutional strategies.

The Strategy for Internationalization of Higher Education in the Republic of Armenia widely stipulates development of institutional strategies in line with the goals and objectives set therein.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

No

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects**? Please tick those, that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

V- Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Action in the Strategy: Organization of education based on competences and learning outcomes,

i) Improvement of state education standards and core curricula, particularly:

a. Further improvement of the RA National Qualifications Framework and full implementation, ensuring the compatibility of the qualifications with the comprehensive European Qualifications Framework and its alignment with the emerging needs of the labor market and the society;

b. Self-certification of the National Qualifications Framework, envisaging a possibility for non-formal qualifications, including micro-credentials as a component of continuing education;

ii) Introduction of a reliable and objective quality assurance system for the assurance and assessment of education quality in accordance with national and international standards, including the assessment of clearly defined outcomes, the learning process and environment. A conformity quality assurance system will also be established.

V- Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Actions in the Strategy:

- i) Provision of a highly qualified and well-trained teaching staff who are aware of and apply modern teaching methods, particularly:
 - a. Development and implementation of effective mechanisms for teaching staff recruitment;
 - b. Establishment of high professional qualification requirements for the right to teach;
 - c. Modernization of pedagogical education, ensuring the compliance of qualification descriptors, graduates' professional knowledge and competence to the modern requirements, implementation of an effective educational internship system,
 - d. Enhancement of teachers' training, professional development, and promotion opportunities, including certification by linking them with decent remuneration mechanisms; development; and implementation of mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of training effectiveness;
 - e. e. Development and implementation of an action plan, aimed at the promotion of the teacher's reputation and public role,

V- Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Action in the Strategy:

- i) Enhancement of learner-centered mechanisms in educational institutions:
 - a. Improving the building conditions of educational institutions, creating a safe, secure physical *and digital* environment that promotes education, taking into account the updated methodology of education, safety and universal access standards.
 - b. Continuous modernization of teaching and learning equipment at educational institutions, continuous updates of modern computer equipment, provision of high-quality internet connection, physical and digital laboratories and libraries.
 - c. Introduction of distance education services, open-access electronic resources and online courses at all levels of education.
 - d. An increased number of short-term academic programmes, implementation of full and part-time higher education programmes, including distance learning programmes.

V- Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Actions in the Strategy are creation of a learner-centered environment in educational institutions:

- i) Enhancement of learner-centered mechanisms in education organization:
- ii) Modernization of curricula and their alignment to modern requirements, competence-based and internationally adopted criteria, in particular prioritizing the teaching of Mathematics, Science, Engineering and Information Technologies, and Foreign Languages, as well as the development of the learners' critical, analytical, innovative, independent and creative thinking;

...

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities?** (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

- i) It is not publically available yet.
- ii) Strategy for Internationalization of Higher Education in the Republic of Armenia is available under the address:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M1unEudGYTQ-htQTe_Y3bmrTgZcUpyfw/view

Croatia

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

Croatia has no specific strategy for enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education, however the topic has been addressed in several strategic and policy documents. Also, there have been various activities and measures at the national level aimed at supporting Croatian higher education institutions in promoting quality teaching and learning.

In the period 15/6/2016-14/6/2018 The Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia implemented *Erasmus+ project Emphasis on developing and upgrading of competences for academic teaching – Educa-T*. The project was designed to support Croatian national endeavors in improving the quality of teaching and learning in higher education and the focus was on strengthening the teaching role of academic staff. The outcomes of the project include *Curriculum framework for teaching competence enhancement in higher education* and *Recommendations for the development and improvement of teaching competences at Croatian higher education institutions*, all incorporated in *the Handbook for Teaching Competence Enhancement in Higher Education*. The project outcomes were designed in such a way to motivate and provide support to Croatian higher education institutions in development of teaching competences, while on the other hand to enable higher education institutions to develop their own approach and use from the Handbook aspects that fit best their institutional strategies.

Croatian dedication to the development of the quality teaching and learning has been clearly stated during the Croatian presidency priorities (1 January – 30 June 2020) when the conference *Teachers and Trainers for the Future: Towards a 'New Normal'* was organized on 29 June 2020.

Since 2020 Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia has participated in the implementation of the Erasmus + project *Assessment Tool and Incentive Systems for Developing Higher Education Teachers' Performance - PROFFORMANCE*. The project has been implemented by the consortium of 6 national authorities from different countries and 5 associated partners, with Hungarian Ministry for Innovation and Technology as the project coordinator. The project aims to support quality enhancement of teaching and learning by creating a set of criteria and an assessment tool of teachers' performance. The results of the Educa-T project were used in the development of the assessment criteria and Croatian experts shared their experience gained in the implementation of the Educa-T project. Therefore, full sustainability and continuity of work on improving quality learning and teaching in higher education has been achieved.

The same consortium has prepared a project proposal PROFFORMANCE + which will build on previous projects and further enhance quality of teaching and learning, especially in the area of digitalization, internationalization and sustainability. The project proposal has been submitted to be financed by the Erasmus + program.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Experience from all projects proved to be very useful for all stakeholders, and they were very eager to participate. Many experts from higher education institutions contributed to the development of the Educa-T project outcomes and they have continued to actively work on the PRROFORMANCE project outcomes. There were no different opinions expressed during the project activities and many stakeholders expressed their support and eagerness to address the topic.

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed**? Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

There is no specific national strategy focused on enhancement of teaching and learning. However *The Implementation Plan of the Ministry of Science and Education for the period 2021-2024*, adopted in December 2020, refers to upgrading study programmes by full implementation of the Bologna principles in line with the Strategy for Education, Science and Technology (2014).

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organisations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

The Strategy for Education, Science and Technology (2014) was prepared by various sub-groups responsible for particular areas. The chapter on higher education included representatives of HEIs and all relevant stakeholders.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

n/a

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement** the **national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

A strategic measure for full implementation of the Bologna principles is related to modifying contents of study programmes with clearly defined learning outcomes.

A major instrument for implementing this measure is the Croatian Qualifications Framework which has been developing since the Act on the Croatian Qualifications Framework entered into force in 2013. The 2014 Education Strategy states that 'study programmes should secure the acquisition of required learning outcomes and keep their flexibility in order to adjust to constant and fast changes in the wider social context'.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

n/a

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Modifying contents of study programmes with clearly defined learning outcomes includes:

- a) the revision of learning outcomes of the study programmes;
- b) encouraging innovative approach to implementing study programmes;
- c) harmonizing learning outcomes with competences in line with the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Items under a-c are sub-measures for implementing the measure 'Modifying contents of study programmes with clearly defined learning outcomes'. The implementation has been monitored at the level of higher education institutions.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

n/a

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Education Strategy states HEIs as bodies responsible for the implementation of these measures and the Ministry of Science and Education provides incentives through the European Social Fund (e.g. a call for the implementation of the Croatian Qualifications Framework).

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

n/a

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Rectors' Conference and the Council of Polytechnics and Professional Schools of Higher Education are possible fora for discussion on the implementation of strategic measures.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

n/a

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects?**
Please tick those that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

HEIs are encouraged to use the ECTS Guide published by the European Commission.

Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Digital transformation of HEIs is a very important aspect of *the Implementation Plan of the Ministry of Science and Education for the period 2021-2024 and the Recovery and Resilience Plan Croatia*.

Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Ministry of Science and Education has been working on the new legal framework for higher education which is a prerequisite for implementing some strategic goals.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities**?
(Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Methodology for monitoring the implementation of activities related to learning and teaching at the national level.

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

<http://educa-t.hr/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/prirucnik-za-unapredenje-kompetencija-nastavnika-u-visokom-obrazovanju-en.pdf>

<https://mzo.gov.hr/news/video-conference-teachers-and-trainers-for-the-future-towards-a-new-normal-to-be-held-on-29-june-2020/3830>

<https://proformance.eu/>

Georgia

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

Current Strategy for Education and Science (2017-2021) sets the following strategic objectives for higher education concerning the dimension of teaching and learning:

- Modernization of higher education system
- Create effective opportunities of lifetime learning
- Increase access to quality education

The new strategic plan for HE to be approved for the next decade (2022-2032) focuses on offering flexible mode of HE teaching and learning. In light of the challenges caused by COVID-19 pandemic and considering up-to-the date developments in higher education of distance, hybrid and part-time studies will be promoted emphasizing requirements of the students with special education needs.

Innovative learning and teaching will be strengthened and university-based centers of excellence will be established, competencies and skills of the teaching staff will be enhanced as well, innovative teaching and learning approaches are envisaged as well.

Strategies will focus on excellence in teaching, HEI human resource policies (recruitment, career progress, reward) including trainings of academic leaders and top managers.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed**? Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The strategic priorities of the previous reforms undertaken in the scope of implementation of the Education and Science Strategy over 2017-2021 have focused on improving the relevance of education and training, to boost the quality and internationalization of higher education and research and innovation. Nonetheless, despite the reforms and progress made, challenges remain across education and research and innovation system at the sub-sectoral and operational level, including but not limited to enhancement of quality and equity, and the underpinning governance, funding, and accountability schemes.

Furthermore, given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Georgia's education system has also been challenged by a rapid transition to distance and blended teaching and learning, providing digitalized learning resources to the teachers and learners, ensuring equitable access, and learning outcomes.

The strategy spans lifelong and life-wide learning and aims to launch a new wave of reforms to address the identified challenges and opportunities through a long-term, conjoint effort by the ministry and the key stakeholders, including academic and civil society, private sector, international donors and independent experts as well as the wider public. The new strategy builds on the achievements of the previous reforms and addresses the challenges and opportunities arising within the sector and the operational environment in Georgia and globally. It also addresses the long-term impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on human capital and skills development and innovation.

To a large extent, the goals for the strategy have been established by revisiting the previous strategy, by emphasizing equity, quality and governance as key crosscutting priorities. In order to develop and strengthen the system of education and science, institutional development policy documents will be prepared on the basis of relevant research and analysis.

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organisations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

Following stakeholders such as governmental organizations, central and local authorities, the business sector and trade unions, academic community, students' associations, donor international and local organizations, NGOs and CSOs as well as other stakeholders of the sector were involved at the different stages of development. Currently public consultations are planned to receive the final feedback.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement** the **national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The implementation of the Strategy of Education and Science of Georgia for 2017-2021 is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, which in the process of implementation cooperates with other governmental institutions, academic and business circles.

Importantly, strategy has been developed through a systematic approach, aligned with the corresponding national legislation. As a result of the ongoing public administration reforms, the strategy has taken guidance from government decree #629, on the Approval of the Rules of Procedure for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents. The Decree sets the requirements for policy-making process, emphasizing the importance of evidence-based policies and ongoing dialogue and engagement with internal and external

stakeholders. It should be noted that the governmental decree itself was developed within the EU and OECD Joint Initiative to Support for Improvement in Governance and Management, taking into account the best international practices and recommendations, as well as the European Principles of Public Administration.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan will be carried out in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook of the Government of Georgia.

In coordination with the Department of International Relations and Strategic Development (Secretariat) of the Ministry of Education and Science, a report on each activity under the Action Plan will be prepared every six months, based on the information provided by the relevant implementing/responsible agency/ department.

The Department will also prepare an annual monitoring report, which will provide monitoring findings on the indicators of activity outcomes and task results. Final monitoring and evaluation document will be conducted one year after the expiration of the strategy.

Source of Funding

The Strategy and Action Plan will be implemented by the State Budget of Georgia, as well as by the basic data and directions document of the country (BDD) within allocations of envisaged responsible agencies.

The amount of financial resources required for the implementation of the strategy is determined by the Annual Action Plan.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The strategy is monitored and evaluated in accordance with compliance, efficiency, effect, sustainability and impact. Monitoring regularly observes the implementation of the Strategy and helps to make decisions that are needed to correct the implementation process by developing recommendations based on monitoring findings and conclusions.

The International Relations and Strategic Development Department of the Ministry is responsible for the annual Strategy Plan and elaboration of interim and annual reports of its implementation.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Currently, a new National Education and Science Strategy 2022-2032 is under development. Within the strategy, it is planned to implement the following goals related to the Higher Education:

- Each HEI offers high-quality education for all students, enhancing their personal and professional development;
- The student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels reflects the diversity of population in Georgia. Inclusion is a task of all institutions.
- The governance of the national higher education system is effective through efficient use of resources, institutional autonomy, and accountability.

It should be noted that HEIs are required to submit an institutional development plan during the authorisation process.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Minister of Education and Science of Georgia coordinates and oversees the HEI`s Rectors `council that is conducted annually in Georgia. The council consists of the heads of all HEIs authorized and accredited in Georgia. The annual council is a good platform to exchange best practices, hold consultation meetings and discuss the future priorities and challenges. Furthermore, during the meeting rectors get familiar with upcoming reforms and developments within the ministry.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects?**
Please tick those, that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Since 2005, having become part of the Bologna Process, Georgia has developed and implemented the following Bologna Process tools:

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the Diploma Supplement (DS), the overarching and national qualifications framework (QFs), the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ESG), the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR). Georgia also participates in ENIC and NARIC networks.

Existence and application of these tools, together with programme accreditation made it possible to compare Georgia's higher education programs with those of other countries involved in the Bologna Process.

Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The government will encourage the development of a more effective tenure-track career system to ensure that the higher education and research staff will deliver throughout their careers. All higher education and research staff will be recruited, appraised and rewarded based on the evaluation of their achievements with transparent and quality-oriented criteria. To incentivize autonomous HEIs, the government will implement regulatory and funding incentives such as mandating new academic staff to undertake professional development in pedagogical training, with a corresponding reduction in teaching hours as well as merit systems that value the high-quality teaching, and annual awards that recognize excellence and innovation in higher education teaching.

Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The government will promote the expansion of innovative and transformative distance learning and blended learning modalities to provide quality education to harder-to-reach communities and geographies and people who lack easy access to internet or digital devices. Also, any possible barriers will be removed in higher education where flexible arrangements for time- and place-unlimited study are limited by law to the disadvantage of a large number of students who combine work and study and those who reside in regions.

Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Under the new 10-year strategy, with a view to improve the quality of teaching, the government will make efforts to secure access to and retention of effective teachers, trainers and educators at all levels of education. To this end, it is planned that all higher education and research staff will be recruited, appraised and rewarded based on the

evaluation of their achievements with transparent and quality-oriented criteria. All staff will be able to develop their pedagogical and/or research skills throughout their career, while excellence and innovation in teaching and learning and research and innovation will be rewarded.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

During the Covid-2019, Georgia identified particular challenges in this area. Consequently, special efforts will be put to encourage Innovation in learning and teaching whether face-to-face or in digital or hybrid mode, through additional innovation- or quality-oriented funds, for platforms or networks that target institutions and/or institutional leaders and staff. The government will also enhance cooperation among and between education providers (general education, VET and higher education and adult education) to improve the supply and demand of education provision and research, development and innovation through joint projects and programs.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities?** (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Georgian delegates would appreciate to get experience from other nations regarding the challenges and obstacles they have faced while applying their national strategies in practice. Moreover, it would be fruitful to hear different perspectives and views on recent developments of Higher Education learning and teaching in participant countries' national systems.

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

The current policy documents of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia can be found on the following link:

<https://mes.gov.ge/content.php?id=7755&lang=eng>

Besides, the National Education and Science Strategy of Georgia 2022-2032 is under development. Once the strategy, log-frame and sectoral action plans are approved by the Government of Georgia, we will share them with you.

Ireland

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education is Ireland's national body responsible for leading and advising on the enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education. The 2019-21 Strategy of the National Forum, available [here](#), represents a national strategy for teaching and learning across the sector. The strategy focuses on four key priorities:

- **The Professional Development of All Staff Who Teach**

High-level aims:

- Lead the implementation of the national framework for the professional development of all staff who teach in higher education, while acknowledging the value of institutional frameworks, programmes and strategies
- Ensure professional development, in all its forms, is understood, valued, supported and recognised by all members of the higher education community

- **Teaching and Learning in a Digital World**

High-level aims:

- Consolidate and continue to lead ongoing efforts to enhance the digital skills, confidence and competence of all those who teach and learn in Irish higher education
- Rearticulate a national vision for digital teaching and learning which is collaborative, responsive and adaptable to institutional contexts

- **Teaching and Learning Enhancement Within and Across Disciplines**

High-level aims:

- Lead enhancements in disciplinary learning, teaching and assessment
- Promote the value of interdisciplinarity to enable sharing of innovation and good practice across disciplinary boundaries

- **Student Success**

High-level aims:

- Lead the development of a sectoral understanding of student success
- Promote institutional cultures and strategies that recognise and maximise the value of data and evidence to enhance student success

Policy partners and stakeholders across Irish higher education are currently involved in a national partnership project, [Next Steps for Teaching and Learning](#), co-ordinated by the National Forum. The project focuses on gathering lessons learned from the sudden move to online/remote teaching and learning since March 2020 and outcomes of this project will inform the next T&L national strategy, due to be developed in 2022.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

The recently established government department – Dept for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) provides evidence of the government commitment to supporting post compulsory education, providing funding, creating policy for the higher and further education and research sector, and overseeing the work of state agencies and public institutions.

Agencies responsible for key aspects of Irish higher education include:

- Higher Education Authority (HEA), which has a statutory responsibility for the effective governance and regulation of the higher education system. It also manages EURIreland, the national agency for Erasmus+
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), an independent state agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in post compulsory education and training services nationally
- The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
- Higher education representative agencies such as the Union of Students in Ireland, Irish University Association, Technological Higher Education Association, Higher Education Colleges Association
- Irish Research Council, established to enable and sustain a vibrant research community nationally
- Science Foundation Ireland, the national foundation for investment in scientific and engineering research

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed?**

Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The announcement of the establishment of the National Forum represented the beginning of a new era for Irish higher education. Ireland's National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 had outlined the importance of ensuring the centrality of teaching and learning in Irish higher education and the National Forum became the national body responsible for leading and advising on the enhancement of teaching and learning across the sector. Its original remit included the following: develop a national professional development framework; support open access to teaching and learning resources and research outputs within the context of building digital capacity in Irish higher education; support collaborative projects in teaching and learning that advance the key strategic priorities; develop a national awards scheme; and establish and maintain a strong evidence base for the advancement of national strategic priorities in teaching and learning.

Following the initial development phase of the National Forum (2013-2017), it entered a new strategic phase in 2018. There was a need for a new national strategy which built on the strengths of the previous years and also addressed recommendations from an external review of the National Forum, which took place in 2017. The Board of the National Forum identified the four strategic priorities, listed in the previous section, and a national

consultation then took place to determine high-level aims and strategic actions under each priority area.

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organisations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

Senior managers and individual staff from universities, institutes of technology and private colleges provided input to the strategy via email, an online consultation and through face-to-face meetings. Collective responses also were received from 20 groups/representative bodies, including industry. A dedicated consultation with students across the sector ensured that the perspectives of over 1100 students, collected via focus groups, open-forum consultations and an online consultation, helped to shape and inform the strategy. Previous consultations with staff and senior managers across Irish higher education, as well as national reviews and research studies, also ensured the strategy was grounded in evidence and took cognisance of the experiences and drivers within and across institutional contexts. The articulation of the aims, activities and indicators of success outlined in the strategy also attends to the policy context within which the National Forum is embedded.

The implementation of the strategy relies on the collaboration of stakeholders. The Board of the National Forum includes various policy partners and there are networks of staff representatives and student representatives who act as liaisons between the National Forum and institutional communities, ensuring that the implementation of the strategy remains responsive to the evolving needs of the sector.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement** the **national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

National T&L body

The existence of the National Forum means that the national strategy has a sustained funding stream for implementation, a Board to oversee strategy development and implementation and a dedicated staff to collaborate across the sector in bringing the strategy to life at all stages. The Board of the National Forum comprises key policy partners including representatives of Government, the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), representative bodies and industry.

Enhancement funding

The implementation of the national strategy is funded by the HEA and this funding has been supplemented since 2019 by the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) Fund. The SATLE Fund and other funding initiatives allow innovation and enhancement at local level to be directed towards areas of mutual strategic importance. A robust review structure, involving international review panels, is in place to monitor the progress and impact of funded initiatives.

Consultation and collaboration

The National Forum has conducted large-scale consultations, not just on the development of its strategy, but also on specific elements such as the future of teaching and learning, understandings of student success, and professional development and recognition. It also has established collaborative structures to allow for input from those with relevant expertise and experience to inform decision-making. These structures include steering groups, advisory groups and assemblies of student and staff associates from across the country.

Strategic partnership agreements

To ensure alignment between the national T&L strategy and other related work in the sector, the National Forum has established strategic partnership agreements with bodies including Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD). These partnerships allow for collaboration, coherence and joint messaging, events and developments.

Active student involvement

Students take a central role in the implementation of the strategy, serving on the Board of the National Forum, review panels, interview and selection panels and advisory/steering groups. In partnership with USI, a student associate intern programme also ensures that there is always a student on the National Forum team. The National Forum has a Student associate assembly with student representation from higher education institutions.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Following an external review of the National Forum in 2017, a progress review was undertaken in 2019 to consider progress against the recommendations from the external review.

Impact is a key focus of the National Forum's work and an impact plan has been put in place to ensure that the various elements of the national strategy are monitored on an ongoing

basis. It is intended to also hold periodic large-scale impact reviews at the end of each strategic period.

Funded initiative teams are supported to monitor, reflect upon and report the impact of their work.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please see section 1 above.

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Quality assurance remit that QQI has regulates and supports institutional strategies that support the teaching, learning and assessment environment. Much of the requirements are captured in the national suite of statutory Quality Assurance guidelines including the Core QA Guidelines (qqi.ie)

QQI strategy 2022-24 specifies priorities – Priority 3 **Strategic priority #development - driving and stimulating provider development** relates closely to issues involving teaching, learning and assessment. These aspects are implicitly covered by other strategic statements as well.

Institutional strategy development is supported through

- Stakeholder engagement initiatives, e.g, the National Academic Integrity Network, NStEP (National Student Engagement Programme)
- Formal meeting channels
- The cycle of institutional reviews and annual quality dialogue meetings with presidents of HEIs
- National policy development processes including a consultation framework
- Significant national enhancement activities such as a focus on leading on assessment, digital education and blended online quality assured provision are central at present.
- The development of the qualifications system to ensure fit for purpose qualifications are linked back to forward looking teaching and learning. New Green Paper on Qualifications (qqi.ie)
- QQI is a board member of the National Forum which sets the national strategic priorities.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

QQI established a national programme of “*Finding common ground*” with professional standards and regulatory bodies. [Finding common ground on professional accreditation and regulation \(qqi.ie\)](https://www.qqi.ie/finding-common-ground)

Significant national enhancement activities, reports and events and policy initiatives such as a focus on leading on assessment, digital education and blended, online quality assured provision enable providers to share best practice on a continuous basis.

QQI is currently establishing a **National Quality and Qualifications Forum** to consider all strategic issues including those supporting teaching, learning and assessment practices make up part of the consultations and discussions within this group. Prior to this, there was a Consultative Forum.

Good practices are also available in a synthesis report of case studies for sharing as described in review reports for institutions, and published [QQI Insights Quality in Irish Higher Education 2020.pdf](https://www.qqi.ie/insights-quality-in-irish-higher-education-2020)

Annual Quality Reports submitted to QQI capture all developments supporting Teaching, learning and assessment [Annual Quality Assurance Report \(qqi.ie\)](https://www.qqi.ie/annual-quality-assurance-report)

Thematic system level reports are also produced by QQI from time to time. In 2020 a research-based report of findings was published by QQI on the impact of COVID on teaching, learning and assessment. [The Impact of COVID-19 Modifications to Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Irish Further Education.pdf \(qqi.ie\)](https://www.qqi.ie/impact-of-covid-19-modifications-to-teaching-learning-and-assessment)

The National Forum funds a [National Seminar Series](https://www.qqi.ie/national-seminar-series) each year which aims to provide space, in local contexts through local seminars, for connections to be established between colleagues in higher education around shared research and practice interests. The series also creates opportunities to hear from national and international experts in different areas of teaching and learning. To date, approximately 500 seminars have been held across the country attracting over 14,000 participants.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects**? Please tick those, that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Institutional programme development is based on the concept of learning outcomes, and the alignment of assessment to these as specified in the QQI Programme Validation criteria.

The National Qualifications Framework reflects the national policy of use of ECTS to underpin the qualifications system.

Independent learning, student-centred teaching and learning approaches are advocated through [the National Framework of Qualifications](#) and the QQI award standards. The award standards (Levels 1 to 9 – of 10 levels) are currently under review. Information on the stages of the reviews can be found on the QQI website.

Student success and the implementation of institutional student success strategies are also central to the National Forum strategy. See [here](#).

Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The national strategy includes the implementation of a national professional development framework for all staff who teach. A range of open PD courses has been developed and collaboratively delivered in areas of importance to staff who teach. As an example, the open course in Universal Design in Teaching and Learning, developed in partnership with AHEAD and UCD Access and Lifelong Learning, is currently taking place with over 1000 participants, supported by 86 trained facilitators. A professional recognition framework is also currently in development.

Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

QQI has published Statutory QA Guidelines for Blended Learning Programmes. There is work ongoing currently to incorporate fully online programmes into these.

QQI holds enhancement events focusing on good practice in digital education for stakeholders, and these continue on a regular basis. All recorded webinars are available on the QQI YouTube channel.

Digital & open education is a strong focus of the National Forum strategy. See [here](#) for an overview of this work, including research, resources and tools.

Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The National Forum has built an extensive evidence base and its consultative nature and representative Board position it well to inform and influence, while also drawing attention to teaching and learning issues and developments.

The National Forum also oversees a range of learning impact awards which aim to support sectoral and institutional efforts to promote, learn from and extend the reach of excellent practice in teaching and learning across Irish higher education. The three learning impact awards are Teaching Hero Awards, Teaching and Learning Research Fellowships, and Delta Awards. See more [here](#).

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

There is a need to ensure that Ireland, in collaboration with international colleagues, takes the best next steps for teaching and learning as we attempt to emerge from the pandemic. The national partnership project, Next Steps for Teaching and Learning, will launch its output on 10 November, representing evidence and consensus focused on the future of teaching and learning in Irish higher education.

Placing the National Forum on a sustainable basis under the auspices of the HEA in 2022 is also a key national concern, to ensure that the good work of recent years is built upon for the good of all those who teach, learn and lead.

There is a need for equity of esteem in the HEIs with regard to research activity and teaching. The value is traditionally given to research activity.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

•
What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities**? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

What have you found effective in attempting to focus attention on the importance of teaching and learning at national and institutional level, especially in a very research-focused context?

What challenges have you faced in attempting to promote the recognition of the teaching aspect of academic careers and how have you overcome these challenges?

What one key lesson will you take with you from the pandemic teaching and learning period?

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

Re QQI, links to documents are embedded in the responses.

The website of the National Forum can be accessed [here](#). For convenience, direct links to key areas of the website are also listed below.

At the **individual level**, the National Forum developed the [National Professional Development Framework for all Staff Who Teach](#) (see also, one-page overview [here](#)) in 2015. The range of associated professional development Open Courses, their content and structure can all be viewed on a dedicated interface [here](#).

At the **discipline level**, the National Forum developed the [Disciplinary Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Assessment \(DELTA\) Framework](#) in 2017. The DELTA Framework now underpins the [DELTA Award](#), which is presented to discipline groups who can demonstrate a record of excellence in teaching and learning enhancement and who commit to an ongoing, clearly articulated, shared process of continued enhancement.

At **institutional level**, following an expansive exploration of the literature, policy/strategy documents, and student perspectives (see report [here](#)), the National Forum recently developed a [Guiding Framework for Embedding Student Success](#) and associated [Toolkit](#) to assist institutions in developing whole-of-institution student success strategies.

A report on the pre-pandemic digital experiences, engagement and expectations of close to 30,000 members of the higher education community is available [here](#).

An overview of the work done in building digital capacity at national level 2013-18 can be viewed [here](#).

National Forum work on open education, including webinars, guides and resources is available [here](#).

Developments and resources associated with the National Forum's two-year national enhancement theme focused on assessment of/for/as learning (2016-18) can be viewed [here](#).

A report on students' perspectives on excellent teaching, based on an exploration of approximately 4,000 nominations to our student-led Teaching Hero Awards is available [here](#).

National Forum Insights on the concept of impact, resulting from an exploration of the related literature and discussions across the sector are available here:

- [Evidence-based Insights About Impact in Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Insights from Practice About Impact in Teaching and Learning](#)

The National Forum resource hub can be accessed [here](#).

Norway

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

In Norway, the main strategic measures to promote quality assurance, quality development, and better teaching and learning in higher education have first been spelled out in white papers. The measures to promote enhanced teaching and learning are both legal and financial. In addition, surveys and analyses are useful to monitor the situation and as a basis for the development of new policy.

Legislation:

The basis of the system is that the higher education institutions themselves have the main responsibility for the quality of the education and training that they provide.

The quality assurance and accreditation requirements are laid down in the law on higher education (Act relating to universities and university colleges), and in a number of regulations, including in particular

- the regulation on the quality of study programmes
- the supplementary regulation on the requirements for (re)accreditation of study programmes, which includes the requirements of the ESG
- the regulation on the national qualifications framework, laying down assignment to level and level descriptors for learning outcomes
- the regulation concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts in higher education, which includes educational requirements for higher education academic staff, sets a minimum of educational training for all teaching staff and increased educational requirements for professors and other top level academic staff (a result of the 2017 Quality Culture white paper, see next question below)

All higher education institutions are required by law to have an internal quality assurance system.

In addition, many of them have made their own programmes and measures to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, for instance through special rewards for teaching excellence.

External quality assurance is provided by the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT, which was established in 2003. NOKUT is responsible for

- cyclic (re)accreditation of quality assurance systems
- (re)accreditation of study programmes and institutions
- evaluations and analyses

Competitive funding:

The first competitive funding scheme for enhanced teaching and learning was introduced in 2010: the Centres for Excellence in Education.

The system of competitive funding was strengthened as from the 2019 budget, as a follow-up of the 2017 Quality Culture white paper, with the introduction of a number of additional calls and measures for better teaching and learning in higher education.

These funds and calls are managed by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (a merger of Diku and Skills Norway from 1 July this year).

Surveys:

Student Barometer: Since 2014, NOKUT has organised a national survey on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Research which is sent to ALL 2nd and 5th year higher education students in the country, enquiring them about their views on the quality of the study programme they attend. The survey results are disseminated through a report and a separate web site where historic results, including results for individual study programmes, are available.

Teaching staff survey: NOKUT has initiated a survey of teaching staff in higher education, about their views on educational quality.

Graduate surveys: Since 1972, the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU) has undertaken graduate surveys on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Research. In the past few years, the graduates have been asked about their hindsight views of the quality of the study programme they have graduated from, in addition to those on the employment situation.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

There are some varied views on the potential to share knowledge, or address common challenges in higher education given that individual solutions have to be developed and addressed according to local conditions. However, there is a general support for focusing on quality and for developing some strong academic communities and solutions that can work as catalysts for the wider higher education sector.

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed**? Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The enhancement of quality in higher education teaching and learning has long been high on the political agenda in Norway. Due to long periods of minority governments over the past decades, the main strategic measures to enhance the quality of teaching and learning

in higher education have been spelled out in white papers. With this approach, once the parliamentary debate in the *Storting* (national assembly) is completed, there is a recognised decision on a national strategy in the field even in periods of difficult political configurations in the *Storting*. Although some of the parliamentary debates on the white papers have led to changes in certain measures, there have been no substantial differences in approach as a result of these debates. Overall, there is wide political consensus on the main approaches to quality teaching and learning in higher education. In practical terms, for instance, the use of white papers as strategic tool means that a white paper on the work relevance of higher education submitted in spring this year (2021) and debated in the *Storting* before the summer, can be followed up as planned despite a change in government a couple of weeks ago (15 October 2021).

There have been a number of white papers of relevance for the enhancement of teaching and learning in higher education over the past few years. Below, we will mention four of these:

- White Paper no. 18 (2014–2015) *Concentration for Quality*

With this white paper, a structural reform was launched which led to several mergers of higher education institutions in the period 2015–2017, reducing the number of state higher education institutions from 33 to 21. There were also some mergers of private higher education institutions. The reason for the process was to create stronger academic environments rather than spreading resources out thinly to create a sound basis for quality education and research. Maybe even more importantly for the topic of this PLA, the white paper was followed up by a thorough review of the regulations on the quality and on the accreditation of study programmes and institutions, leading to the inclusion of the requirements of the ESG in these regulations:

- regulation on the quality of study programmes, tightening requirements for the master's and ph.d. levels
- supplementary regulation on the requirements for (re)accreditation of study programmes

For both regulations, the changes took effect as from February 2017.

- White Paper no. 16 (2016–2017) *Culture for Quality in Higher Education*

This white paper deals with all aspects of quality in the educational provision of higher education, outlining inter alia the division of responsibility for the quality of provision between the various levels of the system: ministry, other national authorities, leadership of higher education institutions, faculty and institute levels, the academic staff in charge of the study programme. In the white paper, seven aims are set to help enhance the quality of higher education:

- More engaging studies and more ambitious goals for student achievement
- Students should be included in the academic community
- Clear aims and streamlining of education programmes
- Varied teaching and assessment methodologies
- Better co-operation with business and industry
- High pedagogical competence of academic staff

- Better recognition of teaching and learning

The Culture for Quality in Higher Education white paper introduced four main approaches to reach this aim:

- Reward for teaching excellence
- Peer review of education
- Competitive funding schemes
- Indicator portal

Most of the higher education institutions have since introduced programmes to reward excellent educators among their staff, i.e. excellence in teaching awards. Some HEIs had already done so before the white paper was written and served as inspiration.

The inspiration for the measures of peer review and competitive funding was from research – why should not academics used to competing for research funding be willing to compete in the same way to provide better education?

- White Paper no. 4 (2018–2019) *Long-term plan for Research and Higher Education 2019–2028*

Normally, white papers in themselves do not entail funding. However, the white paper on the long-term plan on research and higher education was submitted as a supplement to the 2019 budget proposal. It included a proposal of 250 mill NOK (about Eur 25 mill) for competitive funding for quality in higher education in the period 2019 – 2022, thus following up the 2017 white paper Quality Culture in higher education. It is too early to give a final result, as the negotiations on the 2022 budget are still ongoing – they will be finalised in December.

The long-term plan and the ensuing budgets have made it possible to fund various measures to enhance the quality of teaching and learning:

- Reinforce, i.e. provide funding for more calls for, Centres of Excellence in Education
- Various calls for better teaching and learning in higher education

These funds and calls are managed by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills.

- White Paper no. 16 (2020–2021) *Education for change – better working life relevance in higher education*

The aim of the white paper is to promote better and more systematic co-operation between higher education and the social partners to prepare for the challenges ahead – due to digitalisation, demographic changes, and the green shift. As part of the follow-up, a formal, top-level agreement in principle to this effect was signed on 2 July, to facilitate systematic co-operation on future competence needs, quality work-place practice for students, and promote student-active learning, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organisations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

As part of the preparation of the above-mentioned white papers, the Ministry has invited the higher education institutions and other stakeholders to provide examples of good practice and give their views on what their wishes for the planned white paper should be, and, for each of them, the Ministry has received a lot of very constructive contributions. In the early stages of the work, the minister responsible for higher education at the time has also had a large number of meetings with stakeholders to invite viewpoints and ideas. These are meetings with higher education institutions, student and staff organisations, employer organisations, and trade unions, etc.

Also, when the Storting prepares the debate on the white papers, relevant stakeholders are generally invited to special hearings to present their opinions on the proposals in the white paper.

As a rule, the Minister responsible for research and higher education meets representatives of the sector and other stakeholder representatives quite frequently and in a wide number of contexts. This also goes for Ministry staff, as it is necessary to know what is going on in the sector in order to develop new policies. Students constitute an important stakeholder group, and the minister responsible for higher education generally has special meetings with the National Union of Students in Norway twice a year.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement** the **national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

One of the main instruments for quality enhancement in higher education is the Centres for Excellence in Education-scheme. The purpose of the scheme is to reward excellence, encourage research approaches to education, further develop innovation in education, and assist with dissemination of excellent teaching practices. Currently, there are twelve Centres, and they include consortiums between multiple institutions. The centres include fields like teacher education, musicianship, biology, entrepreneurship, maritime education, medicine, mathematics didactics, programming, and ICT. They are derived from local teaching communities. The centres scheme was launched in 2011 and built on experiences from similar efforts in the UK and Finland. There is strong emphasis on ensuring dissemination and on close ties with teaching communities. The scheme has been strengthened over the years, and particularly as a follow-up of the white paper on culture for quality (2017).

Included in the national policy are also other funding opportunities. For instance "Programme for student-active learning" (implemented 2019) and, recently, "Programme for workplace relevance in education" (implemented in 2020). The latter has been implemented to address both quality development aims in general and the recent white paper *Education for Change – better working life relevance in higher education*. Similarly to the Centre-scheme, these programmes emphasize dissemination and innovation. Academic communities that are awarded funding are expected to develop, experiment, and

disseminate their innovations and new knowledge through varied avenues, such as partnerships, research papers, conferences, and websites .

In addition, all the higher education institutions provide some scheme through which teachers can apply for the title of “excellent teacher”. The merit systems are developed locally and hence vary between institutions. However, all these schemes usually include some sort of monetary reward or salary increase and an inclusion of the merited teacher in an academy of excellent teachers. In sum, the different measures provide a wide selection of opportunities for teachers in higher education that wish to innovate and develop their teaching. As already mentioned, the idea is to provide opportunities for teaching innovation as a parallel to opportunities for research innovation. Further, the schemes also assist in building competencies, in documenting efforts, in disseminating the results of their work, and in employing similar approaches in teaching to those usually employed in research.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Some criticize the above-mentioned instruments because they interpret them as drawing on funding which the institutions themselves could have used for quality in teaching and learning. Furthermore, in certain communities there are some concerns about the resources used on writing proposals that are not necessarily funded. The response to this has been that the writing of the proposal in itself can assist academic communities in articulating potentials and challenges that can be addressed, albeit in a scaled-down variety, without funding. The proportion of competition-based funding available to education measures is also far lower than to competitive research grants. Overall, the feedback from the institutions, for instance in the advisory board for the quality enhancement efforts for the Directorate for higher education and Skills, has been that a focus on quality and long-term comprehensive funding as opposed to many small-scale projects is the preferred approach, and in essence a continued approach along the lines drawn so far is encouraged.

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The monitoring varies in form according to measure. In some cases, individual external assessments or reports are used. In other cases, indicators and statistics are used as a source. In the case of the Centres for Excellence in Education-scheme, there is a mid-way evaluation, usually by a panel of international experts. This provides an in-depth evaluation of the current state of the centres’ work and their contribution the quality development of their own and other similar study programmes in the country

Concerning the implementation of general measures at the higher education institutions, the monitoring is partly through the annual budget reporting and the governance meetings with the Ministry, and partly through the follow-up of development agreements between the HEIs and the Ministry. Other aspects are monitored through surveys or evaluations or through NOKUT’s work on quality assurance.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Viewpoints vary on the value of overall statistics, and on what some see as a lack of convincing instruments to track actual change in education and quality of the work to enhance education. The discussion is on how to combine individual data with concrete measures. Other issues under debate are the amount of reporting, and the resources required to pinpoint the origins of development in quality, the need of knowledge balanced versus resources used for reporting. In an ideal world, those data are also used in internal or local evaluations of education – synergies and balances that are also valuable locally at the institutions. Concerning the ‘Student Barometer’, for instance, there is an ongoing discussion about methodology, as multiple years with large efforts are not reflected in overall student satisfaction. Some also question whether, or to what extent, student satisfaction reflects actual quality (what happens in the classroom). However, there is agreement that large changes or variations can indicate areas for further exploration.

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

There is no formal requirement from the Ministry of Education and Research that the higher education institutions develop strategies to promote teaching and learning and hence no specific support for such development work. However, there is a clear expectation that this is an important part of their development work, and in practice they have all developed strategies that include targets relating to teaching and learning.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The accredited higher education institutions are all members of Universities Norway, which provides meeting places and forums for strategic discussions and exchanges. The activities are funded from a membership fee from the institutions, and, for certain activities, from the budget of the Ministry of Education and Research. Also, among academic environments, there are a multitude of forums for discussing teaching and learning, often centred around researchers on higher education teaching or centres for excellence. The latter also organize conferences and seminars that include national and international participants.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects?**
Please tick those, that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

When ECTS was introduced, first in Erasmus, then in the Bologna Process, Norway already had a credit system in place in higher education which had started slowly as far back as in the 1970s. In that system, 20 credits were given for a year of fulltime study, and the change to 60 credits per year introduced through the ECTS system was made as part of a revision of the legislation on higher education in 2002 (in the laws preceding present legislation), to follow up a 2001 white paper on quality in higher education through which a lot of the Bologna implementation was launched.

The Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Higher Education was introduced in 2009, to be implemented by 2012. This means that all study programmes at all the higher education institutions should be described in learning outcomes by the end of 2012. In the first years after the introduction of the system of learning outcomes, the HEIs had to report on the implementation progress in the annual budget reports to the Ministry.

The QF for higher education became part of the Norwegian National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning when that was launched in 2011. In 2014, the Norwegian Qualifications Framework was referenced to EQF and self-certified to QF-EHEA.

Implementing learning outcomes is a slow process, and in the 2017 white paper on culture for quality in higher education, the importance of learning outcomes as a tool for quality in education was (again) strongly underlined.

Regarding student-centred learning, this has always been an ideal. As a measure, it was introduced through the revision of the regulations on quality assurance and accreditation in higher education that took effect as from 2017. Following this revision, the requirements for student-centred learning are in line with those of the 2015 edition of the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). It is also encouraged through other measures, eg. the 'programme for student-active learning' mentioned above.

Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The institutional merit systems described above are very important for the continuous enhancement of teaching. Also, a strategy on the early academic career was launched earlier this autumn, but due to the recent change of government, it is still too early to state to what extent it will be followed up.

Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE
(Max. 500 characters including spaces)

These issues are all high on the political agenda, and in Norway, as in all other countries, the Covid-19 pandemic provided a lightning digital transformation. A strategy on the digitalisation in higher education was launched earlier this autumn, but due to the recent change of government, it is too early to know to what extent, or in what form, it will be taken forward.

Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The regulation concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts in higher education, which includes educational requirements for higher education staff, is important in this respect, in combination with the institutional excellence in teaching awards.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The present government was appointed on 15 October, so it is too early to have an opinion on particular challenges regarding the new government's strategy.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

•
What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities?**
(Max. 500 characters including spaces)

In general, it would be interesting to learn about national measures to promote quality enhancement in teaching and learning. Work on educational quality is continuous, so good ideas for successful measures are always welcome.

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

[Meld. St. 16 \(2016–2017\) - regjeringen.no](#)

[Meld. St. 4 \(2018–2019\) - regjeringen.no](#)

[Regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts - Lovdata](#)

[learning-from-innovations-in-higher-education 2020.pdf \(nokut.no\)](#)

[developing-educational-excellence-in-higher-education 2019.pdf \(nokut.no\)](#)

[2018-eair-forum andersen-helseth-braaten track-1.pdf \(nokut.no\)](#)

[Excellence - The Norwegian Way \(nokut.no\)](#)

Portugal

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

In Portugal, the National Strategy for Higher Education, Research and Innovation approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 25/2018, states the target to achieve a level of 40% of tertiary education graduates in the 30-34 years old age group by 2020 (35% in 2016), and of 50% by 2030. In addition, 60% of those aged 20 should participate in higher education by 2030.

To achieve these goals several measures have been putted in place to improve Higher Education Learning and Teaching, making student-centred learning a reality, promoting students mobility, supporting lifelong learning and the labour market relevance through:

1. Funding of programmes aimed to reinforce educational offering, especially trough upskilling and reskilling. The total amount of funding reaches 252 M€ and is integrated in the national recovery plan. The programmes are:
 - “Impulso Jovem STEAM” (Youth STEAM Impulse), which aims to promote and support initiatives exclusively aimed at increasing the higher education attainment of young people in the STEAM fields, in accordance with the new needs of the labour market – which Portugal has been closely following also in the scope of [Labour Market Relevance and Outcomes partnership initiative](#);
 - “Impulso Adultos” (Adult Impulse), which aims to strengthen and diversify post-secondary education, ensuring both reskilling and upskilling through the development of flexible qualification solutions.
2. Funding of programmes to promote innovation in teaching and applied research (e.g. living labs with Demola Network, practice based learning);
3. Legal changes in order to:
 - a) create 1-year professional master programs (60 ECTS), aimed exclusively for the training of students with demonstrated previous professional experience.
 - b) change the HEI short cycles to reduce length and increase recognition of students prior professional experience;
 - c) Funding of a national mobility programme for students to live in the inland Portugal (Programa + Superior - more than 5000 scholarships in 2021);
 - d) regulate distance learning, demanding flexible learning pathways and the establishment of educational teams including both academics and support staff;
 - g) development of new routes to enter higher education by VET students and learners from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups;
4. assure more scientific employment, with less precarious situations, and a bigger parity between teaching and research careers. Since 2017, a national strategy to promote scientific employment led to an unprecedented evolution in scientific employment, with a 9% growth in career contracts with professors and researchers between 2015 and 2020, and with the almost total replacement of post-doctoral scholarships by contracts.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Although there seems to be a broad agreement on the priorities to be addressed and the goals to be achieved, stakeholders may not always agree on how to reach them, but the Ministry asks for their contributions and view in a public or targeted consultations.

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed**? Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The strategy results from the OECD review to Portugal developed during 2016-2017, which facilitated and promoted a detailed analysis and discussion of Portugal's research and higher education systems, together with a process of serious public engagement in the discussion of the OECD recommendations to further strengthening the country's performance in terms of an international perspective and multidisciplinary approach. This process has occurred about ten years after a previous OECD review of the Portuguese tertiary education system, in 2007.

The OECD recommendations were putted in place with several legal changes that are described below.

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organisations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

Mainly through public or targeted consultations and, in the framework of the national recovery plan, more involvement of stakeholders and their organisations in the definition and co-design of study programs, specially in the STEAM areas and lifelong learning.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Targeted consultations allow gauging sector specific approaches. To facilitate exchanges between the various stakeholders, efforts are made to provide occasions for them to come

together and share and discuss their views, including a more active participation in initiatives that promote the transversal skills and employability of students and graduates

Public consultations contribute to make initiatives more visible while promoting participation and ownership. Reaching a broader audience also results in more diverse perspectives.

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement** the **national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The OECD recommendations were putted in place with several legal changes:

- Strengthening the National Digital Competencies Initiative (INcoDe2030) (RCM n.º 26/2018)
- Modernize the legal regime on degrees and diplomas of higher education, allowing Phds in Polytechnics, reinforcing lifelong learning and deepening the connection between Education and Research and companies (DL 65/2018 and DL 27/2021)
- Review on the International Student Status, stimulating the internationalisation of higher education (DL 62/2018)
- Approval of legal framework to recognize academic degrees and other qualifications awarded by foreign higher education institutions (DL 66/2018)
- Changes in the legal framework that regulates research grants and scientific employment (DL 57/2016 and DL 123/2019)
- Approval of the Distance Learning Legal Regime (DL 133/2019)
- Review of the higher education entrance examination system to ensure it is appropriately adapted to students from upper secondary vocational education (DL 11/2020)
- Funding to the modernization of teaching and learning (Impulsos Jovem and Steam, PBL projects, among others)
- Funding to HEI's through a national agreement that promotes stability in the funding and defines the goals to be attained. It aims to respond effectively and sustainably, through setting goals, to the countries main challenges. The subsequent annual State budget provisions have highlighted political priorities, measures, targets and the financing available for their achievement.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, a new initiative emerged: "Skills 4 post-Covid - Skills for the Future" to consolidate and improve the joint response of science and higher education systems to the challenges brought by COVID-19, involving HEIs and public and private employers, facilitating speedy adaptation in teaching, learning, work and research practices,

as well as approaches to be consolidated to better prepare for the transition to the post-COVID-19 period.

Regarding the relation between research and teaching careers, the government has launched in may 2021 a discussion on a strategy (named “A pact to reinforce investment in R&D and scientific institutions and careers”) in order to review the research career and teaching careers status on the public sector and a to approver for the first time the research and teaching career status on the private HEI.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Through regular follow-up, data collecting and reporting. If applicable, lessons learned can bring about changes during implementation and/or inform subsequent developments or initiatives.

As an example of transparency and to reach a wider audience, the presentation of the 35 eligible applications to the “Youth STEAM Impulse” and “Adult Impulse” was streamed online. In addition, targets achieved within the Portuguese RRP are regularly updated on its website (not yet available in EN).

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The most explicit document regarding “institutional strategies” is the Agreement for the Legislature 2020-2023 that states that all institutions must have in place initiatives in order to attain goals such as

a) broaden the social basis for participation in higher education towards a knowledge-based society;

b. diversify and specialise the teaching/learning process in higher education, intensifying R&D;

c. employing better with more and better integration between education, research and innovation and articulation with companies

The funding of programmes aimed to reinforce educational offering, like Impulso Jovem and STEAM also demand and support the development of institutional strategies.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

HEIs can exchange examples of good practice through their representative associations both at national, European and international level, and through the networks in which they participate.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects**? Please tick those, that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Such principles have long been enshrined in national legislation starting with Decree-Law no. 42/2005, of 22 February, which defines the regulatory instruments for the creation of the European higher education area. Decree-Law no. 107/2008, of 25 June, even stipulated the need for HEIs to publish an annual report on the implementation of the Bologna process.

Accordingly, the above initiatives to some extent contribute to promote the development of the Bologna Process in Higher Education and more and more the concept of student-centered learning.

Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Agreement for the Legislature 2020-2023 commits to strengthening academic careers and stimulating scientific employment: ensuring the development of teaching and research careers in higher education, namely ensuring the timely application of the legal regime of degrees and diplomas in force, as revised in 2018, and stimulating openness, mobility and diversification of teaching and research careers.

To promote the **enhancement of teaching**, there was funding awarded to programmes to promote innovation in teaching and applied research (e.g. living labs with Demola Network, practice based learning projects, within the programme for modernization of polytechnics, etc).

Research careers were also addressed during PPUE21 and are under discussion at national level.

Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

These issues are addressed in the INCoDe.2030, in the Agreement for the Legislature 2020-2023 and in the "Skills 4 post-Covid - Skills for the Future" initiative.

Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The Agreement for the Legislature 2020-2023 highlights reformulating and/or introducing new methodologies to reduce failure and dropout rates. In addition, it stresses the need to diversify and specialise teaching and learning, by intensifying R&D activities.

The "Skills 4 post-Covid - Skills for the Future" encourages experimentation and dissemination of innovative teaching and learning adapted to a system of blended learning and differentiated across all levels of higher education.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The pandemic had a strong impact on the whole of society. Although higher education systems and institutions showed great resilience and life seems to be gradually returning to normal, different recovery paces are likely to occur and a new set of challenges may arise. The "Skills 4 post-Covid - Skills for the Future" initiative will be instrumental in this regard.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

•
What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities?**
(Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Other approaches to similar issues, what obstacles did they face and how they surpassed them.

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

Links to documents and/or websites in English have been embedded in the above replies.

Additional information on the above initiatives as well as others not listed here is available here: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/national-reforms-higher-education-53_en

<https://perin.pt/the-presidency-of-the-council-of-the-european-union/>

<https://www.oecd.org/portugal/oecd-review-of-higher-education-research-and-innovation-portugal-9789264308138-en.htm>

https://wwwcdn.dges.gov.pt/sites/default/files/lmro_partnership_initiative_progress_report_portugal.pdf

Austria

Does your country have a **national strategy and/or set of strategic measures to promote HE learning and teaching**? Please describe your national strategy / strategic measures (including objectives, themes, action areas, periods). (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

Austria does not have a single, encompassing national strategy, but **several elements forming a strategic framework to promote HE learning and teaching**:

- The “Austrian Higher Education Conference” (Hochschulkonferenz) is a strategic forum for policy advice and co-ordination, which involves representatives from all HE sectors and stakeholders. The Conference prepares recommendations on a variety of topics, including strategic aspects of teaching and learning. These recommendations contribute to sector-specific strategic frameworks.
- Sector specific strategic frameworks address the development of L&T:
 - o Public Universities: The “National Development Plan for Public Universities” (Gesamtösterreichischer Universitätsentwicklungsplan) includes strategic objectives for the promotion of teaching and learning. These objectives are reflected in the governance and funding of public universities (esp. through performance agreements).
 - o Universities of Applied Sciences: The “Development and Funding Plan for Universities of Applied Sciences” (Fachhochschulentwicklungs- und Finanzierungsplan) includes strategic objectives addressing teaching and learning. This Plan serves as a basis for the strategic development of the sector, which includes the provision of federal funds.

Table 1.1: Organisational framework for higher education sectors

	Public universities	Universities of applied sciences	Private universities	University colleges of teacher education
Legal basis	Universities Act 2002 (UG)	University of Applied Sciences Act (FHG)	Private Higher Education Act (PrivHG)	Teacher Education Act 2005 (HG)
Legal status	Independent legal entity governed by public law	Various legal entities mainly governed by private law	Various legal entities mainly governed by private law	Federal or private institutions
Steering mechanisms	Austrian National Development Plan for Public Universities (GUEP)	Development and funding plan for universities of applied sciences (FH-EF-Plan)	n/a	Funding plan for university colleges of teacher education (PH-EP)
Degree of autonomy	Autonomous	Autonomous	Autonomous	Semi-autonomous
Supervision	Government supervision	Accreditation	Accreditation	Government supervision
Funding	Mainly government funding: “ <i>Universitätsfinanzierung NEU</i> ” model via performance agreements	Study places funded by federal government and other sources (e.g. states)	No institutional funding from federal government	Public and private funders
Current number	22	21	16	14

Source: Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF), reporting date: 1 January 2021

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How and when was / is the **national strategy / set of strategic measures developed**? Please describe the reasons for and the genesis of their development. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The **“Austrian Higher Education Conference”** (Hochschulkonferenz) was progressively established from 2011 onwards. It resulted from the need for closer communication and co-operation between the sectors with a view to more coherence of the higher education system, at the same time respecting their individual mission, profile and governance.

In 2015, the Conference published **“Recommendations to improve the quality of HE teaching”** (available in German). The recommendations resulted from debates between stakeholders (in sub-groups and workshops) addressed **four quality dimensions of teaching** (teaching competence, curricular design, organization of teaching and learning, resources and output). They emphasise the **responsibility of higher education institutions** and the **need to display cases of good practice**.

These recommendations also resulted in the relevant chapters on teaching and learning of the **National Sectoral Plans**. They also gave an impetus to create a **national database with examples of good practice in teaching**, and to organise regular **dialogues on teaching and learning** (thematic workshops involving all HE sectors).

How were / are **stakeholders** and their organisations (both from the HE area, as well as outside, e.g. labour market) **involved in developing** your national strategy/ set of strategic measures? (Max. 1000 characters including spaces)

The **“Austrian Higher Education Conference”** (Hochschulkonferenz) includes a **core team of 13 members** from the following institutions:

- rectors conferences of the public universities, the universities of applied sciences, the university colleges of teacher education, the private universities
- national students union
- senates of public universities
- Austrian Science Council
- Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research

Members of the science community are directly involved, depending on treated topics. These include other Federal Ministries, Research Societies and Councils, Trade Unions, QA Agency as well as the Bologna Follow-up Group.

Strategic plans and documents are subject to **public consultation** and/or **consultation of the Rectors’ Conferences** and the **Students’ Union**.

Please indicate different views and perceptions about the involvement of stakeholders in the development of a strategy and/or measures: (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Please describe your action and instruments to **implement** the **national strategy / set of strategic measures** These may include legal provisions, financial regulations, formal agreements, incentives and sanctions. (Max. 2500 characters including spaces)

The **“National Development Plan for Public Universities”** (Gesamtösterreichischer Universitätsentwicklungsplan) sets eight strategic objectives. These are specified through areas for strategic action, which are updated every three years (last update: 12/2019). **Objective 3 (Improve the quality of university teaching)** comprises the following **areas for strategic action** such as:

- curricular development (incl. broad BA-studies)
- digital competences and computational thinking in all studies
- Consideration of humanities and ethics as well as technology assessment in all studies
- improvement of teaching methods, didactics and organisation of studies
- research connotation for all studies (esp. MA studies)
- matching of the profile of studies and the profile of the university
- display of quality cycles for quality-driven development of teaching
- integration of less demanded offers into inter-institutional and inter-regional co-operative offers

These areas of strategic action are **further reflected** in the tri-annual **performance agreements** between each public universities and the Federal Ministry. The performance agreements are the basis for federal funding and **define objectives** (qualitative and quantitative) and **action** (including time schedule) for each performance area.

The **performance agreements for the period 2022 – 2024** specifically address the development of quality and support to student progress. Universities should commit themselves to:

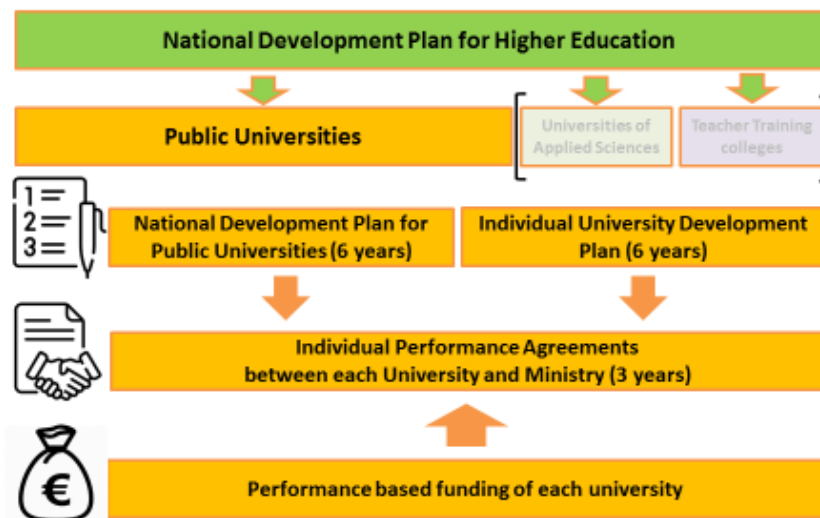
- further development of curricula, the organisation of studies and student support
- measures to support scientific staff with regard to their didactic competence and their administrative workload
- quality measures and their effects should be subject to external reviews and audits
- universities should demonstrate the use of outcomes of evaluation and monitoring (“closing the quality cycle”)

- the provision of digital tools and learning environments, as well as the acquisition of digital competences
- the promotion of lifelong learning
- reaching agreed target values on the number of “active” students (students that achieve at least 16 ECTS credit points per year), the number of graduates and teacher/student-ratios

To benefit from **competitive funds**, that are part of the university budgeting, universities have to prove action in at least five of the following seven areas:

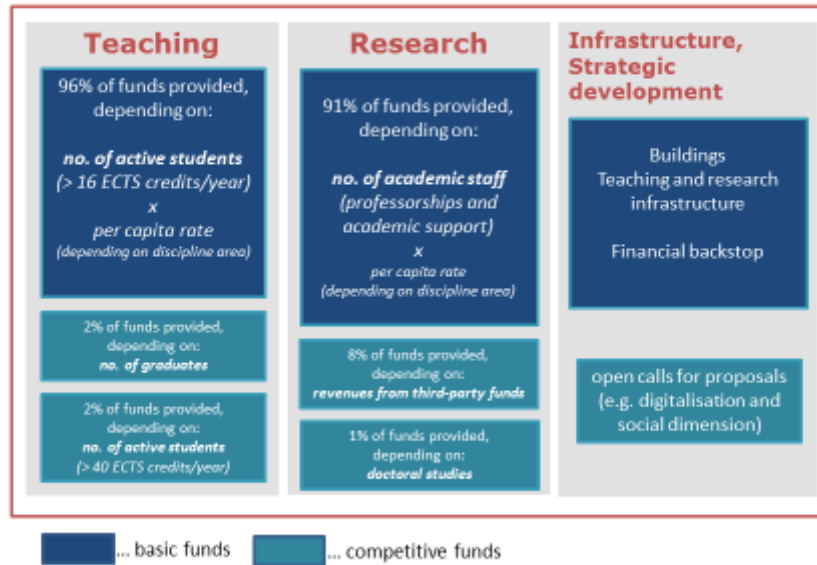
- student assessment as part of the quality cycle
- monitoring of graduates and their career tracks
- graduate feedback on the quality of studies
- monitoring of student progress in individual study programmes
- external evaluation of student progress and mutual exchange
- quality of processes for curricular development
- evaluation of students’ examination and assessment procedures

Instruments for the governance of Public Universities in Austria



Alexander Kohler, BMBWF

The three pillars of global budgeting of public universities



The “**Development and Funding Plan for Universities of Applied Sciences**” (Fachhochschulentwicklungs- und Finanzierungsplan) includes strategic objectives addressing teaching and learning. This Plan serves as a basis for the strategic development of the sector. The distribution of federal funds following a per capita formula is based on the principles formulated therein. Federal funds for new study programmes are allocated through calls for tenders. The actual allocation of funds will only take place after accreditation by the quality assurance agency.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

How is the **implementation monitored**? Please describe any mechanisms and tools for the monitoring, as well as action drawn from the monitoring (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

The **Public Universities** report to the Federal Ministry on progress through:

- **Bi-annual meetings** between the Rectorate and the Federal Ministry. Minutes of these meetings are reference for further action.
- **Knowledge balance reports** including key indicators on “intellectual property”, “key processes”, “key outputs and effects”. The design of the reports are regulated through a ministerial by-law.

- **Reports of universities on the achievement of target values**, as agreed in the performance agreements. In the area of teaching these include the number of “active” students and the number of graduates.

Public universities must undergo **external audits of their quality management system**. These audits also focus on QM processes for teaching and learning. Audits are regulated by federal legislation and are conducted by either the Austrian QA Agency or any other EQAR-registered agency.

The **Universities of Applied Sciences** are subject to **programme and institutional accreditation** and **audit** by an external quality assurance agency (AQ Austria or other EQAR agencies). These include the assessment of teaching and learning quality and institutional measures to quality enhancement.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures stipulate the **development of institutional strategies** to promote teaching and learning? If so, how are **HEIs supported in developing institutional strategies** in connection with the national strategies / sets of strategic measures? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

- The different strategic frameworks do not explicitly stipulate the development of institutional strategies to promote teaching and learning, but they require HEIs to take concrete action.
- Public universities are legally required to prepare and update **institutional development plans** (every three years). The development plans are a key strategic instrument for planning and forms a basis for the performance agreements. Since they have to address all performance areas, they illustrate the university’s strategy for teaching and learning. When drafting their performance agreements, universities must refer to their development plans.
- External **audits of institutional QM systems** and external **accreditation** also follow the principles of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG). The first part of the ESG expects HEIs to have an “institutional policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management”.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Do HEIs have fora for **exchange concerning examples of good practice**? If so, which? Who promotes this exchange? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

- The HEIs have established **inter-university fora for exchange (sector specific, discipline specific, regional)**. These meet regularly for exchange of specific questions and topics. Some of them organise workshops and seminars involving experts and interested people.
- Apart from such fora, there exist other formats to support exchange of good practice: The BMBWF organises “dialogues on teaching and learning”, which are workshops on specific questions and topics. These workshop formats also offer the opportunity to present examples of excellent teaching, which were awarded with the national “Ars Docendi”.
The AQ Austria organises annual conferences on quality assurance in various areas.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Does your national strategy / set of strategic measures **address the following aspects**? Please tick those, that are addressed and elaborate how they are addressed; and comment, if relevant.

Institutional implementation of the Bologna Process tools, such as ECTS, learning outcomes, and the concept student-centered learning (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

All HEIs are legally required to implement Bologna tools, including the above mentioned.

Aspects of continuous enhancement of teaching through staff development (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Public Universities have to demonstrate measures to promote staff development. Such regulations are set by performance agreements.

Quality assurance of staff development are subject of external audits. (In the case of Universities of Applied Sciences, it is also part of the institutional accreditation).

Issues of digital transformation, blended learning formats, and open education in HE (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

These aspects are integrative part of the various instruments and frameworks mentioned above.

Drawing attention to questions of teaching and learning and provide incentives for good teaching (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Public universities may benefit from competitive funds, provided through the performance agreements, if they prove the implementation of QA measures to enhance teaching (see above).

Many HEIs provide for incentives such as teacher awards and fora on teaching quality.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

Are you currently facing **particular challenges in developing or implementing** your national strategy / set of strategic measures to promote learning and teaching? (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

Teaching and learning have gained not only attention but also relevance for the governance of public universities. A major challenge is to use effective levers (e.g. indicators for funding) and, at the same time, respecting the institutional capacity and autonomy to steer learning and teaching quality.

Please describe aspects, on which different stakeholders in your country have different views and opinions (If applicable, max. 500 characters including spaces)

What would you **like to learn about other countries' national strategies and activities?** (Max. 500 characters including spaces)

- Should national strategies for learning and teaching be integrative part of broader strategies, or may they be more effective if they are separate?
- How do other countries translate their strategies into HE governance?
- How do other countries monitor progress in teaching and learning quality?

Please provide **links to websites / documents** (in English) about your strategy / set of strategic measures, examples of good practice, literature, reports, platforms etc. that you wish to spread and promote.

National Development Plan for Public Universities:

https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/dam/jcr:dd33ff38-f6c4-406f-84be-ed2a64db4d6d/GUEP_2019-2024-EN_Version_2017.pdf

Development and Funding Plan for Universities of Applied Sciences:

https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/dam/jcr:12facb32-b08a-4bca-97b4-d7dc6703e0ef/fhplan_201819-202223.pdf (in German only)

University Report 2020: <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/dam/jcr:66d8a4ff-3fd3-4fa0-a4b9-9d6e38a318f6/University%20Report%202020%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education: [RIS - ERV 2011 1 74 - Austrian Laws \(bka.gv.at\)](#) (version: 1 January 2021)