

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY IN EUROPE II

THE SCORECARD

By Thomas Estermann, Terhi Nokkala & Monika Steinel

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FOREWORD



Higher education stakeholders broadly agree on the considerable benefits and importance of university autonomy. In its various declarations, the European University Association (EUA) has reaffirmed the crucial role of institutional autonomy for higher education institutions and society at large. While autonomy is not a goal in itself, it is a vital precondition for the success of Europe's universities. Following its Exploratory Study "University Autonomy in Europe I" in 2009, this project report is another milestone in EUA's developing agenda on this important topic.

The study provides a more detailed picture (than in the previous report) of the current status of institutional autonomy in EUA's member countries. The Autonomy Scorecard itself offers a tool to benchmark national higher education frameworks in relation to autonomy, and enables the establishment of correlations between autonomy and other concepts, such as performance, funding, quality, access and retention. While acknowledging that there are many different models, it nevertheless tries to identify the basic principles and conditions which are important for universities if they are to fulfill optimally their missions and tasks. The scorecards, which were developed on four different elements of autonomy, seek to provide a subjective view of the issue from an institutional perspective. They aim to promote debate and encourage national policy makers to take action to improve the conditions for universities in future governance reforms.

It is clear that autonomy does not mean the absence of regulations. The state needs to provide an appropriate framework in which universities can fulfill their missions in the best possible way. The project tried to compare different framework conditions, focusing particularly on the areas of organisational, financial, academic and staffing autonomy.

Measuring, scoring and weighting the different aspects of autonomy has been a complex and often controversial undertaking. For this reason, transparency in presenting the methodology used is of the utmost importance. A sound understanding of the methodology is also essential to the interpretation of the data and the scorecard results.

The report reveals that, although the institutional freedom of European universities has generally increased, a number of systems still grant their universities too little autonomy and thereby limit their performance. This study and other recent EUA work also shows that reforms in the field of autonomy will need to be accompanied by measures to develop institutional capacities and human resources.

EUA for its part will continue to monitor the progress of reforms in governance given their central importance for universities. In 2012, further information and data will also be made available on an online platform on EUA's website.

Finally, I would like to thank the partners of this project, and the Secretaries General of Europe's national rectors' conferences and their expert staff, who contributed significantly to this project.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "JMR".

Professor Jean-Marc Rapp
EUA President

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Monitoring, comparing, measuring and scoring different elements of institutional autonomy in 28 European higher education systems has been an ambitious undertaking which could only be achieved through the active support of many individuals and organisations.

EUA is deeply grateful for the active support of its collective members. The input, expertise and commitment of the Secretaries General of the national rectors' conferences and their expert staff were instrumental to the project's success.

The EUA Board and Council members provided guidance and expertise throughout the project and ensured that the diversity of the higher education systems was respected in the study.

We would further like to thank the project partners, steering committee members and experts for the time and expertise invested in the Autonomy Scorecard project. Their multiple perspectives and experiences proved to be invaluable in helping to tackle the considerable challenges encountered in the course of the project. Their enthusiasm, commitment and critical reflection on the methodology and analysis were crucial success factors from the beginning.

We are particularly indebted to Howard Newby, chair of the project steering committee, for his continuous commitment. His capacity to synthesise all reflections and suggestions in a coherent manner was invaluable for the success of the project.

Further thanks go to Terhi Nokkala, co-author of the report, who also conducted the interviews and contributed to the data analysis.

We would also like to thank colleagues at the EUA secretariat for the help provided: Ulrike Reimann and Andrew Miller, for their continuous support in the successful dissemination of the results, and Enora Bennetot Pruvot, for contributing to the project in various ways, particularly in the development of the scoring and weighting mechanisms.

Monika Steinel, co-author of the report, deserves particular acknowledgement for contributing to every aspect of the project. Her committed work on the data analysis, validation and day-to-day management was crucial for the project's success.

Finally, EUA would like to acknowledge the financial support of the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, which co-funded this project under the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Thomas Estermann
Head of Unit, EUA

INTRODUCTION

University governance and the relationship between the state and higher education institutions are issues that have generated intense debate in recent years, since they are seen as important conditions for the modernisation of Europe's universities. EUA has monitored and analysed the development and impact of autonomy and related reforms through a wide array of studies as well as through stakeholder debates, conferences and its Institutional Evaluation Programme. The importance of autonomy for EUA's member universities is reflected in the findings of EUA's Trends 2010 report, in which 43% of university respondents viewed autonomy reform as one of the most important institutional developments of the past decade (Sursock & Smidt 2010: 18). Indeed, various studies have demonstrated the positive effects of institutional autonomy (Aghion *et al.* 2008: 5; Reichert & Tauch 2005: 7; Estermann & Bennetot Pruvot 2011).

With its study "University Autonomy in Europe I" (Estermann & Nokkala 2009), EUA has started to provide data on institutional autonomy, which aims to enable university practitioners and policy makers to compare systems more effectively across Europe. The Autonomy Scorecard represents a further step in this process by describing the current state of affairs in university autonomy and by ranking and rating higher education systems according to their degree of autonomy. With the development of a methodology that measures and scores the different levels of institutional autonomy in Europe's higher education systems, this project is treading new ground. It aims to engage all relevant stakeholders in a more in-depth debate on autonomy and thereby help to improve higher education systems. It provides an institutional perspective on autonomy by involving the university sector, chiefly represented by the European national rectors' conferences, at all stages.

EUA's policy positions

From the start, autonomy has played an important role in EUA's policy positions and declarations. The **Salamanca Declaration**, issued during the Convention that marked the creation of EUA in 2001, holds "autonomy with accountability" as its first principle. It states that:

"European higher education institutions accept the challenges of operating in a competitive environment at home, in Europe and in the world, but to do so they need the necessary managerial freedom, light and supportive regulatory frameworks and fair financing, or they will be placed at a disadvantage in cooperation and competition. The dynamics needed for the completion of the European Higher Education Area will remain unfulfilled or will result in unequal competition, if

the current over-regulation and minute administrative and financial control of higher education in many countries is upheld".

The need for greater autonomy was also underlined in the **Graz Declaration** (2003), which states that:

"Governments must therefore empower institutions and strengthen their essential autonomy by providing stable legal and funding environments. Universities accept accountability and will assume the responsibility of implementing reform in close cooperation with students and stakeholders, improving institutional quality and strategic management capacity".

EUA's **Lisbon Declaration** (2007) sets out four basic dimensions of autonomy:

1. academic autonomy (deciding on degree supply, curriculum and methods of teaching, deciding on areas, scope, aims and methods of research);
2. financial autonomy (acquiring and allocating funding, deciding on tuition fees, accumulating surplus);
3. organisational autonomy (setting university structures and statutes, making contracts, electing decision-making bodies and persons);
4. staffing autonomy (responsibility for recruitment, salaries and promotions).

EUA's **Prague Declaration** (2009) presented 10 success factors for European universities in the next decade, which included autonomy:

"Universities need strengthened autonomy to better serve society and specifically to ensure favourable regulatory frameworks which allow university leaders to design internal structures efficiently, select and train staff, shape academic programmes and use financial resources, all of these in line with their specific institutional missions and profiles".

The European Commission and a significant number of European governments have also recognised the need for university autonomy. In its Communication "Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation" (May 2006), the European Commission marks as a priority the creation of new frameworks for universities, characterised by improved autonomy and accountability. The Council of the European Union (2007) confirms this approach and makes an explicit link between autonomy and the ability of universities to respond to societal expectations.

In this framework, university autonomy is not only crucial to the achievement of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), but is also a determining factor in the completion of the European Research Area (ERA), as stated in the European Commission's Green Paper "The European Research Area: New Perspectives" (April 2007). In its viewpoint on the Commission's Green Paper, EUA has re-affirmed the principles of university autonomy.

The EU Flagship Initiative "Innovation Union" of the Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (2010) states the need for European universities to be freed from over-regulation and micro-management in return for full accountability. EUA's statement on the "Innovation Union" also concluded that progress on university autonomy will be an essential component in realising the ambitions of the Innovation Union.

EUA's work on autonomy

EUA's reports have supported these statements. The *Trends* reports, "Financially Sustainable Universities: Towards full costing in European universities", "Financially Sustainable Universities II: European universities diversifying income streams",

and "Institutional Diversity in European Higher Education" analysed the importance of autonomy from different angles and provided empirical evidence for EUA's declarations and policy positions.

EUA's *Trends* reports for example found that autonomy helps to improve quality standards. The Trends IV study states that "there is clear evidence that success in improving quality within institutions is directly correlated with the degree of institutional autonomy" (Reichert & Tauch 2005: 7). This correlation was recently confirmed by EUA's Trends 2010 study (Sursock & Smidt 2010).

The study "Financially Sustainable Universities II: European universities diversifying income streams" found that a university's ability to generate additional income relates to the degree of institutional autonomy granted by the regulatory framework in which it operates. This link was established for all dimensions of autonomy, including organisational, financial, staffing and academic autonomy. The data revealed that financial autonomy is most closely correlated with universities' capacity to attract income from additional funding sources. Staffing autonomy, and particularly the freedom to recruit and set salary levels for academic and administrative staff, were also found to be positively linked to the degree of income diversification (Estermann & Bennetot Pruvot 2011). Finally, by mitigating the risks associated with an overdependence on any one particular funder, a diversified income structure may in turn contribute to the further enhancement of institutional autonomy.

To enable university practitioners and regulatory authorities to compare systems across Europe in a fruitful fashion, EUA started to collect a broad set of data on university autonomy in 2007 and published the results in its 2009 report "University Autonomy in Europe I". This study compared 34 European countries and analysed more than 30 different indicators in four key areas of autonomy. These included organisational autonomy (including academic and administrative structures, leadership and governance), academic autonomy (including study fields, student numbers, student selection and the structure and content of degrees), financial autonomy (including the ability to raise funds, own buildings and borrow money) and

staffing autonomy (including the ability to recruit independently and promote and develop academic and non-academic staff).

This study revealed that the rules and conditions under which Europe's universities operate are characterised by a high degree of diversity. This variety reflects the multiple approaches to the ongoing search for a balance between autonomy and accountability in response to the demands of society and the changing understanding of public responsibility for higher education. And, although the study confirmed the existence of a general trend towards an increase in university autonomy throughout Europe, it showed that a large number of countries still failed to grant their universities enough autonomy. There were also cases where previously granted autonomy had been reduced. In a number of instances an increase in accountability measures had effectively curtailed university autonomy. Quite often there was also a gap between formal autonomy and the real degree of a university's ability to act with independence.

EUA has also been monitoring the evolution and impact of the economic crisis and its effects on higher education systems in Europe since its onset in 2008. This included an analysis of how the crisis has affected the nature of public funding and how such shifts are influencing universities at the institutional level. This revealed that public funding is not only diminishing, but also changing in the nature and form in which it is provided to universities. Public funding is increasingly provided subject to conditions tied to its allocation or accompanied by growing accountability requirements. This has given public authorities more steering power over universities, which significantly contributes to reducing universities' capacity to manage their own funds freely, and hence curtails their autonomy.

Such developments are worrisome as they can hinder universities' capacity to overcome the crisis successfully. EUA's monitoring of the impact of the

crisis has shown that universities' ability to respond effectively to the economic situation also depended on the level of their institutional and, especially, financial autonomy ("Impact of the economic crisis on European universities", EUA 2011). In this

sense, autonomy is seen as one of the prerequisites that enable institutions to allocate their funds strategically and protect those areas that are crucial to the fulfilment of their institutional missions.

Other studies and research

Numerous other studies have attempted to develop the conceptual basis of institutional autonomy (Anderson & Johnson 1998; Ashby & Anderson 1966; Berdahl 1990; Verhoerst *et al.* 2004). Recent autonomy studies have addressed the relationship between the higher education institution and the state (e.g. Dill 2001; Ordorika 2003), or between the higher education institution and another regulatory, often funding, body (Kohtamäki 2009), academic freedom (Karran 2009; Romo de la Rosa 2007), changes in accountability measures (Salmi 2007), and the specific political and historical settings in which autonomy is defined (Felt & Glanz 2002; Huisman 2007; Ordorika 2003).

Autonomy is often addressed as part of larger studies on the governance and management of higher education. Two recent publications (de Boer *et al.* 2010; Jongbloed *et al.* 2010), commissioned by the European Commission, address the link between policy changes related to higher education governance and funding of national higher education systems in 33 European countries. The studies also reflect on the European Modernisation Agenda and its links to governance reforms. The governance study concludes that, while overall institutional autonomy is increasing, there are significant differences in the dimensions of autonomy: organisational autonomy is still rather restricted, while financial autonomy is deemed to be at a medium to high level. The study also notes a link between university performance and institutional autonomy.

Further attempts to relate the governance of universities to their performance have been made by Aghion *et al.* (2008), for example in "Higher Aspirations: an agenda for reforming European universities". This study analyses the relationship between performance in rankings, the status of autonomy and levels of public funding.

A recent World Bank study (Fielden 2008) looks at the structures, processes and activities involved in the planning and direction of the higher education institutions, with specific emphasis on strategy, funding and governance, and references to quality assurance and institutional management. The study focuses on the Commonwealth countries, but takes examples from francophone regions and Latin American countries.

The 2008 Eurydice report on "Higher Education Governance in Europe" particularly analysed policies, official regulations, rights and responsibilities in the governance of higher education institutions and concluded that "there is in general a Europe-wide trend towards less prescriptive regulatory frameworks and that a variety of national models have been developed within the respective contexts of academic self-governance and external accountability".

1. THE AUTONOMY SCORECARD PROJECT

1.1 Project aims and objectives

The Autonomy Scorecard project provides a detailed and accurate picture of the current status of institutional autonomy in 26 different European countries¹. The project focuses on the legislative frameworks in which higher education institutions operate. It updates information from the 2009 study “University Autonomy in Europe I” (Estermann & Nokkala 2009) and includes new elements of autonomy. In addition, it examines some aspects of institutional autonomy in more detail, such as the involvement of external members in governing bodies and quality assurance mechanisms.

The Autonomy Scorecard aims to serve multiple purposes, such as the benchmarking of national policies and awareness-raising among universities. It is intended to act as a reference for further studies and provide a comparable set of data to establish relations between autonomy and other concepts, such as performance, funding, quality, and access and retention in European higher education.

1.2 Methodology

From the Exploratory Study to the Autonomy Scorecard

EUA’s report “University Autonomy in Europe I” provided an important basis for the Autonomy Scorecard project. The current project builds on this study by extending the list of indicators and developing more detailed sets of restrictions for each indicator. In addition to collecting data that reflects the status of institutional autonomy in the year 2010, the project developed a methodology that measures the different levels of autonomy in Europe’s higher education systems by calculating an autonomy score. The difficulties involved in quantifying degrees of autonomy have been acknowledged from the beginning of the project (see section 1.3 “Challenges and constraints”). However, it is hoped that the creation of a scorecard,

which enables the benchmarking of one system’s ‘autonomy performance’ vis-à-vis that of another, will foster a lively debate and drive positive policy developments in this area.

An important facet of the project methodology was the involvement of the broader university community, through EUA’s collective members, throughout the project’s life cycle. Their input was vital in preparing the Autonomy Scorecard project application. The Polish, German and Danish rectors’ conferences, which represent diverse higher education systems, joined EUA in the consortium that carried out the project.

However, all of EUA’s collective members have been involved throughout. The Secretaries General of the national university organisations and

¹ The Autonomy Scorecard project investigated 28 higher education systems in 26 European countries. Due to the federal structure of the German higher education system, three German federal states were included in the study: Brandenburg (BB), Hesse (HE) and North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). The project team thus analysed 28 autonomy questionnaires for 26 countries.

EUA Council members in particular have closely followed the development of the methodology, tracked progress in terms of data collection and analysis, and provided the sector's views on the general direction of the project. They also provided the necessary data from their higher education systems. The EUA Board was equally involved at all stages and served as an important element of quality assurance.

A further important milestone was the selection of an international expert committee that helped the

consortium to steer the project and develop the methodology. The wide range of backgrounds of the steering committee's members provided the appropriate expertise to guide the consortium through this challenging project. The steering committee included executive heads of national rectors' conferences, university leaders and higher education researchers (annex 2).

The project was developed in four, sometimes parallel, stages.

Figure 1 - Development of the Autonomy Scorecard project



The first stage was dedicated to developing and refining the autonomy indicators and describing the elements that represent restrictions as seen from the perspective of higher education institutions. Between October 2009 and April 2010, the EUA secretariat, in close collaboration with the steering committee and the Secretaries General of the rectors' conferences, established a

list of indicators and restrictions (annex 3). Based on this list, a questionnaire was designed to collect data from the individual higher education systems. The questionnaire was then tested by the project partners with data from their higher education systems (April to July 2010) and adaptations were made in summer 2010 to reflect the comments and experiences from this trial.

Table 1: Surveyed higher education systems and abbreviations

Country/System	Country code	Country/System	Country code
Austria	AT	Latvia	LV
Brandenburg (Germany)	BB (DE)	Lithuania	LT
Cyprus	CY	Luxembourg	LU
Czech Republic	CZ	The Netherlands	NL
Denmark	DK	North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany)	NRW (DE)
Estonia	EE	Norway	NO
Finland	FI	Poland	PL
France	FR	Portugal	PT
Greece	GR	Slovakia	SK
Hesse (Germany)	HE (DE)	Spain	ES
Hungary	HU	Sweden	SE
Iceland	IS	Switzerland	CH
Ireland	IE	Turkey	TR
Italy	IT	United Kingdom	UK ²

² The data describes the situation in England, unless otherwise stated.

The questionnaire was submitted to the 26 participating national rector's conferences in August 2010 (table 1). The Secretaries General completed it themselves or passed it on to other experts from the same or a collaborating organisation. These responses then formed the basis for face-to-face or telephone interviews with all respondents. This allowed for the collection of more qualitative data and missing information and for the clarification of any remaining ambiguities. The interview memos were sent to the interviewees for validation and returned to the project team between October 2010 and January 2011. In the early months of 2011, a final validation round was conducted with more than half of the surveyed higher education systems, for which further explanations were required on some selected autonomy indicators.

In parallel, the work on developing a scoring and weighting system was taken up in spring 2010. The scoring system for the Autonomy Scorecard, which is based on evaluations of how restrictive particular regulations were perceived to be, was developed after intense discussions within the project team, the steering committee and EUA's statutory bodies.

The weighting system, which evaluates the relative importance of the individual indicators, is based on the results of a survey conducted among EUA's bodies (EUA Council, Secretaries General and General Assembly) in October 2010 at EUA's annual statutory meetings. The responses of the former two groups were combined and used to design

a weighting system for the autonomy indicators, while those collected from the General Assembly acted as a control group to ensure the validity of the survey results.

Following this, the project team developed a technical structure for the scoring and weighting system, which was combined with the main data collection questionnaire. This made it possible to translate the collected data immediately into a score. Various rounds of comparison and validation were conducted to ensure the comparability of the collected data and scores. A more detailed description of the scoring and weighting methodologies follows below.

The scoring system

The scoring system of the Autonomy Scorecard is based on deduction values. Each restriction on institutional autonomy was assigned a deduction value indicating how restrictive a particular regulation was perceived to be³. Special care was taken to ensure the consistent application of comparable deduction values to similar restrictions across different indicators and national or regional systems.

For example, for the indicator "capacity to decide on the overall number of students" deduction values were assigned as follows.

Table 2 - Capacity to decide on overall number of students – deduction values

Restriction	Deduction value
Independent decision of universities	0 points
Universities decide on the number of fee-paying students, while an external authority decides on the number of state-funded students	2 points
Negotiation between universities and an external authority	2 points
Exclusive decision of an external authority	5 points
Free admission	5 points

The maximum or total possible deduction value for the capacity to decide on the overall number of students is the highest deduction value for the indicator, i.e. 5 points. A system's score is calculated as a percentage of this total. For instance, if the

overall number of students is decided through negotiations between universities and an external authority, that system scores 0.4 or 40% – 2 out of 5 points – for that particular indicator.

Table 3 - Capacity to decide on overall number of students – calculation of scores

Restriction	Deduction value	Score	Percentage
Independent decision of universities	0 points	0/5	0 = 0%
Universities decide on the number of fee-paying students, while an external authority decides on the number of state-funded students	2 points	2/5	0.4 = 40%
Negotiation between universities and an external authority	2 points	2/5	0.4 = 40%
Exclusive decision of an external authority	5 points	5/5	1 = 100%
Free admission	5 points	5/5	1 = 100%

In the case of cumulative deductions, the total possible deduction value is the sum of the deduction values of each possible restriction. This is illustrated by using the indicator “capacity to keep surplus of public funding”, where the maximum deduction value is awarded when surplus cannot be kept. If

it can be kept with other types of restrictions, all restriction values that apply simultaneously are summed up. The following example shows a case in which universities can keep a surplus up to a certain percentage and with the approval of an external authority.

Table 4 - Capacity to keep surplus – calculation of score

Restriction	Deduction value	Score	Percentage
Surplus cannot be kept	10 points		
Surplus can be kept without restrictions	0 points		
Surplus can be kept up to a maximum percentage	2 points	2/10	0.2 = 20%
Surplus can be kept but approval of an external authority is needed	2 points	2/10	0.2 = 20%
Surplus can be kept but its allocation is pre-determined by an external authority	2 points		
Surplus can be kept with other types of restrictions	2 points		
Total score		4/10	0.4 = 40%

Where only a specific combination of restrictions is possible, the total possible deduction value is the sum of the deduction values of all simultaneously possible restrictions.

Using this approach, a score is calculated for each indicator. Once a score for an indicator or autonomy area is obtained, it is ‘reversed’, in the sense that a score of 5%, which indicates a high level of autonomy, becomes 95% (i.e. $100-5\% = 95\%$).

The weighting system

The weightings of the autonomy indicators are based on the results of a survey undertaken during EUA's Annual Conference and statutory meetings held at the University of Palermo (Italy) in October 2010. During the meetings of the EUA Secretaries General and Council, the representatives of the European national rectors' conferences were asked to complete a survey on the relative importance of the autonomy indicators. They were asked to decide whether they considered the indicators included in the autonomy questionnaire to be 'very important', 'fairly important', 'somewhat important' or 'not important'. 30 representatives from 18 countries participated in the survey.

The two sets of surveys yielded very similar results, indicating that the relevant stakeholders broadly agree on the relative importance of the autonomy indicators. The analysis revealed that the indicators were consistently perceived as relevant by both EUA's Council and Secretaries General. Almost all indicators were regarded as 'very important' or 'fairly important'. Diverging views were principally expressed concerning tuition fees, which doubtless reflects different cultural backgrounds and national traditions with regard to this issue.

These results were used to develop a system to weight the autonomy indicators: in a first step, the responses were counted for each autonomy indicator – for instance, out of 30 respondents, 21 considered the ability to decide on the overall number of students as 'very important', seven as 'fairly important', one as 'somewhat important' and one as 'not important'. Points were then assigned to the different response options: 3 points for 'very important', 2 points for 'fairly important', 1 point for 'somewhat important' and 0 points for 'not important'⁴.

The number of respondents who had ticked one of the four response options for a particular indicator was multiplied by the appropriate number of points assigned to that particular response option. This resulted in an indicator's so-called total 'importance value'. For example, in the case of the indicator "ability to decide on the overall number of students", 21 responses for 'very important', 7 for 'fairly important', 1 for 'somewhat important' and 1 for 'not important' were multiplied by 3 ('very important'), 2 ('fairly important'), 1 ('somewhat important') and 0 ('not important'), respectively (table 5).

Table 5 - Ability to decide on overall number of students – calculation of 'importance value'

Ability to decide on the overall number of students	Number of responses	'Importance value'
Very important	21	63
Fairly important	7	14
Somewhat important	1	1
Not important	1	0
Total	30	78

This calculation was carried out for each indicator, and the 'importance value' of all indicators within each autonomy area summed up. In a final step, the 'importance value' of each individual indicator was expressed as a percentage of the sum of the 'importance values' for all indicators within one

autonomy area. For example, by dividing its 'importance value' of 78 by the total 'importance value' for academic autonomy (543), the indicator "ability to decide on the overall number of students" received a weighting factor of 14%.

Table 6 - Academic autonomy – ‘importance values’ and weighting factors

Indicator - academic autonomy	‘Importance value’	Weighting factor
Capacity to decide on the overall number of students	78	14%
Capacity to select students	78	14%
Capacity to introduce and terminate degree programmes	87	16%
Capacity to choose the language of instruction	70	14%
Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms	80	15%
Capacity to select quality assurance providers	61	11%
Capacity to design the content of degree programmes	89	16%
Total	543	100%

Table 6 sums up the weighting factors thus developed for the indicators relating to academic autonomy. Weighted scores are obtained by

multiplying non-weighted scores with the respective percentage values (table 7).

Table 7 - Academic autonomy – non-weighted and weighted scores

Indicator	Non-weighted score	Weighting factor	Weighted score
Capacity to decide on overall number of students	100%	14%	14%
Capacity to decide on admission mechanisms for Bachelor degrees	100%	7%	7%
Capacity to decide on admission mechanisms for Master’s degrees	40%	7%	3%
Capacity to decide on the introduction of Bachelor degrees	20%	4%	1%
Capacity to decide on the introduction of Master’s degrees	20%	4%	1%
Capacity to decide on the introduction of doctoral degrees	20%	4%	1%
Capacity to decide on the termination of degree programmes	40%	4%	2%
Capacity to decide on the language of instruction for Bachelor degrees	0%	7%	0%
Capacity to decide on the language of instruction for Master’s degrees	0%	7%	0%
Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms	0%	15%	0%
Capacity to select quality assurance providers	0%	11%	0%
Capacity to decide on the content of degree programmes	0%	16%	0%
Total score	28%	100%	29%

It is important to note that the different autonomy areas – organisational, financial, staffing and academic autonomy – are not weighted against each other. It was decided that, due to the various and intricate connections between the different autonomy areas, it would be impossible to weight the importance of financial autonomy against that

of staffing autonomy, for example. The perceived importance of a particular indicator is therefore only compared with the perceived importance of the other indicators in the same autonomy area.

1.3 Challenges and constraints

The project team met with a number of challenges, both in the collection and validation of data and the establishment of a robust methodology to measure, score and weight the different elements of autonomy.

Data collection

Monitoring all changes in national and legal frameworks in a large number of higher education systems within the study period presented an enormous challenge due to ongoing reforms in several countries. Previous data collection exercises show that even small changes in legislation can alter the picture markedly and continuous updating, even within the data collection period, was therefore necessary.

Secondly, a reliable comparison of university autonomy across borders is highly challenging. Autonomy is a concept that is understood very differently across Europe; associated perceptions and terminology tend to vary quite significantly. This is due not only to differing legal frameworks but also to the historical and cultural settings that define institutional autonomy in each country. Indeed, the establishment of a single set of restrictions for all indicators proved very difficult in some cases. In order to enable general comparisons, complex and diverse situations had to be simplified, which may have led to specific situations in some systems being reflected in somewhat less detail than would have been desirable.

Selecting, scoring and weighting indicators of autonomy

Institutional autonomy cannot be measured objectively and it was clear from the beginning that the development of a scorecard for the four autonomy areas would be a complex and delicate

task. A number of normative decisions were taken, especially in the selection of the indicators, the allocation of deduction values to individual restrictions and the design of a weighting system, which attributes different values of importance to the autonomy indicators.

The selection of indicators and restrictions reflects an institutional perspective. EUA's collective and individual members provided input which guided the choice of indicators and clarified which regulations are perceived as restrictions on institutional autonomy. Despite the diversity of higher education systems in Europe, there was a coherent view on which indicators the scorecard should include.

It should also be stressed that institutional autonomy does not mean the absence of regulations. All higher education systems need to set a regulatory framework in which their universities can act. For instance, systems need rules to ensure quality standards and determine the terms of public funding. In many of these areas, EUA has developed policy positions that reflect the view of the university sector. In the area of quality assurance, for example, EUA's positions provided a starting point in determining which quality assurance measures should be considered as appropriate; measures that are in line with these policy positions were not regarded as restrictive and hence not assigned a deduction. Similarly, in the area of staffing autonomy, a country's labour law regulations were seen as a basis for university staffing policies and only specific regulations for higher education institutions or civil servants were treated as restrictions.

In order to establish a scoring system, numerical values had to be allocated to the various restrictions on institutional autonomy. The scoring system and the individual deductions on which it is based were extensively debated, tested and finally approved by the project steering committee.

The establishment of a weighting system to reflect the varying degrees of importance assigned to the autonomy indicators also entailed a series of normative steps. The decision to develop such a weighting system was only taken after extended deliberations by the steering committee, who felt that the equal weighting of all autonomy indicators – essentially a weighting ‘by default’ – would not lead to more accurate or objective scores. It was therefore decided that the report should include both non-weighted and weighted scores. The autonomy scores presented in the main text have been weighted; non-weighted scores are provided in annex 5.

The weighting factors, which are based on a survey among the EUA Council and the Secretaries General of the national rectors’ conferences, reflect the perceptions of Europe’s diverse higher education systems. By allocating numerical values to the degree of importance assigned to the various indicators, these views were translated into a numerical system (see section 1.2). The survey showed that views of the relative importance of the indicators were surprisingly coherent among respondents. As previously mentioned, diverging views on tuition fees are indicative of the different cultural backgrounds and practices found in Europe’s higher education systems. While a majority of respondents regarded tuition fees as important, others did not consider the capacity to charge fees as a central element of financial autonomy. There was greater agreement on fees for international and, to some extent, Master’s students.

Ranking and rating

The different possibilities for presenting the scorecard results were also debated intensely. When the data for the 28 higher education systems is fed into the scoring and weighting system, the results appear in a ranking order. Although no obvious clusters emerged, systems were subsequently grouped or rated into four groups on the basis of their scores in order to enable a more detailed comparison and analysis of the results. The report therefore presents both a ranking order and rating clusters.

It is important to read the result tables in parallel with the analysis in chapter 3, since the latter explains why a certain system is situated in a particular group. When making inferences about why universities in one system may be more autonomous than those in another, it is crucial to refer to the text. Finally, it should also be noted that a ranking place reflects the nature and number of restrictions in only one autonomy area.

Measuring accountability

This study is concerned with the relationship between the state and institutions and analyses how this relationship is shaped through specific rules and regulations. This also includes accountability measures, which are established in return for increased institutional autonomy. Quality assurance processes are an important way of ensuring accountability, for instance. While there needs to be a framework for appropriate quality assurance processes, associated regulations can be burdensome and restrictive. By analysing whether universities can freely choose quality assurance mechanisms and providers, the Autonomy Scorecard aims to assess whether existing quality assurance systems can be considered as appropriate.

There are additional aspects of accountability which were not included in the study, as they do not lend themselves to international comparison. In many of its projects, EUA has noted the increase of burdensome and inappropriate accountability measures, for example in competitive funding schemes. These can have a strong negative impact on institutional autonomy.

Despite these constraints and challenges, this report provides much-needed detailed and comparable information on the status of institutional autonomy in 28 higher education systems. It is hoped that by adopting a somewhat more provocative approach, the scorecard will encourage a lively debate in this crucial policy area.

2. THE STATE OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY IN 2010

This chapter describes the state of play in the four dimensions of university autonomy in 28 European higher education systems (in 26 countries) in 2010. The structure and descriptions of the different dimensions of autonomy are based on EUA's study "University Autonomy in Europe I". The text follows the first study in treating organisational, financial, staffing and academic autonomy separately. The sequence of the individual elements in the four dimensions of autonomy has been slightly adapted and chapter headings restructured in the section on financial autonomy. Compared to the initial report "University Autonomy in Europe I", this text contains more detailed information on some aspects of institutional autonomy; these are highlighted

in special boxes. For readability and conciseness, the present chapter contains fewer definitions of the individual elements of university autonomy. Explanations of why the chosen indicators are considered as instrumental to ensuring institutional autonomy are included in EUA's first study.

The information presented here primarily refers to public higher education institutions or universities. Where private or other types of higher education institutions have been incorporated, this is clearly stated in the text. This is particularly the case in countries where private institutions make up a considerable proportion of the higher education sector, such as Portugal and Turkey.

2.1 Organisational Autonomy

Organisational autonomy	Financial autonomy	Staffing autonomy	Academic autonomy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection procedure for the executive head • Selection criteria for the executive head • Dismissal of the executive head • Term of office of the executive head • Inclusion and selection of external members in governing bodies • Capacity to decide on academic structures • Capacity to create legal entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length and type of public funding • Ability to keep surplus • Ability to borrow money • Ability to own buildings • Ability to charge tuition fees for national/EU students (BA, MA, PhD) • Ability to charge tuition fees for non-EU students (BA, MA, PhD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on salaries (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on promotions (senior academic/senior administrative staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on overall student numbers • Capacity to select students (BA, MA) • Capacity to introduce programmes (BA, MA, PhD) • Capacity to terminate programmes • Capacity to choose the language of instruction (BA, MA) • Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms and providers • Capacity to design content of degree programmes

Executive leadership

Selection of the executive head

Although the university leadership may comprise several key staff in the institution, such as the rector, the vice-rectors, the head of administration and the faculty deans, this study focuses primarily on the executive head of the university, who below is referred to as the 'rector', since this is the most commonly used denomination in Europe. Other terms, such as 'vice-chancellor', 'provost', 'president' or 'principal', may be used alternatively.

The selection procedures for the rector vary from country to country. The procedures, which fall into four basic categories, were discussed more specifically in the initial study "University Autonomy in Europe I" (Estermann & Nokkala 2009: 14). The four most common categories are as follows:

1. Elected by a specific electoral body, which is usually large, representing (directly or indirectly) the different groups of the university community (academic staff, other staff, students), whose votes may be weighted.
2. Elected by the governing body, which is democratically elected within the university community (usually the senate, i.e. the body deciding on academic issues).
3. Appointed by the council/board of the university (i.e. the governing body deciding on strategic issues).
4. Appointed through a two-step process in which both the senate and the council/board are involved.

The selection of the rector may have to be validated by an external authority. This applies in half of the studied systems: Brandenburg, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. The appointment is confirmed by the ministry or minister for higher

education in Brandenburg, Greece, Iceland, Italy and the Netherlands, and by the president (or other head of state/government) in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg and Slovakia. In Spain, the appointment is confirmed by the regional authority, in Latvia by a national public authority, and in Sweden by the government. However, in Sweden this is merely seen as a formality.

The selection procedure does not need to be validated by an external authority in the remaining systems (AT, CY, DK, EE, FI, FR, HE, IE, LT, NRW, NO, PL, PT, UK).

Qualifications of the executive head

Provisions regarding the qualification requirements for the rector are specified by law in 16 countries. In 12 systems, restrictions as to who is eligible usually stem from the university's own statutes or from common practice, rather than from legal prescriptions.

Figure 2 - Selection criteria for the executive head



The table below summarises the qualification requirements set down by law. The most common requirement, which applies in 13 systems, is the need for the rector to hold an academic position. In eight systems, s/he is expected to hold a doctoral degree. In four, s/he must come from the university in question.

In several systems, there are additional guidelines regarding, for instance, the particular type of academic position (e.g. full or associate professorship) or university degree (e.g. *habilitation* or lower university degree) candidates are required to hold. Further specifications include international experience (AT), demonstrated managerial competencies (AT, FI, LT, NRW) or experience in pedagogy (LT)⁵. In Denmark, the rector must be a recognised scientist. In Cyprus and Luxembourg, the rector cannot simultaneously hold a position as

dean or head of department or act as a member of the board of governors. In Turkey, rectors must be less than 67 years old when taking office.

There may be different kinds of qualifications depending on the type of institution concerned. In Latvia, for example, the rector of a university must be a professor, while in other types of institutions a doctoral degree is sufficient. In Finland, a doctoral degree is required in all universities except in the academies of performing and fine arts.

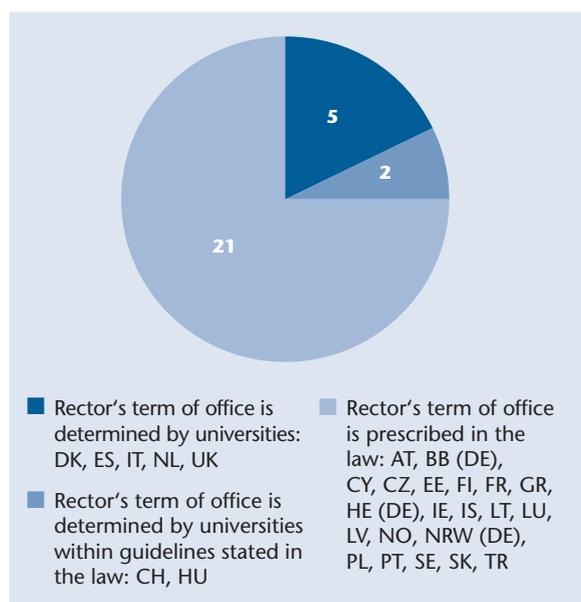
Table 8 - Qualifications of the executive head

	Rector must hold an academic position	Rector must hold a doctoral degree	Rector must come from within the university
CY	•	•	•
DK	•		
EE	•		
ES	•		•
FI		•	
FR	•		
GR	•	•	•
HU	•		
IT	•		•
LT		•	
LU	•	•	
LV	•		
PL	•	•	
PT	•		
SE		•	
TR	•	•	

Term of office and dismissal of the executive head

In most systems the rector's term of office is stated in the law, either as a fixed duration or limited to a maximum period. The term is typically four (AT, CY, CZ, FR, GR, NO, PL, PT, SK, TR), five (EE, FI, IS, LT, LV, LU) or six years (BB, HE, NRW, SE) and

it is often renewable once. In Hungary, the term is between three and five years, while in Switzerland, it is between two and six years, depending on the university. In Ireland, the term of office is a full 10 years. Only in five countries are institutions able to freely determine the length of term of their executive leaders (DK, ES, IT, NL, UK).

Figure 3 - Term of office of the executive head

The possibility of dismissal is a key factor when assessing the rector's accountability to the institution and to other stakeholders. In nine countries (CH, CY, DK, EE, FI, IE, IT, NL, UK), the law does not contain provisions regarding the rector's dismissal.

In the remaining systems, the dismissal of the executive head is more or less strictly regulated. In Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden, the dismissal must be confirmed by an external authority, while the university is free to decide on the procedure. In Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia, the procedure is stated in the law, although the dismissal itself is carried out by the university. In Brandenburg, the Czech Republic, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg and Spain, the dismissal is confirmed by an external authority, and the procedure is stated in the law. In France and Turkey, dismissal procedures are laid down in the law and conducted by an external authority.

In a few systems, regulations concerning the dismissal of the executive head are laid out in more detail. In Austria, dismissals may be carried out by the university, but can only occur in cases of severe misconduct, conviction of a criminal

offence, mental or physical incapacity or loss of confidence on reasonable grounds, and according to a procedure specified in the law. In Norway, the rector is a civil servant and can only be dismissed on the basis of serious misconduct and in accordance with the pertinent law. In Poland, the rector can be dismissed by the selection committee or, in the case of grave misconduct, by the ministry after consultation with the national rectors' conference and the council for higher education.

Internal academic structures

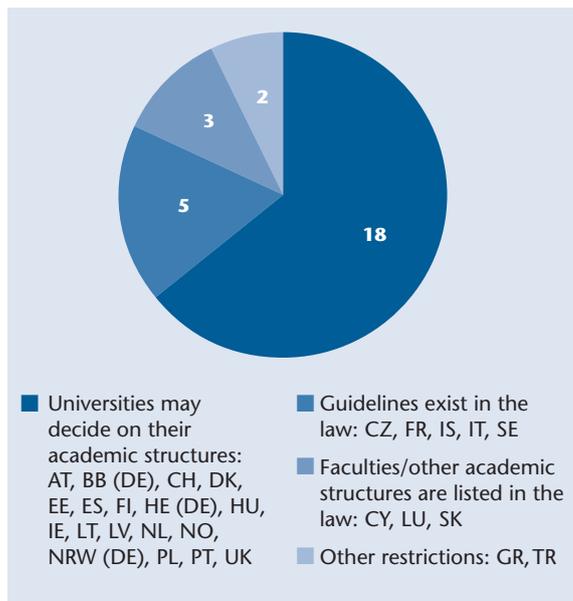
In 18 of the surveyed systems, universities are essentially free to determine their internal academic structures. Although in some of these systems, certain legal provisions concerning organisational units exist, these were not regarded as significant restrictions on institutional autonomy.

In five countries, universities must adhere to legal guidelines. While the law does not explicitly specify the number and name of academic units, other restrictions apply. In Italy, the law states that universities must have faculties and departments and describes their competencies. Similarly, in the Czech Republic, the law prescribes that universities must have faculties and specifies their competencies and governing bodies. While universities may establish or merge faculties, the opinion of the Czech accreditation committee must be sought before doing so. In Iceland, the law states that universities should be organised into schools, faculties and research institutes. However, the university council can decide on the establishment of these academic units and on the need for further, smaller ones, such as departments.

In Cyprus, Luxembourg and Slovakia, academic units are listed by name in the law. In these systems, the universities are unable to establish new faculties and departments or restructure existing ones without amending the law.

Different regulations exist in Greece and Turkey: here, academic structures are subject to approval by the ministry or the council for higher education, respectively.

Figure 4 - Ability to decide on internal academic structures



Creating legal entities

The capacity to create independent legal entities enables universities to implement their strategies in a flexible and adequate way and hence to carry out their main missions. In Cyprus, Greece, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey, universities are only allowed to create not-for-profit entities. In the remaining 18 countries (AT, BB, CZ, EE, ES, FI, FR, HE, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, NO, NRW, UK), universities are able to create both for-profit and not-for-profit entities.

Other restrictions may apply in some countries. In Poland and Iceland, universities are only allowed to create entities whose scope of activity complies with the mission of the university. In Iceland, the consent of an external authority (the Ministry of Education and Research) is also necessary. In Denmark, universities can establish fully-owned limited companies, which can then create subsidiary companies together with

third parties in order to engage in other activities, such as spin-off companies, science parks or student dormitories. The law states that up to 5% of the research budget can be used to establish such companies. In Sweden, only universities that are specifically listed in the law have a right to establish holding companies.

Figure 5 - Ability to create legal entities



Governing bodies

Governance structures

There are two main types of governance structures: dual and unitary. In 15 of the surveyed systems, universities have a dual structure comprising a board or council, which is usually limited in size, and a senate. Although the terminology varies considerably, the senate is often a wider and more representative body, which includes the academic community and, to some extent, other categories of university staff. Competencies are divided between the board/council and the senate.

Universities have a dual governance structure in Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hesse, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (see map 1).

Feature 1 - Governance in the United Kingdom

UK universities have a dual governing structure, which includes an academic senate and a council. The Council, which usually comprises approximately 25 members, is an independent entity and nearly always contains academic staff and student representatives, although there tends to be a majority of independent external members. Appointments are managed by a nominations committee, and vacancies are normally widely publicised both within and outside the institution.

Differences between institutional governing bodies stem from their historical origins. In the case of the so-called “pre-1992” higher education institutions, the composition and powers of the governing body are laid down in and limited by the charter and statutes of the institution. For the “post-1992” universities and colleges, they are laid down in the Education Reform Act 1988 (as amended by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992).

The scope and division of responsibilities between governing bodies may vary considerably between higher education systems. In Iceland, for instance, the senate appoints the academic staff representatives on the university board; otherwise it merely plays an advisory role. In Germany, decision-making powers lie mainly with the senate in some states and with the board/council in others. In Hesse, for example, the senate is the main decision-making body, while the council is advisory and only confirms the institution’s development plan. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the council elects the president and vice-presidents and decides on the development plan, while the senate confirms the elections and decides on the university statutes. In Austria, the rectorate coexists as a collegial body on an equal footing with the senate and the council, in fact providing Austrian universities with three governing bodies.

In a dual structure, the board/council is often responsible for long-term strategic decisions, such as statutes, strategic plans, the election of the rector and vice-rectors and budget allocation. The senate is entrusted with academic issues, such as curricula, degrees and staff promotions, and consists mainly of internal members of the university community. In some cases, the senate includes only professors. More typically, however, it also comprises representatives of other categories of academic and administrative staff as well as students.

Feature 2 - Large governing bodies (Spain, Switzerland & Italy)

In **Spain**, the composition of the university governing bodies varies widely. The senate may contain up to 300 members, including professors, junior academic staff, administrative staff and students. Universities themselves determine the exact composition of the senate, although the law prescribes that professors must make up the majority. The senate typically decides on the university strategy and elects the rector.

As with the senate, the composition of university boards differs within Spain. The board may contain up to 50 members, its composition being similar to that of the senate. Professors constitute the majority, while the remaining share is made up of junior academics, administrative staff and students. The board is the executive organ of the university and handles day-to-day affairs, such as staffing issues. It also proposes the budget. The board contains only few external members. These are chosen by the university’s social council, which is appointed by the regional government and includes representatives from business, trade unions and civil society. The social council approves the institutional budget and the annual accounts.

In **Switzerland**, the composition of university senates also varies. They range from around 25 (elected) to about 200 members (if all professors sit in the senate). In addition to professors, elected senates usually include other academic staff, administrative staff and student representatives. Professors (including deans) usually make up the largest share. The senate mostly acts as a consultative body. It may comment on a variety of questions, such as the strategic direction of the university. In some cases, it puts forward a candidate for the position of rector and, in most cases, it confirms the selection of the executive head. At times, the senate may suggest potential candidates for the university council or select the vice-rectors.

The university council is the main executive body. It is usually a board-type body and includes only external members. It takes all major decisions, such as financial issues, strategic planning, reporting and staffing procedures (particularly for permanent professors).

In **Italy**, the structure of governing bodies is defined in the university's statutes, but in fact differs little between institutions. There may be some variation regarding, for instance, the number of external members included in the board. The senate comprises all deans, academic representatives chosen according to discipline (e.g. by department) and, by law, 15% students. It is unusual for non-academic staff to be represented.

The board comprises the rector, the head of administration and representatives of the different categories of academic staff (full professors, associate professors and researchers). 15% of the members come from the student body and between two and four members are elected by non-academic staff. Boards may also include one or two external members, appointed by the national or regional governments. These members are typically from the public sector. Some

universities have established advisory councils, in which local businesses and members of civil society are represented.

In other countries, universities have a unitary governing system, in which there is only one main decision-making body. This body, which is responsible for all major decisions, may be known as the senate, the council or by another name. A senate-type body exists in Brandenburg, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Poland and Turkey. A board- or council-type body exists in Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. (Higher education institutions in Brandenburg in fact share a common board, which provides strategic advice to the university leadership and puts forward candidates for the university presidency).

Feature 3 - Governance in the Netherlands

Dutch institutions have a dual governing structure, which encompasses two board-type bodies (rather than one senate and one board). The main governing body of the university is the executive board, which usually comprises the president, the vice-president and the rector. The president is responsible for major strategic decisions and represents the university externally. The vice-president, who is often external to the university, is responsible for finances and staffing. The rector deals with academic affairs.

The members of the executive board are appointed by the supervisory board, which includes only external members selected by the ministry. The members represent a variety of interests, such as business, other universities and scientific institutes, government and civil society. Besides appointing and dismissing the members of the executive board, the supervisory body maintains a certain distance from day-to-day affairs. Instead, it monitors compliance with relevant regulations and the achievement of strategic goals.

External members in governing bodies

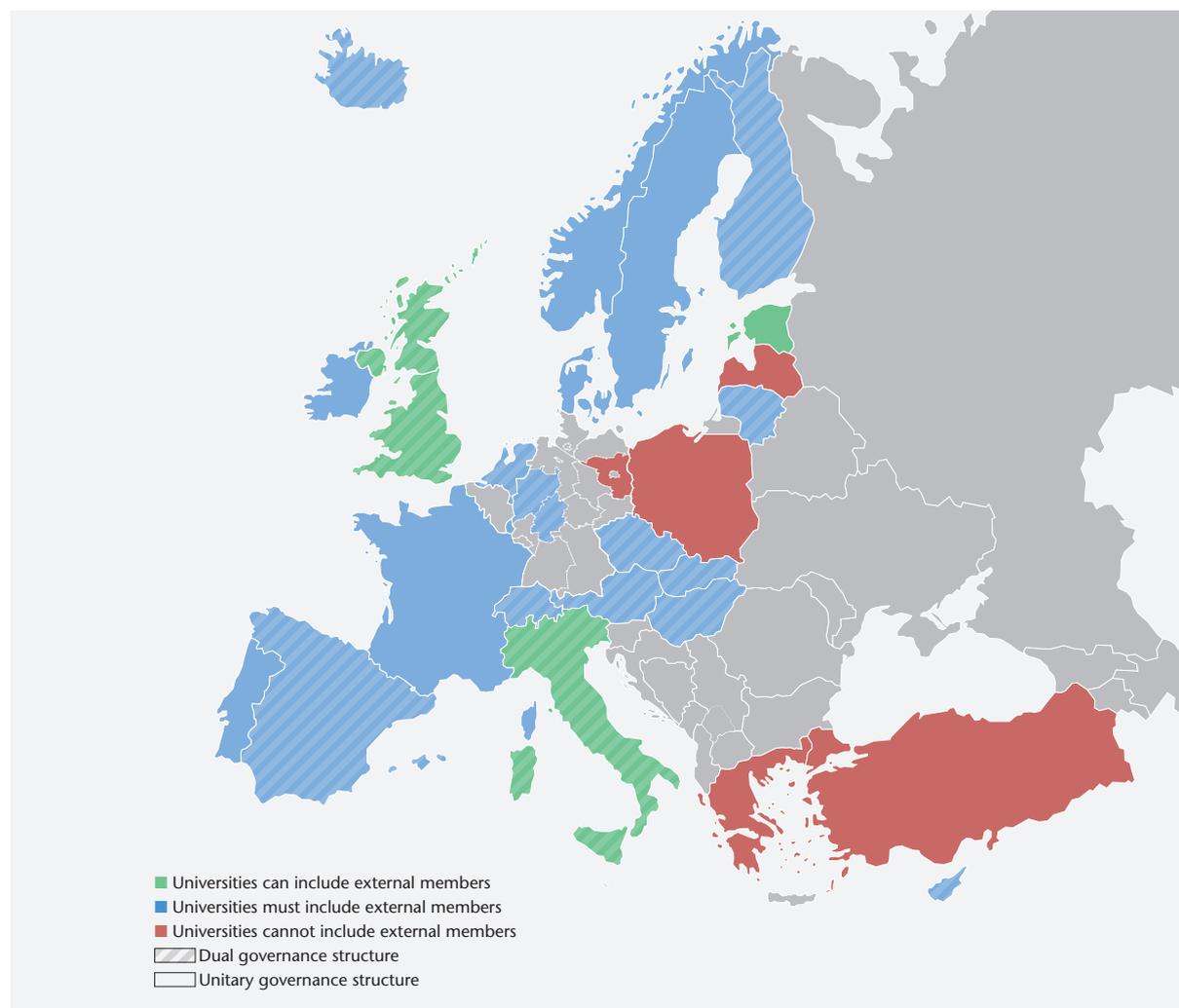
The inclusion and appointment of external members is an important aspect of a university's governing structure. If an institution is able to include them, the selection can be carried out by the university itself and/or by an external authority.

The ability to decide on the inclusion of external members in university governing bodies is fairly rare. Only in Estonia, Italy and the United Kingdom are universities free to decide whether or not they wish to include them. In Brandenburg, Greece, Latvia, Poland and Turkey, universities are unable

to include external members in their governing bodies, although in Turkey this restriction does not apply to private institutions. In the remaining 20 systems, they are required to include them.

External members of governing bodies are usually fully integrated into the decision-making process. There are only some restrictions in this respect: in France, for instance, external members cannot participate in the election of the rector. In dual systems, external members are typically included in the board-type or council-type body. Of the unitary systems with a senate-type governing body, only Estonia and Ireland include external members.

Map 1 - Structure of governing bodies and inclusion of external members

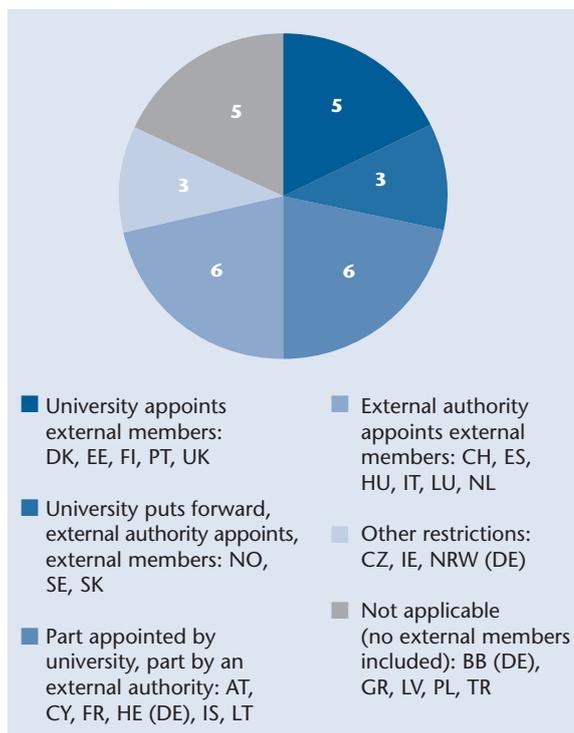


The appointment of external members follows four main models:

1. Universities are free to appoint the external members of their governing bodies in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Portugal and the United Kingdom.
2. External members are proposed by the institution, but appointed by an external authority in Norway, Slovakia and Sweden.
3. Some of the members are appointed by the university and some by an external authority in Austria, Cyprus, France, Hesse, Iceland and Lithuania.
4. An external authority decides on the appointment in Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland.

There may be some more specific variations on the four main procedures. In the Czech Republic, the external members are appointed by the minister after consultation with the rector. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the external members are appointed by a special selection committee, which comprises representatives of the university, the board itself and the state ministry.

Figure 6 - Selection of external members in governing bodies



Feature 4 - Governance of foundation universities in Turkey

Turkey has an important private higher education sector. It consists of non-profit foundation universities, whose governance differs from that of public universities. Foundation universities have a dual governing structure, comprising a senate composed of representatives from the different groups of the university community, and a board of trustees. The board includes representatives of the founding foundation, external members appointed by the foundation and the rector of the university. The foundation determines the number of external members to be included, which typically varies between four and six. External members usually come from industry, economics and finance, or they may be academics from other universities.

There is no hierarchical relationship between the senate and the board. The former decides on academic affairs, while the latter takes financial and administrative decisions. The board also selects the rector, who is then formally appointed by the council for higher education.

Recent developments

The drive towards an enhanced institutional ability to decide on university affairs continues, fostered by some major legislative changes in the past few years. In Portugal, for instance, a new higher education law, which was passed in 2007, has improved public universities' autonomy in many respects. If they fulfil certain criteria – for example, at least half of their funding is external – public universities can apply for the legal status of foundations. So far, this opportunity has been taken up by three universities. By adopting this status, universities gain greater flexibility, in particular in deciding on their governance structures and financial affairs.

In Finland, the legal status of universities changed in January 2010. Universities are now corporations under public law. Two universities have acquired the status of foundations under private law. At the same time, the governing structure of the universities has changed from a unitary to a dual system. External members were previously limited to one or two in the institutional senate. Now, at least 40% of the membership of the board of a public university must be external. Members are elected by the university senate, which may also decide to include a majority of external members in the board. The board's chair and vice-chair are elected from among the external members.

In Lithuania, there has been a similar shift. The status of the governing bodies has changed with the passing of a new law in spring 2009. Previously, the main decision-making body was the senate, while the council played a supervisory role. Now the senate, which mainly comprises internal members, decides on academic issues and acts as a preparatory body for the council. The council is the main executive body. It comprises nine or eleven members, of which four or five are put forward by the ministry. The university and the ministry also jointly decide on an additional – usually external – council member.

A new governing structure is about to be introduced at the University of Tartu in Estonia. In the future, the main governing body will be a board containing a majority of external members, who are appointed by the ministry and the academy of sciences. The laws regulating university governance are also expected to change in Italy and Poland in the coming year.

These examples reflect a trend towards more managerial universities with smaller decision-making bodies, into which external stakeholders have been integrated.

The ability of universities to decide on their internal academic structures also represents an important aspect of organisational autonomy. In Sweden, for example, the internal organisation of universities was deregulated in January 2011. The law previously required the existence of faculty boards to decide on various academic issues. Faculty boards are no longer legally obligatory and universities are now free to determine their own internal academic structures.

2.2 Financial autonomy

Organisational autonomy	Financial autonomy	Staffing autonomy	Academic autonomy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection procedure for the executive head • Selection criteria for the executive head • Dismissal of the executive head • Term of office of the executive head • Inclusion and selection of external members in governing bodies • Capacity to decide on academic structures • Capacity to create legal entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length and type of public funding • Ability to keep surplus • Ability to borrow money • Ability to own buildings • Ability to charge tuition fees for national/EU students (BA, MA, PhD) • Ability to charge tuition fees for non-EU students (BA, MA, PhD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on salaries (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on promotions (senior academic/senior administrative staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on overall student numbers • Capacity to select students (BA, MA) • Capacity to introduce programmes (BA, MA, PhD) • Capacity to terminate programmes • Capacity to choose the language of instruction (BA, MA) • Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms and providers • Capacity to design content of degree programmes

Allocation of public funding

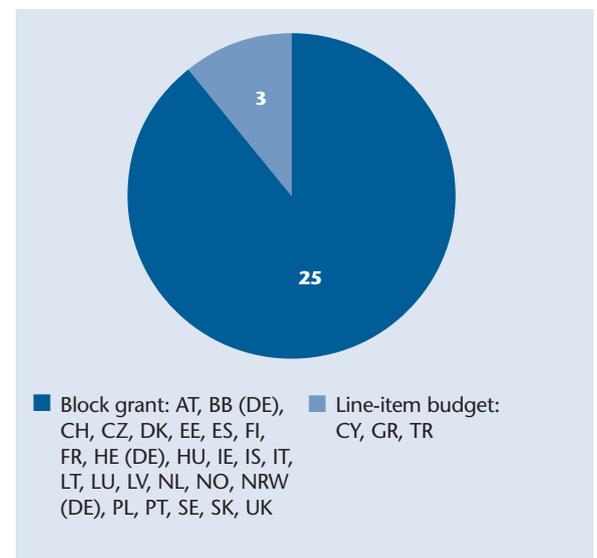
More and more countries are moving towards longer-term negotiated contracts between the ministry and universities, in which the rights and responsibilities of the institution – regarding resources and student numbers, for instance – are determined with possible annual adjustments. There is a perceptible trend, especially in Western Europe, towards the allocation of public funding through block grants, rather than line-item budgets (Estermann & Bennetot Pruvot 2011: 25-26).

Block grants are financial grants that cover several categories of expenditure, such as teaching, operational costs and/or research activities. In such a framework, universities are free to divide and distribute their funding internally according to their needs, although some restrictions may still apply.

By contrast, in a line-item budget, the ministry or parliament pre-allocates university funding to cost items and/or activities. Institutions are thus unable to distribute their funds, or may only do so within strict limitations. Line-item budgets are only used

in Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. In the remaining 25 systems, universities receive their basic public funding in the form of a block grant, which they can autonomously divide between their internal cost items and/or activities. However, this does not necessarily mean that universities are entirely free in the use of their basic funding.

Figure 7 - Public funding modalities



There are no restrictions on the internal allocation of the block grant for Brandenburg, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hesse, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

In France, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden, the block grant is divided into broad categories, such as teaching and research (Iceland, Sweden), teaching, research and infrastructure (Latvia, Lithuania), salaries and operational costs (Portugal), or investments, salaries and operational costs (France). As a rule, universities are unable to move funds between these categories. In France, funds can be transferred into operations and investments, but not into salaries; in Iceland, shifting funds is possible in theory, but rarely done in practice.

In the following countries, universities receive a block grant that can be freely allocated, although some minor restrictions apply. In Austria, where universities receive their basic funding as a three-year block grant, a 2% reserve is set aside and allocated to institutions on an annual basis, although this is not perceived as a significant restriction on institutional autonomy. In the Czech Republic, approximately 80% of the basic funds is allocated as a block grant and primarily intended for teaching, 20% is earmarked for projects and development, while research funding is mainly competitive. In Ireland, a percentage of the block grant is earmarked for specific tasks, such as widening access for disadvantaged socio-economic groups. Institutions cannot use this money for other purposes. In Poland, universities receive a block grant for teaching and, potentially, an additional grant for the development of infrastructure. Research funding is allocated directly to the faculties.

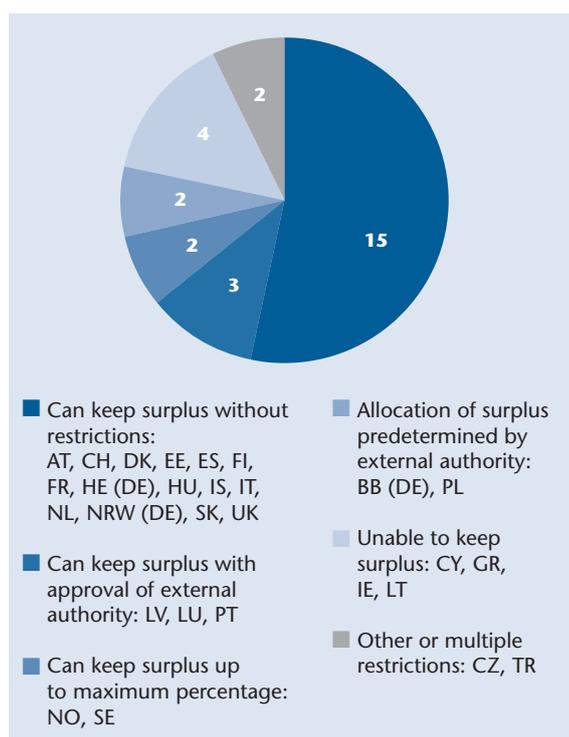
One year is by far the most common funding period. It is longer only in Austria, Brandenburg and Luxembourg. In these systems, budgets are decided for three, two and four years, respectively. In Norway, the funding period for results-based funds, which make up nearly half of the total public funding, is two years. Finally, the funding period of some universities in Switzerland may be longer than one year, but this has to be confirmed annually by the cantonal or federal parliament.

Keeping surplus on public funding

Universities in the following 15 systems are entirely free to keep a surplus on their public funding: Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hesse, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom and Estonia, however, public funding may be adjusted for the following year if the university either exceeds or fails to meet the prescribed intake or graduates. Universities in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland and Lithuania are unable to keep a surplus.

In addition, other restrictions may apply. The approval of an external authority is required in the Czech Republic, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal and Turkey. In the Czech Republic, Norway and Sweden, the surplus can be kept up to a maximum percentage (5% in the Czech Republic and Norway, and 10% in Sweden). In Turkey, the allocation of the surplus is predetermined by an external authority. In Poland, the surplus can only be spent on investments. In Brandenburg, although universities are legally entitled to keep a surplus, the financial crisis has led the state government to reclaim some of the excess funds.

Figure 8 - Ability to keep a surplus



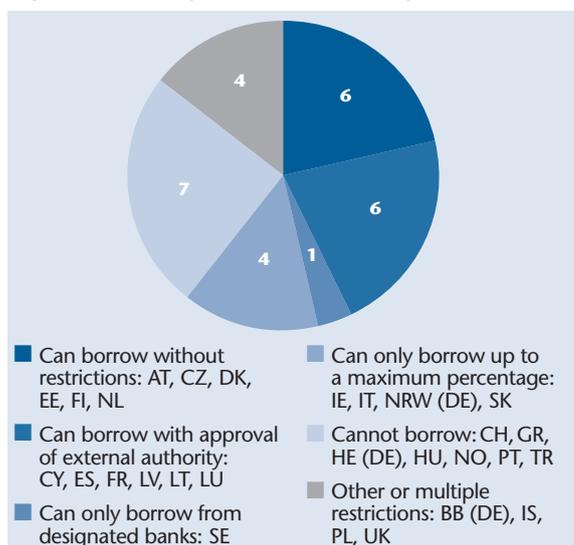
Borrowing money

Universities in seven systems – Greece, Hesse, Hungary, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland and Turkey – are unable to borrow money on the financial markets. (Foundation universities in Portugal and Turkey are at least theoretically able to do so). In Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland and the Netherlands, universities can borrow money without restrictions.

In Cyprus, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Spain, institutions can borrow money with the approval of an external authority, while in Sweden and Brandenburg they can only use specific, state-owned banks. In Brandenburg, Ireland, Italy, North Rhine-Westphalia and Slovakia, the law prescribes that universities may only borrow up to a maximum percentage.

In Poland, universities are able to borrow money and the state may guarantee the loan. However, if the loan is to be guaranteed by university assets received from the state or local government, the treasury minister must approve the loan application. In Iceland, although public universities cannot borrow money directly, companies owned by these universities can. In the UK, universities can borrow freely as long as the yearly costs of the financial commitment remain under 4% of their total income; beyond that percentage, they are required to secure the approval of the Higher Education Funding Council.

Figure 9 - Ability to borrow money



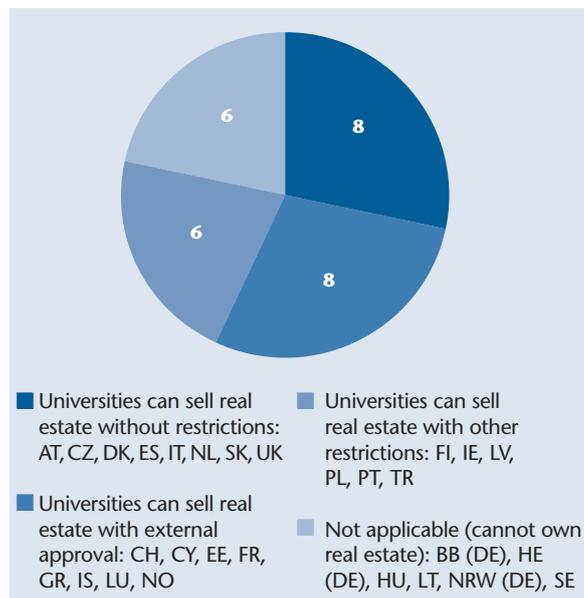
Ownership of land and buildings

The capacity of universities to buy, sell and build facilities autonomously is closely linked to their freedom to determine their institutional strategy and academic profile. This study again confirmed that cultural perceptions and traditions to a large extent determine whether institutions consider owning or renting their facilities more favourable. High maintenance costs or restrictions associated with historical buildings may lead universities in some systems to prefer not to own their facilities.

Universities are unable to own buildings in Brandenburg, Hesse, Hungary, Lithuania, North Rhine-Westphalia and Sweden. In the remaining 22 countries, universities can own their buildings. EUA's initial study on university autonomy has already shown that, in some higher education systems, buildings are not necessarily owned directly by the state or by the university, but by public real estate companies (Estermann & Nokkala 2009: 24-25). This is the case in Austria, Finland and Sweden.

A more detailed look at the legal framework of those countries in which universities may own their buildings shows that higher education institutions are not necessarily able to decide autonomously on the sale of these assets. In Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom, universities may sell buildings without restrictions. In eight countries (CH, CY, EE, FR, GR, IS, LU, NO), institutions require the permission of an external authority, typically the ministry or parliament, to sell their real estate. In Norway, such an authorisation is required only in the case of historic buildings. In six countries (FI, IE, LV, PL, PT, TR), there are other restrictions, some of which are presented in figure 10.

Figure 10 - Ability to sell university-owned real estate



In 2010, the Finnish government relinquished its full ownership of buildings and provided universities with majority ownership rights through a specific legal framework. Buildings are owned and maintained by three companies, which in turn are owned jointly by the universities (67%) and the government (33%). Under this new arrangement, universities are able to use their majority ownership of these companies as collateral for loans. Universities can decide on selling real estate only through these companies. On the other hand, the real estate companies negotiate with the universities before selling property.

In Poland, most buildings owned by the universities are provided by the state or local government. The university senate can decide on the sale of university assets, but if the building was allocated from resources of the treasury or a local government, the treasury minister must approve it.

In Latvia, university buildings may be owned by the state or by the universities, in which case institutions can sell them freely. Universities may also request that the state sell the state-owned buildings they occupy. In most cases however, universities choose to continue to occupy these buildings; they hope to obtain full ownership at a future point and thus recover the income generated by the sale.

Feature 5 - Legal vs. actual ownership of university buildings (Denmark, Austria & France)

Universities' legal or formal ability to own buildings, and the extent to which they actually do so, may diverge widely. Universities in Austria and Denmark, for instance, are theoretically able to own real estate. However, in both countries, universities actually own only a minority of the buildings they occupy.

In **Denmark**, higher education institutions are theoretically able to own (and sell) their buildings. Universities are keen to acquire ownership to raise capital and increase flexibility. However, the conditions under which buildings can be purchased are unpredictable and unfavourable. The majority of buildings are therefore still owned by the state. Universities only tend to own real estate they received as donations or acquired through the merger with an entity that owned the building in the first place. There are some exceptions, such as the Copenhagen Business School and the Technical University of Denmark, which own all their buildings.

In **Austria**, the vast majority of university buildings is owned by a real estate company called the BIG (Bundesimmobiliengesellschaft), and rented to the universities. The BIG manages most of the publicly-owned real estate. Though universities are free to acquire buildings, for instance in a public-private-partnership or joint venture, this only happens on a small scale. This situation is regarded as a significant restriction on institutional autonomy.

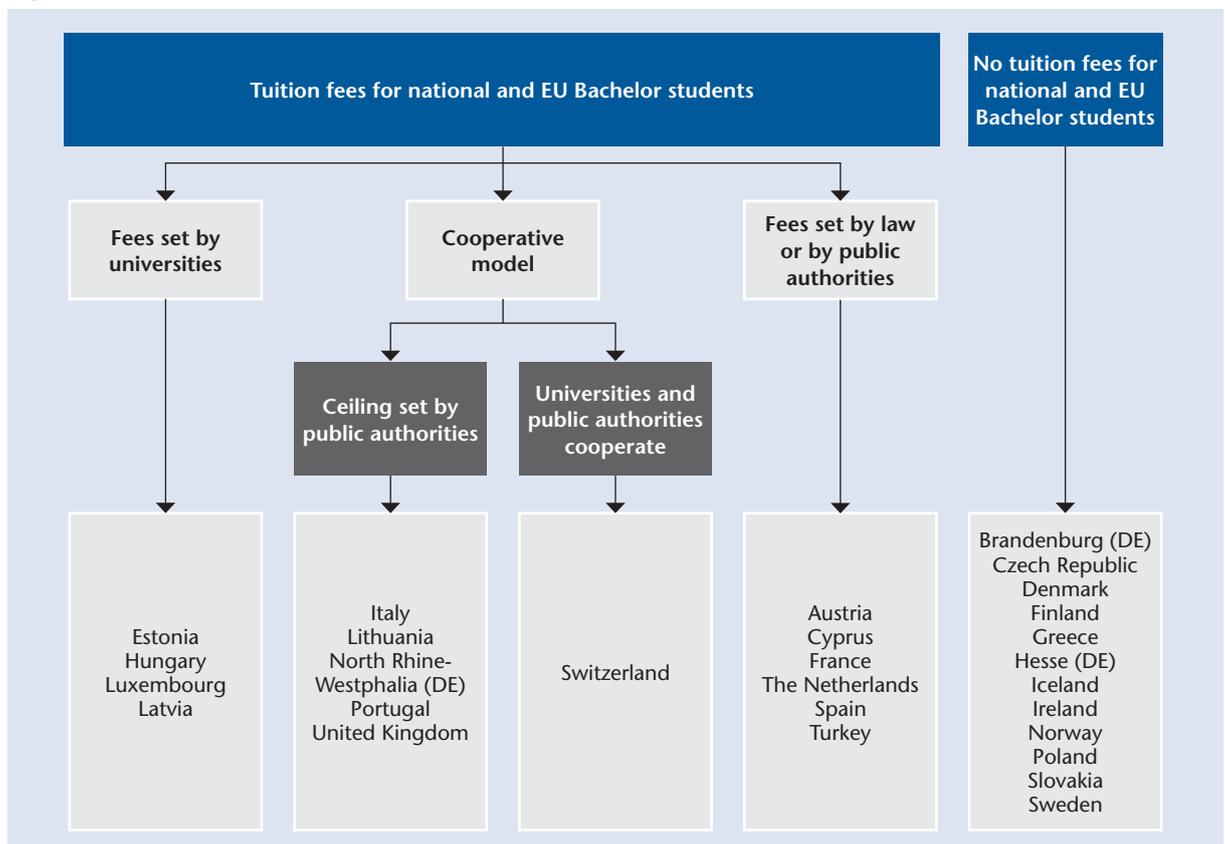
French universities can only own their buildings if they have the technical competencies and resources to do so. Following the implementation of the autonomy reform in 2007, universities are now able to request

the 'dévolution', i.e. the handing over of all university buildings owned by the state to the institution. Universities have to fulfil certain conditions to qualify for this scheme, which was voluntarily piloted by three universities in 2011. However, despite obtaining full ownership of their real estate, universities still need to secure the approval of a state authority to sell their assets.

Students' financial contributions

This study considers the issue of student contributions⁶ in so far as it relates to universities' financial autonomy. Universities' ability to set fees and decide on their level is often essential to ensuring their financial capacity, since it enables the institution to generate new funding streams through private contributions. In some systems, this income represents a significant percentage of the university budget and the ability to charge and set fees thus plays a central role for institutional strategies.

Figure 11 - Tuition fees for national/EU Bachelor students



The following table describes the ability to set tuition fees for national/EU students and non-EU students in the 28 higher education systems included in the study. Three main models exist in Europe: fees may be freely determined by the university itself; a public authority may decide on fees; or a public authority and universities may cooperate in setting fees. The modalities of collaborative fee-setting range from

genuine negotiations between universities and the external authority, to the external authority setting a ceiling under which universities may levy fees. In some systems, public authorities allocate a number of state-funded study places, while the institutions may take in additional students and set fees for them within a given framework.

⁶ This study considers private student contributions in two forms: (1) tuition fees, as annual contributions paid by students to cover all or part of tuition costs in higher education; and (2) administrative fees, as contributions of students to different administrative costs (entrance fees, registration fees, certification fees, etc.).

Generally speaking, universities are more autonomous in setting fees for non-EU students than for national/

EU students whose fees are often either set by an external authority or not levied at all.

Table 9 - Setting tuition fees

	Universities free to set tuition fees	Cooperation universities/ external authority	Ceiling set by law or external authority	Fees set by law or external authority	No fees
National and EU students/ Bachelor level	EE, HU, LU, LV	CH	IT, LT, NRW (DE), PT, UK	AT, CY, ES, FR, NL, TR	BB (DE), CZ, DK, FI, GR, HE (DE), IE, IS, NO, PL, SE, SK
National and EU students/ Master's level	EE, GR, HU, IE, LU, LV, PT, UK	CH	IT, LT, NRW (DE)	AT, CY, ES, FR, NL, TR	BB (DE), CZ, DK, FI, HE (DE), IS, NO, PL, SE, SK
National and EU students/ Doctoral level	EE, IE, HU, LT, LU, LV, NL, PT, UK	CH	IT	AT, CY, ES, FR, TR	BB (DE), CZ, DK, FI, GR, HE (DE), IS, NO, NRW (DE), PL, SE, SK
Non-EU students/ Bachelor level	EE, HU, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL, PT, SE, SK, TR, UK	CH, DK, PL	IT, NRW (DE)	AT, CY, ES, FR, GR	BB (DE), CZ, FI, HE (DE), IS, NO
Non-EU students/ Master's level	EE, GR, HU, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL, PT, SE, SK, TR, UK	CH, DK, PL	IT, NRW (DE)	AT, CY, ES, FR	BB (DE), CZ, FI, HE (DE), IS, NO
Non-EU students/ Doctoral level	EE, IE, LT, LU, LV, NL, PT, SK, TR, UK	CH, HU, PL	IT	AT, CY, ES, FR	BB (DE), CZ, DK, FI, GR, HE (DE), IS, NO, NRW (DE), SE

There are a large number of additional regulations regarding student contributions. Even in systems where the majority of national/EU students do not as a rule pay fees, they may nonetheless be required to do so if they fulfil certain specific conditions, some of which are described below.

In Austria, due to an amendment to the higher education law in September 2008, there are no fees for regular students unless they study for longer than the standard duration (plus one tolerance semester). In some specific cases (e.g. students in part-time employment or from the least developed countries), fees may be waived. A similar situation can be found in the Czech Republic, where there are no fees for students who take programmes taught in Czech and finish their studies in time. Recent reforms in Finland have led to the introduction of a trial scheme, which enables universities to levy tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students who are taking part in separate, English-language Master's programmes, provided appropriate scholarship schemes are set up. In Norway, universities may

acquire the permission to establish professional Master's degrees (e.g. MBA programmes), for which they may set fees.

In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, there are both publicly and privately funded study places. An external authority decides on the number of state-funded – and hence tuition-free – places. Universities may determine the fee level for additional privately-funded study places, which is generally the same as or lower than the funds they receive for state-funded places. Similarly, in Hungary, national/EU students may either be state- or self-funded, depending on their previous academic achievements. An additional regulation applies in Estonia, where fees may not be increased by more than 10% from one year to the next.

In Poland and Slovakia, there are no tuition fees for full-time national/EU students. However, for part-time students, who make up a considerable share of the student population, fees are either set freely by the university (SK) or may not exceed the

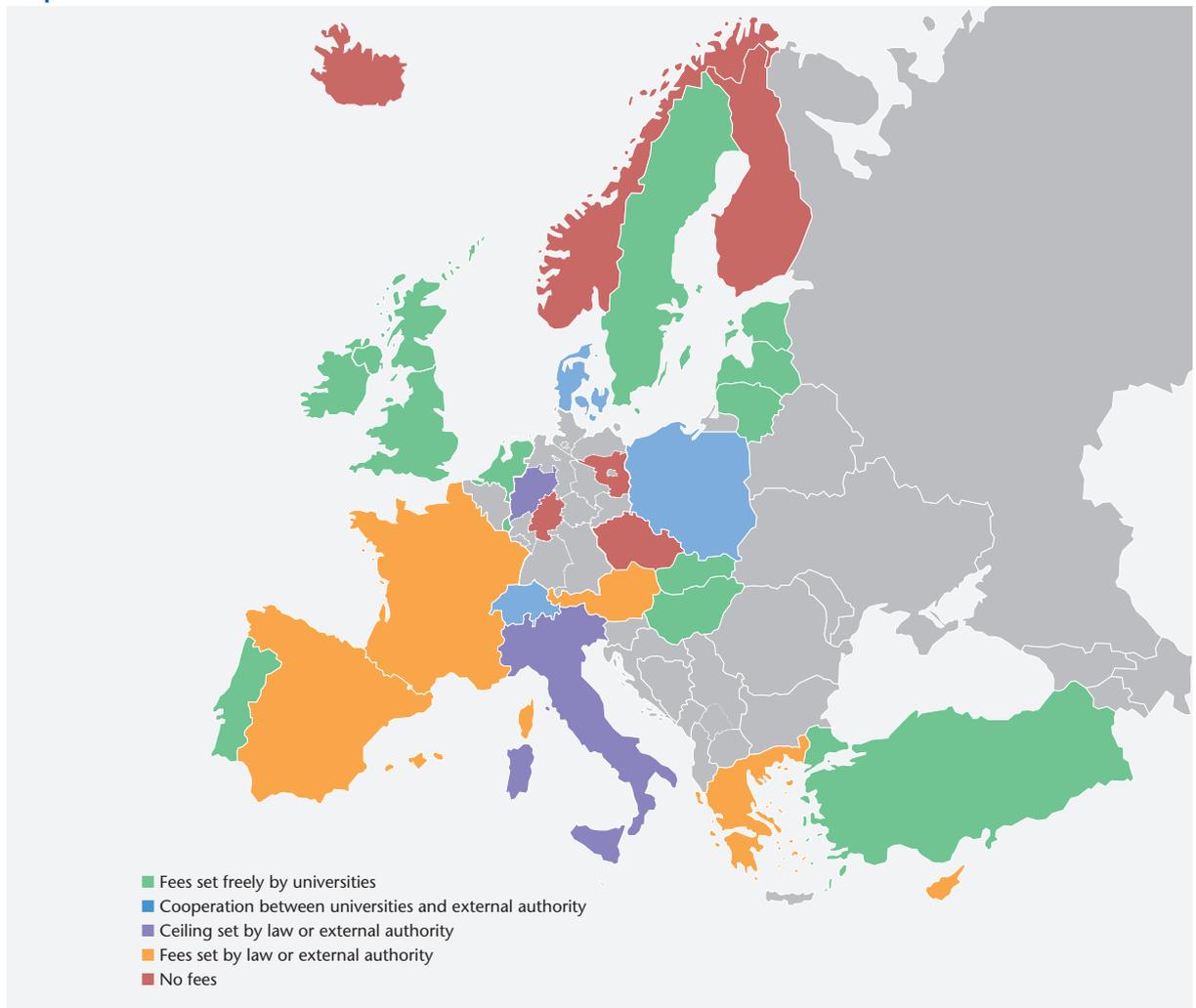
actual costs of educating students (PL). In Slovakia, institutions may also levy fees for students who are studying for more than one degree.

In Turkey, different regulations concerning tuition fees apply to public and private institutions. Fees for national students at public universities are set by the council of ministers, whereas those for foreign students can be set by the university itself.

In foundation universities, fees for all students are set internally by the university's board of trustees.

In Ireland, there are no tuition fees for national/EU Bachelor undergraduate students, although they are charged a 'student services' contribution (€2000 for the academic year 2011/2012). Finally, in Italy, universities can charge fees, but these may not exceed 20% of the state funds.

Map 2 - Tuition fees for non-EU Bachelor students



Recent developments

The state of financial autonomy in Europe has been marked by two major – partly opposed – developments. On the one hand, the economic crisis, which has unfolded since October 2008,

has had a strong effect on public funding in many countries⁷. Not only are funds often diminishing, but the form in which they are provided to universities is also changing. They are increasingly subject to restrictions placed on their allocation, or accompanied by more stringent accountability

⁷ EUA has been monitoring the evolution of the economic crisis and its effects on higher education systems in Europe since its onset in 2008. The continuous feedback from various sources fed into up-to-date reports on the situation and highlighted the evolving nature of the effects that the crisis has had on higher education across Europe: www.eua.be/public-funding-observatory

requirements. This has given public authorities greater steering power over universities, which has significantly reduced institutions' autonomy and their capacity to manage funds as they see fit.

In addition, there is a general trend towards targeting public funding at strategic national priorities. For example, funding for the so-called STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) subjects is increasing in Austria, Finland, Portugal and the UK. This is boosting governments' steering power and limiting universities' ability to act autonomously, particularly if these funds are being carved out of block grant funding.

Universities' ability to retain surpluses has also been questioned as a result of the economic crisis. Some universities in the Nordic countries have had to justify keeping their surpluses for future strategic investments. In Brandenburg, universities have accumulated a €25 million public funding surplus over a two-year funding period. The state government intended to reclaim €10 million, despite the fact that universities in Brandenburg are entitled by law to keep their surplus.

In a number of systems, there has been a noticeable move towards student contributions. Finland and Sweden have taken steps to introduce fees for non-EU students. In Finland, this has happened on a limited scale since 2010, namely for a number of Master's programmes taught in foreign languages. In Sweden, fees for non-EU students are being introduced in autumn 2011, which will be required to cover costs across the institution. In the UK, the ceiling for national/EU students has been raised almost threefold to £9000. Some systems, by contrast, have moved in the opposite direction: in

North Rhine-Westphalia, tuition fees at Bachelor and Master's level, which are currently set by the university under an externally imposed ceiling, will be abolished in 2011.

For certain aspects of financial management, universities have gained greater freedom of action. There has been a move from line-item funding to block grants in Latvia and Lithuania. Almost all European countries now allocate their funding in the form of block grants, although, as described above, numerous restrictions remain concerning their internal allocation.

More countries now allow their universities to borrow money on the financial markets. Lithuanian universities have recently obtained the – albeit limited – capacity to do so. In practice, however, this ability is not always used. In some countries, including Latvia, universities require the authorisation of the ministry to borrow, but this is unlikely to be granted.

Finally, universities in some systems have at least formally increased their financial autonomy by gaining ownership of the buildings they occupy. In France, a new university law is gradually giving universities the option of acquiring their buildings. In 2011, three universities, which fulfilled the necessary technical requirements, were granted ownership of their buildings in a pilot project. In Finland, university buildings are now owned by three real-estate companies that are in turn co-owned by the government but majority-owned by the universities themselves. Through an amendment to the law on university real estate, the University of Luxembourg will also receive broader ownership rights.

2.3 Staffing autonomy

Organisational autonomy	Financial autonomy	Staffing autonomy	Academic autonomy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection procedure for the executive head • Selection criteria for the executive head • Dismissal of the executive head • Term of office of the executive head • Inclusion and selection of external members in governing bodies • Capacity to decide on academic structures • Capacity to create legal entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length and type of public funding • Ability to keep surplus • Ability to borrow money • Ability to own buildings • Ability to charge tuition fees for national/EU students (BA, MA, PhD) • Ability to charge tuition fees for non-EU students (BA, MA, PhD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on salaries (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on promotions (senior academic/senior administrative staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on overall student numbers • Capacity to select students (BA, MA) • Capacity to introduce programmes (BA, MA, PhD) • Capacity to terminate programmes • Capacity to choose the language of instruction (BA, MA) • Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms and providers • Capacity to design content of degree programmes

A detailed comparison of the different elements of staffing autonomy presents a challenge due to the hugely diverse regulations concerning different categories of university personnel and the differing legal frameworks of public and private labour law, which impact on the ability to recruit, remunerate, dismiss and promote staff.

Recruitment of staff

The analysis demonstrates that there are significant differences in recruitment procedures across Europe, ranging from a large degree of independence in the recruitment of staff to formalised procedures that necessitate the approval of an external authority.

In 18 systems (AT, CH, CY, DK, EE, FI, HE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, NO, NRW, PL, SE, UK), universities are essentially free to recruit their own academic staff. In a number of these, such as Austria, Hesse or Sweden, general guidelines regarding the selection procedure or basic qualifications for senior academic staff, the requirement to publish open positions or the composition of the selection committee, are specified in the law. However, external authorities do not become involved in the recruitment process itself.

Tighter restrictions apply in the ten remaining countries, which are summarised in table 10.

Table 10 - Restrictions on senior academic staff recruitment

	Recruitment confirmed by an external authority for some or all	Number of posts regulated by external authority for some or all	Other restrictions
BB (DE)			•
CZ	•		
ES			•
FR		•	•
GR	•	•	
HU	•		
IE			•
PT			•
SK	•		
TR		•	

In four systems, the appointment of some (CZ, HU, SK) or all (GR) senior academic staff members must be confirmed by an external authority. Although some appointments in Brandenburg must in principle be confirmed by an external authority, the state government may make statutes for individual universities, which effectively allow them to carry out the selection process independently.

In France, Greece and Turkey, the number of posts for some or all senior academic staff is regulated by an external authority. In Turkey, for instance, the council for higher education allocates a specific number of vacancies to universities, which may then carry out the recruitment process on their own. When a post holder resigns or retires, the post again comes under consideration by the higher education council. In Denmark, the number of professors in the highest category is theoretically limited. However, institutions do not consider this as restrictive, since they are able to employ individuals in a lower category and pay them a higher salary.

In Ireland, a moratorium on staffing across the state-funded sector has been implemented in response to the economic crisis. All universities have committed to the moratorium, which entails a 6% reduction in staff numbers and a ban on promotions and permanent positions. It applies to academic and administrative staff alike.

In Spain, recruitments are made from a pool of candidates who have previously been accredited by the national agency ANECA. Similarly, in Portugal, candidates for full professorships must undergo personal accreditation by a jury, which involves the evaluation of an applicant's scientific output.

In Estonia, institutions are free to recruit academic staff, but must adhere to a quality agreement signed by the universities themselves. This agreement contains some general guidelines regarding the selection of senior academic staff as well as more specific regulations concerning the recruitment for different positions (full professors, associate professors, etc.).

Feature 6 - Recruitment practices for senior academic staff (Czech Republic, Finland, Sweden, France & Italy)

Although there is of course some variation with regard to recruitment practices for senior academic personnel, most systems follow fairly similar procedures. It is common practice to specify selection criteria at faculty level and to set up a selection committee to evaluate candidates. The successful applicant is subsequently appointed at faculty level or, alternatively, by a decision-making body at university level. The selection committee

either recommends one candidate or provides the decision-making body with a shortlist of preferred candidates in order of priority.

In the **Czech Republic**, a full professorship is more akin to an academic qualification than a post. In order to become a professor, a candidate has to be an associate professor and demonstrate adequate scientific and teaching abilities. An application is evaluated by the faculty's and the university's scientific boards, which must be specifically accredited for this purpose. If it deems a candidate fit for professorial status, the university's scientific board makes a proposal to the minister. The latter in turn makes a proposal to the President of the Republic, who ultimately grants the status. Universities are free to determine the required qualifications for each post. Open posts must be advertised publicly and all those holding the required qualifications may apply.

In **Finland**, professorial vacancies generally have to be publicly announced. However, a vacancy may be filled without public notification if a person holding very specific and unique competencies is directly invited to take up the post or if a post is filled for a fixed period only. Statements regarding the qualifications and merits of applicants must be provided by a minimum of two experts if a person is appointed until further notice or for a minimum of two years. The faculty council makes a decision on the basis of these statements; the rector or chancellor then appoints the professor. An appointment 'by invitation' is also possible in **Sweden**.

In **France**, academic staff is recruited from a list of candidates drawn up by a national committee of academic peers. This committee, whose membership is partly decided by the academics themselves and partly nominated by the ministry, decides on applications of scientists who wish to

be included in the list. Universities then fill open positions with candidates from this list. Following the autonomy reform, universities have also been given the opportunity to hire non-permanent, non-civil servant staff freely, although these represent only a minority of university personnel.

In **Italy**, the selection of senior academic staff involves scientific evaluation panels, which typically comprise one internal and four external members. External members are usually full professors working in a pertinent scientific field at other Italian universities. Evaluation panels assess scientific merit on the basis of previous research and publications.

In 22 systems (all but DK, ES, FR, GR, IE and PT), institutions are essentially free to decide on the recruitment of senior administrative staff. In the remainder, certain practices affect universities' flexibility.

In France, the ability to recruit administrative staff varies by category. The recruitment of personnel working in libraries and central administration is carried out by an external authority in a national competition. On the other hand, universities are free to recruit heads of administration and other staff categories, such as 'ingénieurs de recherche'.

In Portugal, public universities have two staff categories: civil servants on permanent contracts and non-civil servants on fixed-term contracts. Administrative staff on civil servant contracts are hired according to public administration rules. In Greece, permanent administrative employees are recruited in a national competition for administrative staff in all public services. The national council for the selection of administrative staff matches the requests of universities with those of applicants. Temporary administrative posts may be filled freely by universities following an open call. Finally, in Denmark, the number of certain high-level university management staff, such as pro-vice chancellors, is limited.

Staff salaries

Universities in Europe are generally not entirely free to set the salaries of their academic or administrative staff members. Salaries for senior academic staff can be determined by universities in only four countries: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Sweden and Switzerland. In Latvia, the state sets a minimum salary for each staff category; however, this is largely equivalent to national labour regulations that set a minimum salary and is therefore not regarded as a restriction.

In Denmark, salary bands are negotiated with other parties. Overall limits are placed on professorial salaries in Brandenburg, Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia. In the three German states, professors appointed after 2002 are guaranteed a minimum salary, while those appointed before 2002 are civil servants whose salary bands are fixed. The salaries for other senior academic staff are negotiated with other parties. In Finland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, salaries for all senior academic staff are negotiated with other parties. In Norway, salary bands are negotiated and there is a ceiling for professorial salaries. However, this ceiling is so high that it is rarely reached.

In Cyprus, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Slovakia and Spain, the salaries of all academic staff members are fixed or negotiated nationally due to their civil or public servant status, although in Slovakia, the rector or dean may increase prescribed salary levels by as much as 100%. In Austria, Brandenburg, Hesse, Luxembourg and North Rhine-Westphalia, civil servant status applies only to staff recruited under previous employment regulations. In Portugal, only some academic staff members have civil servant status with set salaries. Salary bands are prescribed for all or some staff in France, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland and Turkey.

A similar picture emerges with regard to the salaries for senior administrative staff. Salaries are decided freely by universities in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway,

Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. They are negotiated with other parties in Brandenburg, Finland, Hesse, the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia. In Denmark, France, Ireland, Poland and Turkey, salary bands are fixed by an external authority.

Salaries for all administrative staff in Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Slovakia and Spain, and for some staff in Portugal and Austria, are determined by an external authority. In Austria, employees hired before 2004 are either civil servants or public employees. Although former public employees are now employed by the university, they maintain largely the same rights concerning salaries and dismissal as before. The remaining civil servants have a contract with the state and fixed salary levels. Salaries for senior academic and administrative employees hired after 2004 can be determined autonomously by the universities. At the same time, collective bargaining by the universities resulted in the introduction of minimum wages.

Feature 7 - Salaries in the United Kingdom

For most academic staff, universities tend to adhere to a nationally agreed 51-point pay scale. Imperial College and the University of Northumbria, which do not follow the scale, have nevertheless adopted similar pay structures.

It is important to note that these are only guidelines. Within the minimum and maximum salaries, universities have autonomy over their salary grading structure. For example, an institution may choose to use 10 or 20 instead of 51 points, and, crucially, it can freely decide on the appropriate qualifying criteria for the various scales. In addition, the nationally agreed pay scale normally does not apply to the professorial level or to senior management staff, including the executive head. In these cases, salaries above the £58,258 maximum mark can be determined freely by the institution.

Dismissal of staff

In eleven countries (CH, CZ, DK, EE, FI, IE, LV, LT, LU, SE, UK) there are no specific regulations governing the dismissal of academic and administrative staff other than the pertinent national labour regulations. In Sweden, specific regulations apply to professors hired before 1993. In Switzerland, certain categories of staff benefit from a longer notice period. On a similar note, most full-time permanent academic staff in Poland enjoy special protection from dismissal.

Dismissal is strictly regulated for all academic and administrative staff in France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Slovakia. In Brandenburg, Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia, academic and administrative staff members are either civil servants or public sector employees and therefore enjoy special protection from dismissal.

Different restrictions apply in the remaining systems. Of the 14 universities in the Netherlands, 11 follow civil servant-type contracts. Three fall under private law and thus adhere to regular labour regulations. In addition to civil service and national labour laws, Dutch universities also negotiate separate labour contracts for the sector, which include specific rules for dismissal.

National labour laws and collective bargaining agreements generally regulate dismissals at Austrian universities. However, specific rules do pertain to civil servants, as they do also in Portugal and Spain. In Turkey, professors, associate professors and senior administrative staff have civil servant status and their dismissal is regulated. Other academic staff members are on fixed-term contracts; their employment can be terminated upon completion of the contract.

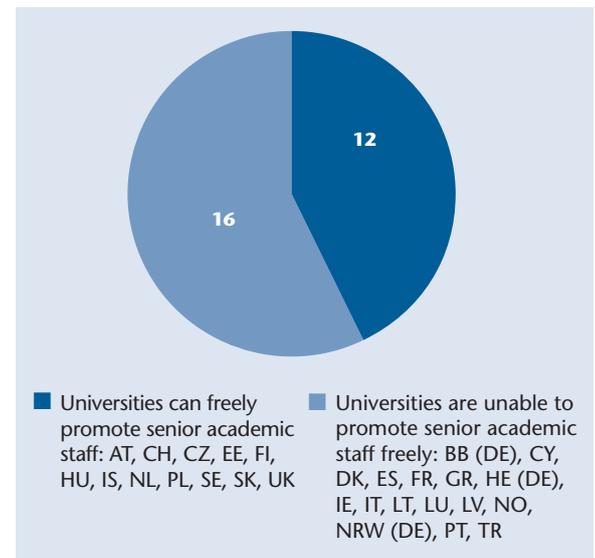
In Cyprus, higher categories of academic staff, such as full and associate professors, cannot be dismissed at all. Lower categories, including lecturers and assistant professors, must undergo individual evaluations

every three to four years. They are dismissed if they fail twice in a row. Senior administrative staff in permanent positions can only be dismissed during the first two years of their contract.

Staff promotions

Universities in twelve systems are able to promote both academic and administrative staff freely on the basis of merit (AT, CH, CZ, EE, FI, HU, IS, NL, PL, SE, SK, UK). In Lithuania, Brandenburg and Turkey, career advancement for both academic and administrative staff is only possible if a post is available at a higher level. In Latvia and Luxembourg, administrative staff can be promoted freely, whereas academic staff can only be promoted if there is an open post at a higher level.

Figure 12 - Ability to promote senior academic staff



In Portugal, promotion procedures are contingent on types of contract. A majority of staff members has civil servant status and can only be promoted if there is a post at a higher level. Those on regular contracts can be promoted based on merit. For academic staff, performance is also evaluated by a promotion committee, whose composition is specified in the law. The latter restriction also applies in other systems, including Cyprus, Greece and Spain. Unlike in Portugal, the performance of

administrative staff in the latter three countries is also assessed by a committee whose composition is regulated. In Norway, the law specifies the composition of the promotion committee for academic staff, while administrative employees can be promoted freely.

Various additional restrictions may also apply. In Latvia, for instance, all academic posts must be filled through a competition every six years. In order to be eligible to apply, one must have held a post at a lower level for at least three years, effectively making the recruitment of professors from outside academia impossible. Similar restrictions apply in Cyprus and Greece, where applicants must have held their previous post for four or three years, respectively.

In North Rhine-Westphalia and Hesse, promotion is automatic and based on the number of years served in the previous position. For those who still hold civil servant status, promotion is based on age.

In France, promotion quotas are imposed by the state. For senior academic staff, half of all promotions granted are determined at the national level. The same group of academic peers that sets up the national recruitment list decides on these. The remaining promotions are allocated to individual institutions, which are then free to decide whom they wish to promote. For senior administrative staff, promotions are not usually decided by the universities, but rather by other administrative staff who have been elected into a committee. For non-civil servant staff, promotions are freely decided by the university. However, these cases currently make up only a minority.

Finally, in Ireland, universities can theoretically promote staff freely. However, due to the financial crisis, there is currently a moratorium on all promotions.

Table 11 - Restrictions on senior academic staff promotions

	Promotion only if post at higher level	Law states who has to be included in the promotion committee	Other restrictions
BB (DE)	•		
CY		•	•
DK			•
ES		•	
FR			•
GR		•	•
HE (DE)			•
IE			•
IT			•
LT	•		
LU	•		
LV	•		
NO		•	
NRW (DE)			•
PT	•	•	
TR	•		

Recent developments

In some systems, employees now no longer have civil servant status. In Hesse, for instance, significant changes to the contractual employment framework have meant that universities no longer have to grant civil servant status to staff employed after December 2009. Since a new law came into force in Finland in 2010, institutions themselves, rather than the state, have become employers of university staff.

In Austria, a change of the collective bargaining agreement in October 2009 introduced minimum wages for all university staff. In Luxembourg, an expected change to the higher education law will enable promotions based on merit.

The financial crisis has also had an impact on staffing policies in many systems. In Ireland, the State Employment Control Framework, which has prescribed a 6% cut to employee numbers and a ban on promotions and recruitments for permanent positions in publicly funded sectors, came into force in 2009. A revised Employment Control Framework will apply from 2011. Similar measures have been introduced in Latvia and Italy. In Greece, Ireland, Spain and Portugal, salary reductions across the public sector have likewise affected university staff. In the UK, many universities have had to decrease their staff numbers in order to cope with the significant budget cuts.

2.4 Academic Autonomy

Organisational autonomy	Financial autonomy	Staffing autonomy	Academic autonomy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection procedure for the executive head • Selection criteria for the executive head • Dismissal of the executive head • Term of office of the executive head • Inclusion and selection of external members in governing bodies • Capacity to decide on academic structures • Capacity to create legal entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length and type of public funding • Ability to keep surplus • Ability to borrow money • Ability to own buildings • Ability to charge tuition fees for national/EU students (BA, MA, PhD) • Ability to charge tuition fees for non-EU students (BA, MA, PhD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on salaries (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior academic/senior administrative staff) • Capacity to decide on promotions (senior academic/senior administrative staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to decide on overall student numbers • Capacity to select students (BA, MA) • Capacity to introduce programmes (BA, MA, PhD) • Capacity to terminate programmes • Capacity to choose the language of instruction (BA, MA) • Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms and providers • Capacity to design content of degree programmes

Overall student numbers

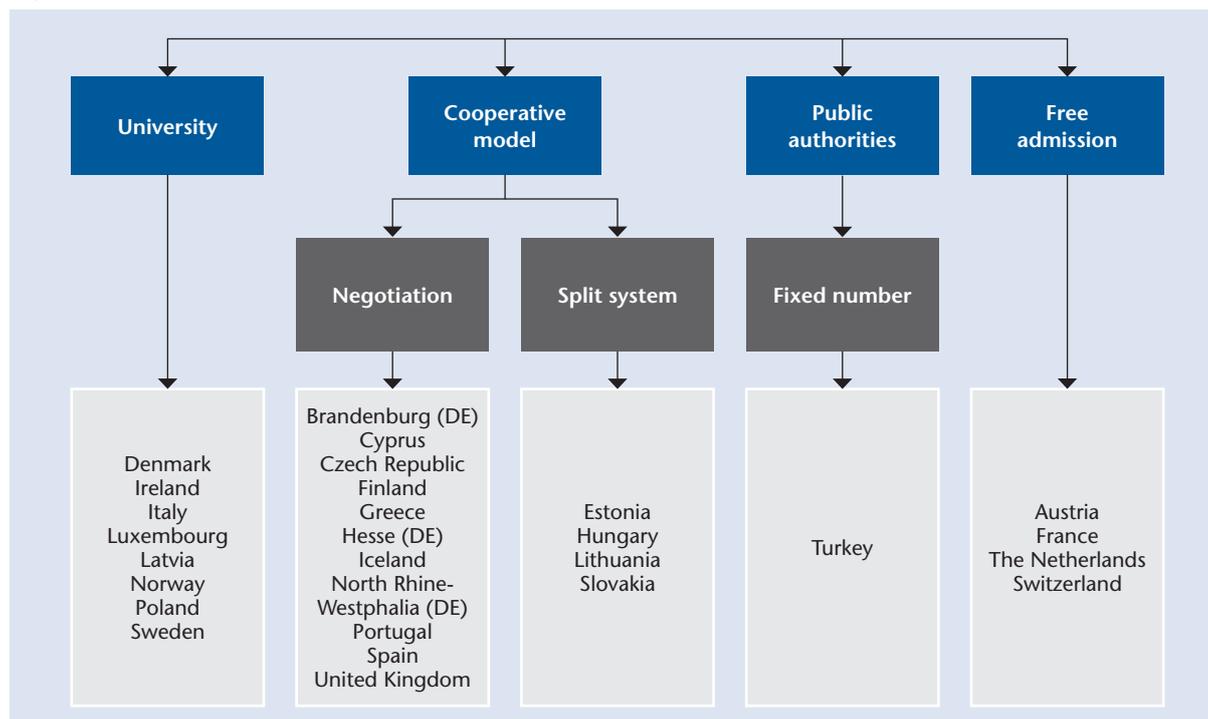
Five main methods are used when deciding on overall student numbers. A “cooperative” model

involves negotiations between the university and the public authorities, which usually happens in one of two ways. In 11 systems, student numbers are negotiated with the relevant ministry; this may

happen in the context of programme accreditation, during which maximum or minimum student numbers are determined. The second mode of cooperation is a split system, in which public authorities decide on the number of state-funded study places and universities set the number of fee-paying students, which enables the latter to

influence overall student numbers. This system is used in four countries. In a third model, student numbers are exclusively decided by the state. This only applies in Turkey. The fourth model, used in four systems, is one of free admission based solely on completion of secondary education⁸.

Figure 13 - Overall student numbers



Feature 8 - Student numbers in Turkey

The national higher education council decides on the maximum annual student intake for each academic programme after examining proposals by the universities. It further determines the principles whereby the selection and admission of students should be carried out, taking into consideration human resources planning, institutional capacities and student interests and skills.

In a total of eight systems, institutions are free to decide on their student intake. Nonetheless, even in cases where universities can freely decide on student numbers, there may be specific limitations, such as nationally set requirements on the staff/student

ratio (as in Italy), or ceilings for some fields, such as medicine, dentistry or engineering (as in Denmark or Sweden). Even in free admission systems, such as France, the Netherlands or Switzerland, a *numerus clausus* may apply for these (and similar) fields. In the Czech Republic, universities negotiate the number of state-funded study places with the ministry, but are theoretically able to take in additional students. However, institutions would only be likely to take in additional students for whom they are able to charge fees (i.e. those studying in a language other than Czech or for more than the standard duration of semesters). In the UK, overall numbers for national/EU students are capped. Institutions are however flexible in allocating study places to individual courses. There are no restrictions on non-EU student numbers.

⁸ In the case of France, the principle of free admissions only applies to first-cycle students in their first year of study.

Admission mechanisms

All higher education systems require that candidates hold a secondary education qualification or succeed in a general matriculation exam. In most cases, these are the basic eligibility criteria for higher education studies, which are usually specified in the national law. Admission mechanisms can be clustered into three models. Admission criteria may be set by the university, co-regulated between an external authority and the university, or admission may be regulated entirely by an external authority.

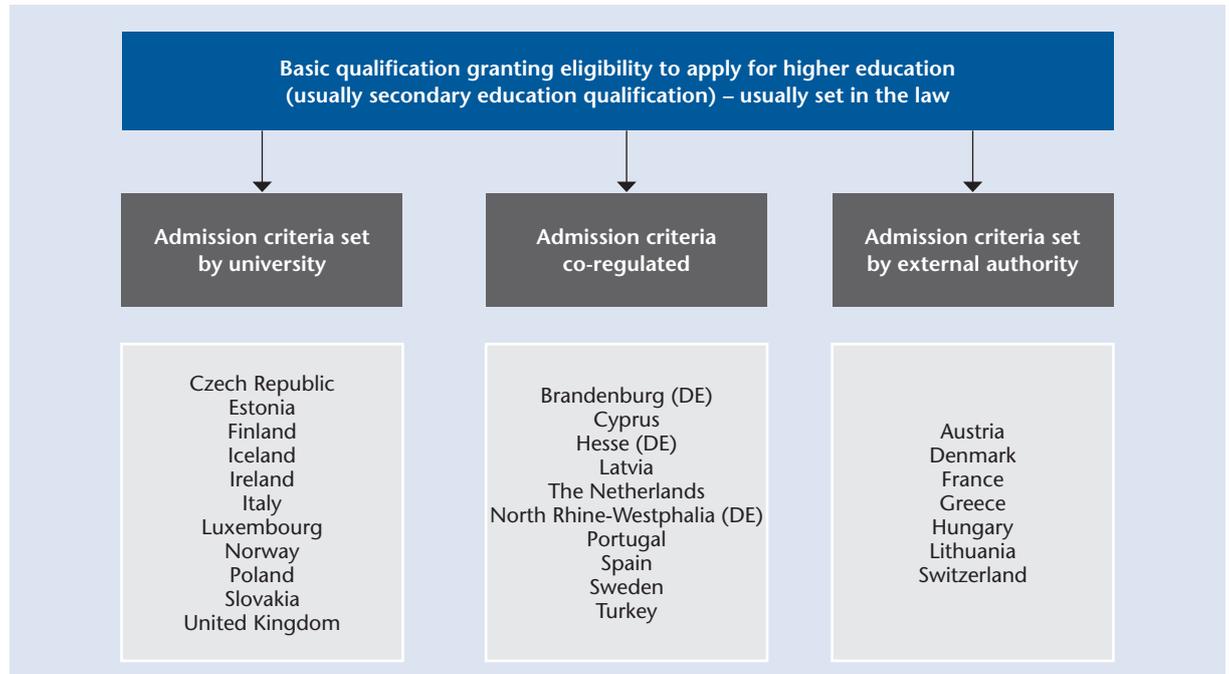
Universities may freely set their admission criteria at Bachelor level in eleven systems. In seven countries, admissions are entirely regulated by an external authority. Three of these (AT, FR, CH) have a system based on free admission. In ten systems, admission mechanisms are co-regulated between institutions and external authorities. In Brandenburg, Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia, for instance, 60% (HE, NRW) or 80% (BB) of Bachelor students are selected by the universities, with the remaining

40/20% reserved for students with long waiting periods, which are due to the *numerus clausus* system used for the distribution of study places in certain disciplines.

Feature 9 - Student admissions in the Netherlands

The Dutch system is based on equal access to Bachelor-level education for all students holding a secondary education qualification. Selection criteria have been determined by the government together with the university sector. For some courses, specific coursework at secondary level is required. Individual institutions are unable to set additional selection criteria. The possibility of granting universities the capacity to impose further criteria is currently being discussed. At Master's level, universities have greater freedom to set selection criteria, although these are also regulated by law.

Figure 14 - Selection criteria at Bachelor level



At Master's level universities are free to set admission criteria independently in a large majority of 22 systems. In five countries (AT, DK, HU, NL, SE), they are co-regulated. In Switzerland, admissions are regulated at the political level.

Feature 10 - Examples of admission mechanisms (Greece, Sweden & Estonia)

Externally regulated admission process: Greece

At Bachelor level, entry is based on the results attained in the national matriculation exam organised by the ministry. When applying for tertiary education, applicants are able to state their preferred universities. Institutions negotiate the number of study places for each department with the ministry. Students are then selected on the basis of their preferences and in the order of their performance in the matriculation exam until all study places allocated to a particular department have been filled. The law specifies certain categories of students with priority entry, irrespective of their performance in the exam. These include students with health problems, from low socio-economic backgrounds or families with several children.

The admission system is about to change: the ministry is planning to introduce a separate secondary level exit exam and allow universities to organise their own entry examinations. The current matriculation exam acts both as an exit (from the secondary level) and entry (to the tertiary level) exam.

Co-regulated admission process: Sweden

The higher education board sets criteria for each field of study. These specify the disciplines and level of study required to be eligible to take a course in a particular field. For example, for civil engineering or psychology, some subjects, such as mathematics, must have been studied to an appropriate level at

the secondary level. The credits or modules accumulated, rather than the grade achieved, are decisive. Institutions may set additional criteria, but the law states that they should require no more from the prospective student than is necessary for the successful completion of the degree.

Admissions criteria set by universities: Estonia

Universities are free to set admission criteria. Some universities in Estonia have set threshold requirements, which are calculated on the basis of the national examinations at the end of secondary school; all students who meet this threshold are entitled to apply for admission to university. On top of this, many fields and programmes have additional requirements, such as entry examinations or interviews.

Introduction and termination of degree programmes

In general, the introduction of new academic programmes requires some sort of approval by the relevant ministry or another public authority. However, the specific procedures vary considerably across Europe.

New programmes must usually pass through some type of accreditation process. Due to the national or regional allocation of educational responsibilities, opening programmes in certain fields may be more difficult if the discipline is already well catered for in other parts of the country. Some countries, such as Denmark, take into account the requirements of the national labour market when deciding on the establishment of new programmes.

Alternatively, new programmes may need to be negotiated with the responsible ministry. Often, such negotiations are closely related to the cost of the programmes. Some may also require a specific professional accreditation.

At Bachelor level, universities in seven countries (AT, CH, IE, LU, NO, SE, UK) can introduce programmes without prior accreditation. However, even in these countries, the establishment of programmes may still follow particular regulations. Although universities can open study programmes independently in Austria, they must have been agreed upon in a performance agreement with the ministry if they are to receive public financial support. In 11 systems (BB, CZ, DK, GR, HE, HU, IT, LT, NRW, PT, SK), all new Bachelor programmes must undergo accreditation to be introduced. In France, the Netherlands and Spain, programmes must be accredited in order to receive public funding. In the Netherlands, privately funded study programmes are also commonly submitted to voluntary accreditation, since this is seen as a quality label.

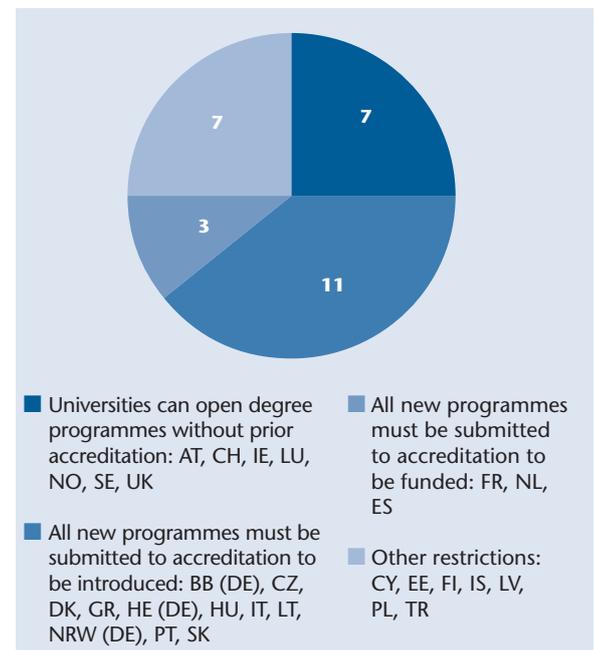
In several countries, additional restrictions apply. In Cyprus and Turkey, all new Bachelor programmes must be submitted to and approved by the ministry or higher education council, respectively. However, this procedure is not a formal accreditation.

In Finland, a ministerial decree determines the educational responsibilities of each university, thereby specifying which academic programmes an institution is entitled to offer. Within their educational remit, universities are allowed to open new study programmes. Similarly, Icelandic and Estonian universities are accredited for certain fields of study, in which they can freely introduce new programmes.

Polish universities can open academic programmes at both Bachelor and Master's levels, provided that the name of the programme is on a list of 118 'standard' fields of study compiled by the ministry, and that the faculty offering the programme fulfils certain requirements (e.g. number of full-time academic staff) stated in the law. If a university wishes to open a programme in a field which does not feature on this list, it has to obtain the approval of the higher education council.

Finally, in Latvia, accreditation can take place after the programme has become operational, but no later than three years after its introduction. Prior to opening new study programmes, universities do, however, have to obtain an operating licence by submitting a self-assessment report. A licensing commission appointed by the minister decides on the application.

Figure 15 - Introduction of academic programmes at Bachelor level



In the majority of systems (all but BB, DK, ES, FR, HE, IT, LT, NL, NRW), procedures for opening new study programmes at Master's and Doctoral level are more or less the same as those at Bachelor level. In the remaining countries, restrictions at one or both of these levels differ from procedures at Bachelor level.

In some countries, the requirements for opening programmes other than at Bachelor level may be more flexible. In Brandenburg, Denmark, Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia and the Netherlands, Bachelor and Master's programmes must undergo accreditation to be introduced or publicly funded, while doctoral programmes can be opened freely

by institutions. Similarly, evaluations of doctoral programmes in Italy are only necessary if the university intends to obtain public funding for the programme in question.

By contrast, in some systems, the requirements for programmes beyond Bachelor level, particularly doctoral ones, are more stringent. In France and Spain, all doctoral programmes must be accredited before introduction, whereas at Bachelor and Master's level, accreditation is only necessary if programmes are to be publicly funded.

Finally, in Lithuania, the science council of the country decides whether universities meet the necessary requirements to offer doctoral programmes. In Hungary, faculties must have at least four full professors in the relevant field and demonstrate adequate scientific quality in order to set up a doctoral school.

Universities in Europe are more autonomous with regards to the termination of existing programmes. Only in five systems (AT, BB, FI, GR, TR) does such a decision require negotiations between the institution and the relevant external authority. Universities in the remaining 23 systems can freely decide on the closure of academic programmes.

Some minor specifications may exist. Upon closing a study programme, universities in the Czech Republic, Finland and Latvia are obliged to provide students with the option of continuing their studies in the same or a similar programme, either at the same or another institution. In Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia, each university has an allocated capacity of study places it is required to offer. In order to fulfil this obligation, study places must be reallocated to other degrees if a programme is discontinued.

Language of instruction

Universities in Europe are often able to choose the language of instruction at different degree levels. Institutions in 21 systems may do so at both Bachelor and Master's level (AT, BB, CH, DK, EE, ES, FI, HE, HU, IE, IT, LU, NL, NO, NRW, PL, PT, SE, SK, TR, UK⁹). In Turkey, however, the higher education council must approve any course taught in a language other than Turkish.

In the remaining seven countries, some restrictions may apply to all or some degree levels. In Cyprus, France and Greece, universities may only offer undergraduate degrees in the national language. There is some more flexibility regarding Master's programmes: Greece and France may offer certain Master's programmes in other languages, while Cyprus may use other languages as long as the courses in question are also available in Greek.

In Iceland and Lithuania, specific language requirements are imposed on Bachelor programmes. Programmes offered in English are linked to institutional internationalisation strategies, such as Erasmus courses or joint degrees. Master's courses in both countries may be offered in non-national languages. In Estonia, any degree taught in a language other than Estonian should also be offered in the national language, although the law does not formally prescribe this.

In Latvia, degree programmes can be taught in foreign languages to a limited extent, both at Bachelor and Master's levels. The law prescribes that, in public universities, the language of tuition shall be Latvian. There are a few exceptions, which again often relate to internationalisation activities. For instance, official EU languages can be used for programmes aimed at foreign students only. For local students, 20% of a degree programme may be taught in other EU languages. In addition, languages other than Latvian cannot be used for final exams or dissertations.

⁹ This situation applies for England. In Wales, there is a sector-wide agreement to encourage and expand opportunities to study in Welsh at Welsh universities.

The situation in the Czech Republic is perhaps most restrictive: universities may choose the language of instruction at both degree levels, but will not receive public funding for foreign-language programmes.

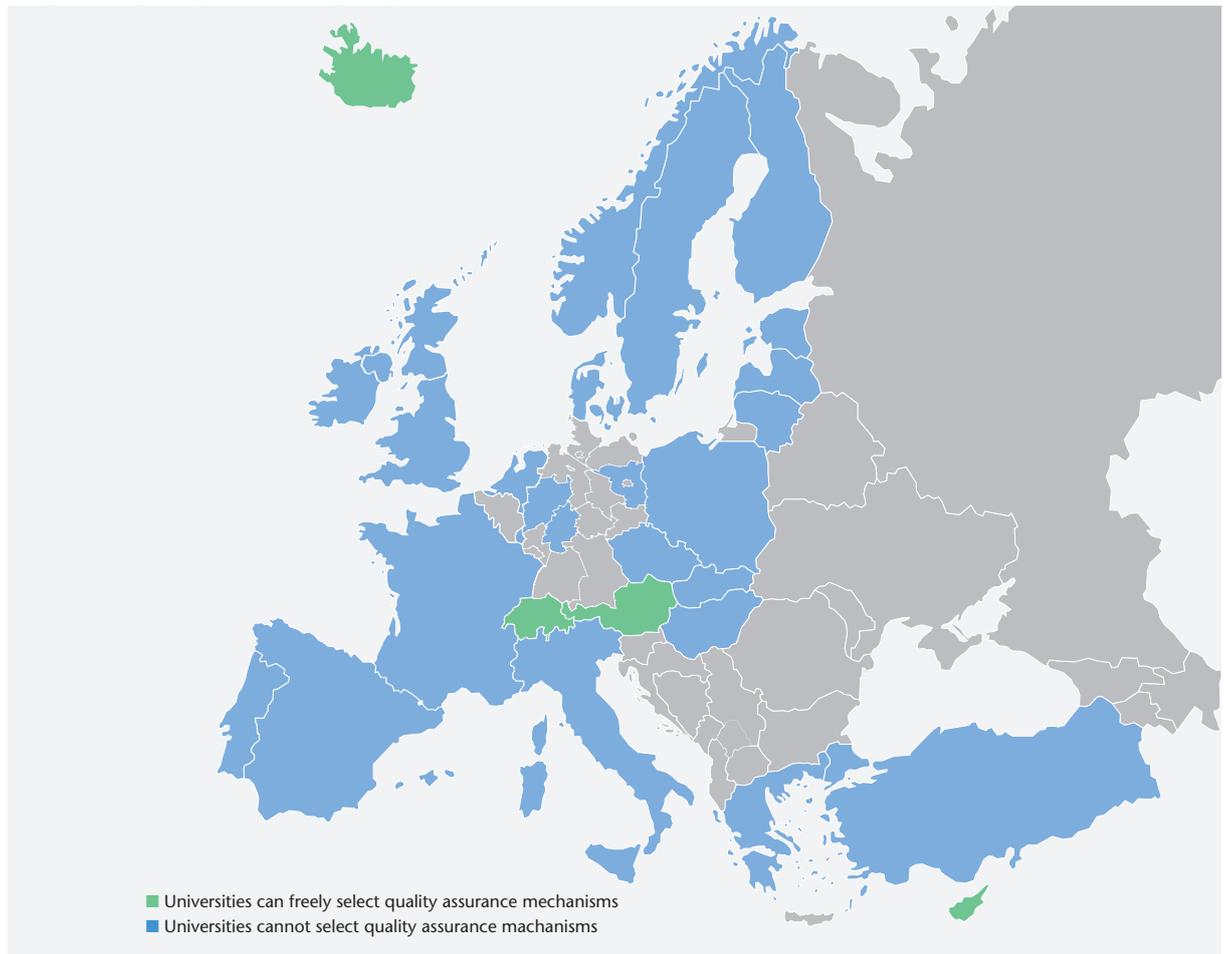
Quality assurance mechanisms and providers

The study also addressed the capacity of universities to choose appropriate quality assurance mechanisms and providers. Only in four countries (AT, CH, CY, IS) are universities able to select their quality assurance

mechanisms freely and according to their needs. In Austria, universities make specific commitments concerning external quality assurance mechanisms, but these are mutually agreed upon in the context of their performance agreements.

In the remaining 24 systems, institutions are unable to choose specific quality assurance mechanisms. Accreditation typically occurs on a programme basis, sometimes periodically. In Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Norway and the UK, quality assurance takes the form of institutional audits.

Map 3 - Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms



With regard to the capacity to select a specific quality assurance agency, higher education systems fall into two categories. In Austria, Brandenburg, Cyprus, Estonia, Hesse, Iceland, North Rhine-Westphalia and Switzerland, universities can use a

quality assurance agency of their choosing; they may also select an agency from another country. All those systems with the capacity to choose their quality assurance mechanisms can also select the agency. In Brandenburg, Hesse and North Rhine-

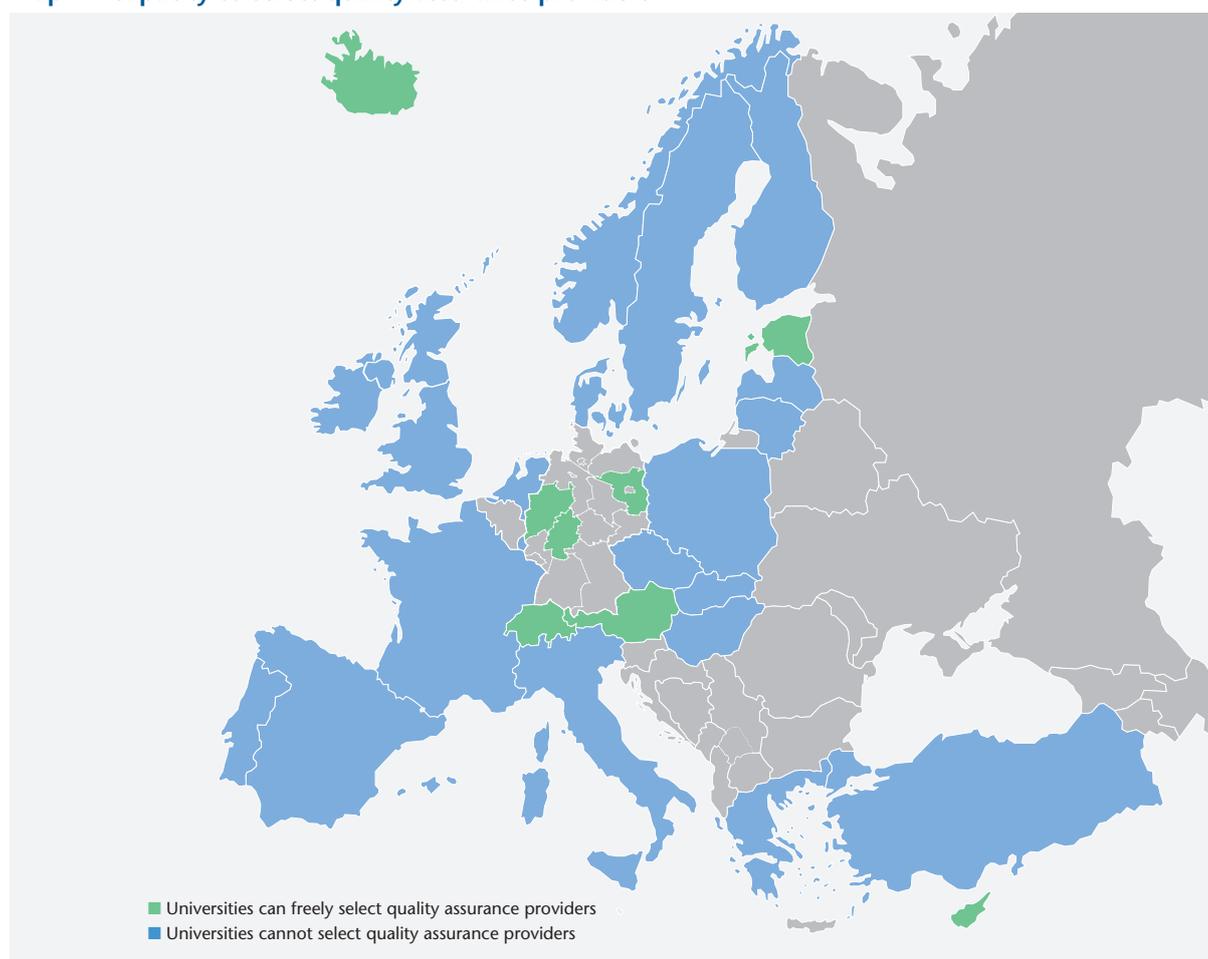
Westphalia, universities may select one of the agencies accredited by the national Accreditation Council; these can currently be found in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Similarly, in Estonia, the national quality assurance agency must approve the provider selected by an institution.

In the Netherlands, the formal decision regarding accreditation is made exclusively by the bi-national – Dutch and Belgian – accreditation council, but universities may select any qualified agency to conduct the required evaluation. This assessment is then approved by the bi-national accreditation council. In 2011, the accreditation law will change

from an exclusive programme-level accreditation to institutional quality audits. When the internal quality assurance mechanisms of a higher education institution are successfully audited, the accreditation organisation will only perform a light form of audit of that institution's programmes.

In the remaining 20 systems, universities are not able to choose a specific quality assurance agency. However, in a number of them, institutions may seek complementary, external quality assessments in addition to the mandatory quality assurance carried out by the national agency.

Map 4 - Capacity to select quality assurance providers



Designing academic content

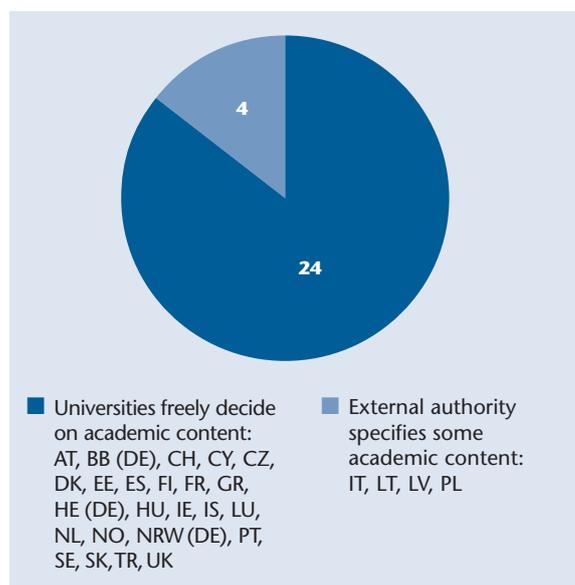
In a large majority of systems, universities are free to determine the content of degrees other than for the regulated professions. In Italy, universities may design

academic degrees if they adhere to the guidelines set by a framework decree, which circumscribes the general structure of the academic system and defines the educational activities, objectives and learning outcomes for each programme. In Poland,

approximately 40% of degree content is preset. However, rather than specifying course content, these guidelines outline the areas of study which should be covered. Universities do not see this as a severe restriction. The requirement of having to choose from a list of 118 clearly defined academic fields is perceived as a greater constraint.

In Latvia, universities have to follow general guidelines on higher education standards, which determine certain aspects of study, such as the minimum duration of practice periods in professional programmes. In addition, they prescribe certain modules, for instance on entrepreneurial skills development, for all degrees. Finally, in Lithuania, the quality assurance agency determines some content as part of the accreditation process. Universities perceive this as a considerable hindrance to diversification, innovation and competitiveness.

Figure 16 - Capacity to design academic content



Recent developments

In terms of academic autonomy, the most significant changes have taken place in relation to quality assurance systems. In Ireland, universities have established the Irish Universities Quality Board to review and validate their processes externally. A new national body is being established to evaluate quality and qualifications in all higher education institutions. This has raised some concern about whether the evaluation approach will remain the same under the new body. In the Netherlands, the mode of quality assurance will change in 2011 from programme-accreditation only to institutional quality audits. In Austria, a new law for external quality assurance in the higher education sector will be introduced in 2012. In the future, Austrian universities will generally be limited to agencies included in the European Quality Assurance Register, although the minister may grant exceptions by ministerial decree. In Estonia, the law regulating quality assurance was changed in 2010, giving universities the ability to select international agencies to conduct the required accreditation process. As yet, no university has made use of this capacity, so it remains to be tested in practice. Estonia is likely to base its list of eligible international quality assurance agencies on the European Quality Assurance Register.

3. THE AUTONOMY SCORECARD 2010

This chapter presents scorecards for the four areas of institutional autonomy. By closely examining the restrictions and combinations of restrictions that apply in each higher education system, this section aims to describe how scores and ranking positions were established. In order to facilitate such a comparison, higher education systems are split into four clusters: a “high” group of countries scoring between 100% and 81%, a “medium high” group scoring between 80% and 61%, a “medium low” group

scoring between 60% and 41% and a “low” group scoring between 40% and 0%. The systems within these groups are compared in detail. In addition, the particular characteristics of each cluster are pointed out.

It is important to note that this chapter presents the weighted results. Non-weighted results are presented in annex 5. The methodology used for scoring and weighting systems’ ‘autonomy performance’ is described in detail in chapter 1.

3.1 Organisational autonomy

Table 12 - Organisational autonomy scores

Rank	System	Score
1	United Kingdom	100%
2	Denmark	94%
3	Finland	93%
4	Estonia	87%
5	North Rhine-Westphalia	84%
6	Ireland	81%
7	Portugal	80%
8	Austria	78%
	Hesse	78%
	Norway	78%
11	Lithuania	75%
12	The Netherlands	69%
13	Poland	67%
14	Latvia	61%
15	Brandenburg	60%
16	France	59%
	Hungary	59%
18	Italy	56%
19	Spain	55%
	Sweden	55%
	Switzerland	55%
22	Czech Republic	54%
23	Cyprus	50%
24	Iceland	49%
25	Slovakia	45%
26	Greece	43%
27	Turkey	33%
28	Luxembourg	31%

The United Kingdom leads the way in the area of organisational autonomy: its higher education system scores 100% on all indicators, meaning that higher education institutions can decide without state interference on all aspects encompassed by this area of autonomy.

An additional five systems – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland and North Rhine-Westphalia – obtain scores higher than 80% and are thus included in the **top cluster of highly autonomous systems**. In those, universities may freely decide on the *structure of their faculties and departments* and *create a variety of for-profit and not-for-profit legal entities*. In addition, all systems in the top cluster include *external members in their governing bodies*. In an upper tier of systems (DK, EE, FI), universities may freely appoint the external members of these bodies. Ireland and North Rhine-Westphalia, which form the bottom tier of the cluster, involve a local or state authority in the selection process.

In none of the highly autonomous systems is the procedure for the *appointment of the executive head* prescribed in the law. The process for his/her *dismissal* is externally regulated only in North Rhine-Westphalia. In three systems (DK, EE, FI), the law contains guidelines concerning the *selection criteria for the executive head*. In a majority of

systems (EE, FI, IE, NRW), the *length of his/her term of office* is prescribed in the relevant higher education law.

The **second (“medium high”) cluster**, which includes systems scoring between 61% and 80%, contains Austria, Hesse, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Portugal. In terms of *deciding on their academic structures and creating for-profit and not-for-profit legal entities*, these systems remain highly flexible. Only Portugal is unable to establish for-profit companies.

A majority of systems in the “medium high” cluster include *external members in university governing bodies*. Only Poland and Latvia, who incidentally score lowest in this cluster, are prohibited from doing so. However, the systems in the second (“medium high”) cluster enjoy noticeably less freedom in the appointment of external members than those in the top (“high”) cluster. While Portuguese universities can freely select non-university representatives, restrictions apply in the remaining five systems: in Austria, Hesse and Lithuania, external members of governing bodies are partly appointed by an external authority, partly by the university. In Norway, an external authority appoints them upon proposal by the university; in the Netherlands, an external authority appoints them independently.

The universities’ freedom of action in deciding on selection procedures and criteria for the appointment of the executive head is only somewhat more curtailed in the “medium high” cluster. In a majority of systems – all but Latvia and the Netherlands – the process for the *appointment of the executive head* is determined and conducted by universities themselves. In half of the systems, specific *selection criteria*, such as the need for the candidate to hold a doctoral degree (LT) or an academic position (LV, PT), are stated in the law. The situation in Poland is most restrictive in this respect: candidates for the position of rector must hold both a doctoral degree and an academic

position. By contrast, the procedure for the *dismissal of the executive head* is legally prescribed in a majority of systems. In some (AT, HE, NO), higher education laws only state the grounds for dismissal and procedures by which this can be carried out. In others, an external authority is (LV, LT, PT) or can be (PL) directly involved in the dismissal. Similarly, the *term of office of the executive leader* is defined by law in nearly all systems. The Netherlands forms an exception to this rule, as neither the procedure for the dismissal of the executive head nor his/her term of office are externally regulated.

To sum up, systems in the “medium high” cluster are largely free to decide on academic structures and establish legal entities. Almost all include external members in their governing bodies, although they are significantly less free in appointing them: external authorities are usually involved in the process. Regarding the executive leadership, the situation is less clear-cut: in a majority of “medium high” systems, universities remain free to decide on the appropriate selection process and criteria for their rectors. By contrast, the dismissal procedure and term of office are set down by law in nearly all systems contained in the second cluster.

The **third (“medium low”) cluster** includes systems with a score between 41% and 60%, and consists of Brandenburg, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Only in two out of these twelve systems (CY, FR) is the *appointment procedure for the executive head* carried out exclusively at the institutional level. In nine systems – all bar Cyprus, Italy and Switzerland – an external body is involved in the *rector’s dismissal*. In eight of these, the ministry or higher education authority confirms the dismissal, following a procedure which is either decided by the institution (GR, HU, SE, SK) or laid down in the law (BB, CZ, ES, IS). In France, only an external authority is entitled to

dismiss the executive leader. The *term of office* is legally prescribed in all systems, except Italy and Spain. With regards to the *selection criteria for the executive head*, the situation is slightly more varied. Universities in five of twelve systems (BB, CH, CZ, IS, SK) are free to decide on the required qualifications and experiences. In the remainder, candidates must hold a doctoral degree or academic position, come from within the university or, indeed, any combination of these.

Universities in the “medium low” cluster are severely limited in their capacity to select the *external members of their governing bodies*. While all systems except Brandenburg and Greece include non-university representatives, not one is able to select them without state involvement. Overall, the restrictions imposed on “medium low” systems are more severe than those encountered in the “medium high” cluster. In Hungary, Italy, Spain and Switzerland, external members of governing bodies are appointed exclusively by an external authority. In Cyprus, France and Iceland, they are appointed partly by the university, partly by an outside body. Finally, in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Sweden, the ministry selects external members upon proposal by the institution.

The universities’ ability to *decide on their academic structures* is also limited in a majority of systems in the third cluster – only in Brandenburg, Hungary, Spain and Switzerland can they freely structure their schools, faculties and departments. Pertinent restrictions range from the existence of legal guidelines (CZ, FR, IT, IS, SE) to the need for approval by the ministry (GR) or the actual listing of academic units in the law (CY, SK). Systems in the “medium low” cluster generally allow universities to *establish legal entities*, although here too significant constraints remain: in Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia and Switzerland, universities are only entitled to create not-for-profit legal entities, while Sweden reserves the right to set up companies to specific institutions. In Iceland, a legal entity must be approved by the national ministry.

Although the specific national or regional circumstances within the “medium low” cluster are highly heterogeneous, it can be said that a majority of systems faces regulatory constraints in most areas of organisational autonomy. In deciding on the appointment, term of office and dismissal of the executive head, universities in “medium low” systems hold little freedom of action. On a similar note, the appointment of external representatives to university governing bodies is heavily regulated in all systems in this group. By contrast, a limited number of systems grant universities somewhat more flexibility in deciding on academic structures and setting selection criteria for the executive leadership. The least heavily regulated aspect of organisational autonomy in the “medium low” group is the establishment of legal entities.

The **fourth (“low”) cluster** contains higher education systems with scores up to 40%, i.e. Luxembourg and Turkey¹⁰. In both cases, the *procedures for the selection and dismissal of the executive head* are stated in the higher education law. An external authority is directly involved in the dismissal process: it either discharges the rector (TR) or confirms the removal from office (LU). *Selection criteria*, such as the need for a doctoral degree and academic position (LU, TR), or an upper age limit (TR), are also externally prescribed. The *term of office of the executive head* is stated in the law.

In terms of university governing bodies, universities in both Luxembourg and Turkey face significant restrictions, albeit for different reasons. Turkish public institutions are unable to invite *external members to sit on their governing bodies*. The University of Luxembourg does include non-university representatives in its board, but their appointment is controlled by the ministry.

The *structure of academic units*, such as faculties and departments, is also heavily regulated: they are either approved by an external authority, as

¹⁰ Since the higher education systems in these countries differ considerably, with Luxembourg having only one university, any comparison between them should of course be treated with caution.

in Turkey, or listed in the law, as in Luxembourg. Finally, universities in both systems in the “low” group retain some flexibility in *establishing legal entities*: Turkey can only establish not-for-profit outfits, while the University of Luxembourg can create both for-profit and not-for-profit ones.

The fourth cluster contains those higher education systems whose level of autonomy is perceived to be **low**. Universities in these systems lack freedom of action in nearly all areas of organisational autonomy, only maintaining a certain degree of independence in the creation of legal entities.

3.2 Financial autonomy

Table 13 - Financial autonomy scores

Rank	System	Score
1	Luxembourg	91%
2	Estonia	90%
3	United Kingdom	89%
4	Latvia	80%
5	The Netherlands	77%
6	Hungary	71%
7	Italy	70%
	Portugal	70%
	Slovakia	70%
10	Denmark	69%
11	Ireland	66%
12	Switzerland	65%
13	Austria	59%
14	North Rhine-Westphalia	58%
15	Finland	56%
	Sweden	56%
17	Spain	55%
18	Poland	54%
19	Lithuania	51%
20	Norway	48%
21	Czech Republic	46%
22	France	45%
	Turkey	45%
24	Brandenburg	44%
25	Iceland	43%
26	Greece	36%
27	Hesse	35%
28	Cyprus	23%

In the area of financial autonomy, the **top cluster**, which is considered to be **highly autonomous** (with a score higher than 80%), contains Estonia, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom. These systems receive a high score on the majority of indicators making up financial autonomy. Remaining restrictions among these top-tier systems are a one-year *funding cycle* (as opposed to multi-annual funding cycles) for Estonia and the United Kingdom, and the inability to *borrow money* without the approval of an external authority (LU). The United Kingdom requires the consent of its Higher Education Funding Council for universities to borrow more than a certain (rather large) amount. Universities in the United Kingdom must also set *tuition fees* for national/EU students below an externally imposed ceiling. Finally, in Luxembourg, the approval of the ministry is required to *keep a surplus* and *sell university-owned buildings*; the latter is also the case for Estonia.

The **second (“medium high”) cluster**, which includes systems scoring between 61% and 80%, covers Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia and Switzerland. In terms of *public funding modalities*, the systems featured in the second cluster display similar characteristics: all have a one-year funding period. All receive a block-grant, although the universities’ freedom of allocation is restricted in some systems: for instance, in Hungary, Latvia, Portugal and Slovakia, block grants are split into broad categories

between which funds cannot usually be moved. In Ireland, small portions of the block grant are earmarked for specific activities.

All systems in the second cluster, except Ireland, allow universities to *keep the surplus* they generate. In Latvia and Portugal, universities must secure the approval of an external authority to do so. There is greater ambiguity with regards to universities' *ability to borrow money*: in some systems (DK, NL), they are able to borrow funds unrestrictedly, in others (IE, IT, SK) they can only borrow up to a maximum percentage, while in others still (CH, HU, PT) they cannot borrow at all. Finally, universities in eight of nine systems in the "medium high" cluster are – at least theoretically – entitled to *own the buildings* they occupy, although in Switzerland, they may only sell them with the approval of an external authority. Other restrictions, such as the need to record acquisitions and sales on a national register (PT), may also apply. In Hungary, universities enjoy wide-ranging powers over their real estate in terms of using and renting them. However, they do not officially own, and are therefore unable to sell, them.

In six systems contained in this cohort – Ireland, Hungary, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia – universities have significant freedom of action with regards to *setting student contributions*. This flexibility ranges from the capacity to decide on the level of fees for all student groups¹¹ (LV), to the ability to set student contributions for non-EU students (SK). Slovakia is unable to levy tuition fees for national/EU students (except if they study part time). In Italy, universities are allowed to set fee levels under an externally-imposed ceiling only. Similarly, universities in Denmark and Switzerland are more constricted with regards to student fees. Swiss universities cooperate with the authorities in deciding on the level of student contributions. Danish universities are least autonomous in this respect: contributions are charged only for non-EU Bachelor and Master's students and set in cooperation between universities and an external authority.

To sum up, systems with "**medium high**" **financial autonomy** generally offer relatively flexible public funding modalities and allow universities to keep the surplus they produce. In most systems, borrowing money and owning buildings is also possible – the picture for these indicators is less clear-cut. The second cluster splits more or less clearly into a larger top-tier group, which has considerable flexibility in the charging and setting of student contributions (for all or some student groups), and fewer bottom-tier systems, in which the ability to levy and decide on tuition fees is more curtailed.

The **third ("medium low") cluster**, which includes systems scoring between 41% and 60%, consists of Austria, Brandenburg, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway, North Rhine-Westphalia, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. Within this group, there is a relatively high degree of consistency concerning *public funding modalities*: the funding cycle lasts one year, except in Austria, Brandenburg and Norway, where it is longer. Universities in 12 of 13 systems receive public funding in the form of block grants. Nevertheless, their freedom to allocate these funds is restricted in a majority of cases, either through the use of broad categories (FR, IS, LT, SE), the earmarking of particular portions of public funding (CZ), or the allocation of some funds directly to faculties (PL). In Finland, Norway, Spain and two German states (BB, NRW), universities are free to allocate their block grant as they see fit. Turkey, where universities receive a line-item budget, forms an exception in the "medium low" group.

Universities' ability to keep a surplus, borrow money and own buildings is significantly constrained in several systems. The first indicator – the *ability to keep a surplus* – is the least clear-cut: here, options range from the complete inability to keep a surplus (LT), to the capacity to retain excess funds up to a maximum percentage (CZ, NO, SE), only for a predetermined purpose (BB, PL), or with the approval

¹¹ These groups include national/EU Bachelor, Master's and doctoral students and non-EU Bachelor, Master's and doctoral students.

of an external authority (CZ, TR). In Austria, Finland, France, Iceland, North Rhine-Westphalia and Spain, universities may keep and spend their surplus freely. All systems, bar Norway and Turkey, allow universities to *borrow money*. While in some systems (AT, CZ, FI), institutions may do so unrestrictedly, in others (ES, FR, LT), the approval of an external authority is required, while in others still, universities may borrow up to a maximum percentage (BB, NRW) or from designated banks (BB, SE). While nearly all systems in the second cluster make it at least hypothetically possible for universities to *own the buildings* they occupy, the situation is different in the third (“medium low”) group: only in three systems – Austria, the Czech Republic and Spain – can universities own and freely sell their real estate. In four (BB, LT, NRW, SE), universities cannot own their buildings at all. In the remaining six, varying restrictions apply, such as the need for approval by an external authority (FR, IS).

In terms of *tuition fees*, the third cohort splits into two groups: in a top group (LT, NRW, PL, SE), universities retain limited influence over the setting of student contributions. In Sweden, for instance, universities can decide on fees for non-EU Bachelor and Master’s students, while national/EU Bachelor and Master’s degrees as well as all doctoral programmes are free of charge. In Lithuania, universities must set the level of student contributions for national/EU Bachelor and Master’s degrees under an externally imposed ceiling, whereas institutions can freely decide on fees for doctoral degrees and non-EU Bachelor and Master’s degrees. Despite these variations, top-tier systems generally allow for more flexibility in setting fees for non-EU students than for national/EU ones. The situation is markedly different for bottom-tier systems, which include Brandenburg, the Czech Republic, France, Iceland and Norway. Here, fees are either set by an external authority, or not charged at all. Austria, Finland, Spain and Turkey are interesting outliers: despite a strict no-fee policy, Finland belongs to the top group, as do Austria and Spain where tuition fees are set by an external authority for all student groups. Turkey, on

the other hand, which allows its universities to set tuition fees for non-EU students, is situated at the bottom.

To summarise, even systems characterised by “**medium low**” financial autonomy tend to offer fairly flexible public funding modalities. However, the ability of universities to borrow money and own buildings and, to a somewhat lesser degree, to keep excess funds is significantly constrained in a majority of cases. While universities belonging to the top tier of the third cohort retain a moderate amount of flexibility in the charging and setting of student fees, in the bottom systems, they are unable either to charge or set fee levels.

The **fourth (“low”) cluster** includes higher education systems with scores of up to 40%, i.e. Cyprus, Greece and Hesse.

In this cohort, heavy constraints can be observed. In a majority of systems, selling university-occupied buildings is possible only with the approval of an external authority (CY, GR). In Hesse, universities cannot *own their buildings* at all. *Borrowing money* is entirely prohibited in two higher education systems (GR, HE), while in Cyprus, the approval of an external authority is required to do so. In Cyprus and Greece, universities cannot *retain a surplus*.

Whereas block grants are the norm in the first (“high”), second (“medium high”) and third (“medium low”) clusters, *public funding* takes the form of a line-item budget in two of the three systems included in the fourth (“low”) cohort (CY, GR). By contrast, institutions in Hesse receive block grants and may use these without restrictions.

Student contributions are either determined by an external authority (CY) or not levied at all (HE). Only in Greece may universities set fee levels for Master’s programmes.

The final cluster contains higher education systems whose level of financial autonomy is perceived to be **low**. This cohort is characterised by a near-complete lack of autonomy in the area of student contributions and, in two of

three systems, highly inflexible public funding modalities. Severe constraints are generally imposed on the universities' capacity to own and sell university-occupied buildings, borrow money and keep surplus funds.

3.3 Staffing autonomy

Table 14 - Staffing autonomy scores

Rank	System	Score
1	Estonia	100%
2	United Kingdom	96%
3	Czech Republic	95%
	Sweden	95%
	Switzerland	95%
6	Finland	92%
	Latvia	92%
8	Luxembourg	87%
9	Denmark	86%
10	Lithuania	83%
11	Ireland	82%
12	Poland	80%
13	Austria	73%
	The Netherlands	73%
15	Iceland	68%
16	Norway	67%
17	Hungary	66%
18	Portugal	62%
19	Hesse	61%
	North Rhine-Westphalia	61%
21	Turkey	60%
22	Brandenburg	55%
23	Slovakia	54%
24	Italy	49%
25	Cyprus	48%
	Spain	48%
27	France	43%
28	Greece	14%

In the area of staffing autonomy, the largest number of higher education systems falls in the **top cluster**. Eleven systems – Denmark, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom – score above 80%. Estonia receives a score of 100%, indicating that institutions can freely decide on all aspects of staffing, including recruitment, dismissal and promotion procedures and salaries.

The other systems in the top group split into an upper (CH, CZ, FI, LV, SE, UK) and a lower (DK, IE, LT, LU) tier. The former systems, which are more clearly situated in the “high” cluster – i.e. they score over 90% – mostly face restrictions in only one indicator. In the Czech Republic, Sweden or Latvia, for instance, the law provides basic guidelines regarding *recruitment procedures* and qualifications. In Finland and the UK, salaries for senior academic staff (UK) or both staff profiles (FI) are negotiated with other parties, such as unions. Another restriction in this upper tier relates to *promotion procedures* for senior academic staff: in Latvia, these promotions are possible only if a post is available at a higher level. The Swiss system applies special regulations, such as a longer notice period, to the *dismissal* of a limited number of specific high-level staff, usually permanent professors.

The second (lower) tier in the top group contains systems which impose a slightly larger number of restrictions on higher education institutions. In Denmark, for example, limitations exist with regard to *recruitment procedures* and *staff salaries*: while the overall number of certain administrative posts is limited by law, universities may freely hire academic personnel. Danish authorities also set salary bands for senior administrative staff. By contrast, Danish laws do not specify *dismissal* practices; they do however contain general guidelines concerning *promotion procedures*. Ireland is a special case: despite the absence of any formal or legal constraints, all recruitments and promotions have been frozen as a result of the government's 'Employment Control Framework' moratorium of 2009.

To conclude, systems included in the top cluster enjoy a **high level** of autonomy in staffing matters. One higher education system imposes no restrictions on universities' ability to hire, pay, dismiss and promote staff. Where limitations apply, these are relatively minor and do not significantly constrain institutions in their freedom of action. In top-cluster systems, recruitments, salaries and promotions tend to be more heavily regulated than dismissals. Restrictions are placed on recruitments (5 systems), salaries (6) and promotions (5). Dismissals are externally regulated in one system only. Finally, though sector-specific regulations do exist in some top-cluster systems, these are not linked to the civil servant status of university employees.

The "**medium high**" cluster covers systems scoring between 61% and 80%. It includes Austria, Hesse, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia, Norway, Poland and Portugal, and may be split into two sub-groups. Institutions in Austria, Iceland, Poland and the Netherlands retain considerable autonomy in *recruiting and promoting* staff. Only Austrian and Polish laws contain guidelines concerning the procedure and criteria for the

selection of senior academic personnel. Restrictions in this upper tier of "medium high" systems relate mostly to staff *salaries* and *dismissals*. In Austria, for instance, salary levels are set for some personnel due to their civil servant status, while in Iceland and the Netherlands, salary bands are negotiated with other parties. In Poland, salary bands are set by an external authority for senior academic and administrative staff. Apart from Poland, staff dismissals are strictly regulated due to the civil servant status held by some or all staff groups in all systems, although in Austria this protection is only granted to staff employed before 2004. It should also be noted that, even in Poland, most full-time academic staff enjoy special protection from dismissal, although they are not civil servants. In Austria and the Netherlands, additional sector-specific regulations concerning dismissals have been negotiated as part of collective bargaining agreements.

The lower tier of the second cluster (HE, HU, NO, NRW, PT) is less flexible in terms of staff *recruitment*: in Hungary for instance, certain selected academic posts are confirmed by the ministry. Similarly to Austria, the laws in Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia and Portugal specify the procedure to be followed when hiring senior academic staff. Institutions in Hungary are free to decide on promotion procedures. For the remaining four systems, some restrictions apply, such as the need to have held a position for a minimum number of years (HE, NRW) or the need for an open post at a higher level (PT). Institutions in the lower tier are most limited in their freedom of action regarding *staff salaries* and *dismissals*. Here, restrictions can be found in almost all systems and for all staff profiles. Dismissals are strictly regulated due to the civil servant status of either all (HE, HU, NO, NRW) or some staff (PT). Salary bands are either negotiated with other parties (HE, NO, NRW) or set by an external authority (HU); in Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia there is an overall limit on all payments for senior academic staff. In Portugal, the salary levels of some staff are prescribed by an external authority due to their civil servant status.

Summing up, although universities belonging to systems in the “**medium high**” cluster face more restrictions than those in the first group, they do retain autonomy over certain aspects of staffing. Generally speaking, recruitment procedures and promotions are less heavily regulated than salaries and dismissals. Contrary to the first cluster, some or all university personnel generally have civil servant status.

The **third (“medium low”) cluster**, which includes systems scoring between 41% and 60%, consists of Brandenburg, Cyprus, France, Italy, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey. Institutional independence in these systems is strongly curtailed. The restrictions placed on hiring, paying, dismissing and promoting personnel cover a wide spectrum. The civil servant status enjoyed by some or all employees in all “medium low” systems constrains institutions, particularly in deciding on *salaries* and *dismissals*. In Cyprus, Slovakia and Spain, the situation is most restrictive in that civil servant status determines salary levels for all senior academic and administrative staff. In Italy, salaries are fixed on the basis of civil servant status for all academic, though not administrative staff. Additional restrictions may include overall limits on all staff payments (BB) and salary bands that are either predetermined by an external authority (FR, TR) or negotiated with another party (BB). In all systems, the institutions’ freedom to dismiss staff is heavily limited due to the civil servant status of some or all personnel. In Cyprus, higher categories of academic staff cannot be dismissed at all.

Promotions are heavily regulated in all systems bar Slovakia. Higher education laws may specify the composition of the promotion committee (CY, ES). In some systems, promotions are only possible if there is an open post at a higher level (BB, CY, TR). In France, promotions are governed by annual quotas, while Italy carries out a national competition.

The institutions belonging to the “medium low” group remain most flexible in *hiring* new staff. A number of systems still grant universities some autonomy in carrying out recruitments for senior administrative (BB, SK, TR), or both categories of staff (CY, IT). (In Italy, the law nonetheless specifies the selection procedure to be followed). Restrictions on recruitment procedures vary. Both France and Spain practice a system of pre-selection: in Spain, candidates for academic and administrative posts must be personally accredited by the national accreditation agency before being hired by universities. French institutions can only recruit academic staff out of a national list drawn up by peers who were partly nominated by the ministry. The number of academic posts is limited by an external authority in France and Turkey. An external authority confirms some academic staff appointments in Slovakia, and even carries out the recruitment (of senior administrators) in France.

Universities in those systems situated in the third cluster, where autonomy is seen to be “**medium low**”, face restrictions on a majority of staffing indicators and for both staff profiles. In a number of systems, more than one restriction applies to one indicator. Institutions in this group are least constrained in hiring staff; most systems maintain some freedom to determine recruitment procedures, mostly for senior administrative staff.

Scoring below 41%, Greece is the only system in which staffing autonomy is perceived to be **low**. Greek institutions are constrained by (at times multiple) restrictions imposed on all areas of higher education staffing. The number of posts is limited; appointments are confirmed by an external authority for academic and carried out through a centralised national system for administrative personnel. Salaries and dismissals are strictly regulated due to the civil servant status held by all staff, and the law states detailed requirements for the promotion process. Greek universities thus have little to no say over staffing matters.

3.4 Academic autonomy

Table 15 - Academic autonomy scores

Rank	System	Score
1	Ireland	100%
2	Norway	97%
3	United Kingdom	94%
4	Estonia	92%
5	Finland	90%
6	Iceland	89%
7	Cyprus	77%
8	Luxembourg	74%
9	Austria	72%
	Switzerland	72%
11	Hesse	69%
	North Rhine-Westphalia	69%
13	Brandenburg	67%
14	Sweden	66%
15	Poland	63%
16	Italy	57%
	Spain	57%
18	Denmark	56%
	Slovakia	56%
20	Latvia	55%
21	Portugal	54%
22	Czech Republic	52%
23	The Netherlands	48%
24	Hungary	47%
25	Turkey	46%
26	Lithuania	42%
27	Greece	40%
28	France	37%

In the area of academic autonomy, six countries – Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom – are included in the **top cluster** and their universities can thus be considered as **highly autonomous**. With a score of 100%, Ireland is in the lead. Irish universities can freely decide on all aspects of academic autonomy¹². A feature

common to the top two systems, i.e. Ireland and Norway, is their institutions' ability to decide on the overall number of study places and select students. Norwegian universities are free to admit as many students as they wish, but will not necessarily receive additional public funding.

Universities' inability to decide independently on the number of students – overall numbers are in most cases negotiated with an external authority – sets Estonia, Finland, Iceland and the UK apart from the top two systems. Additional constraints exist with regards to the introduction and termination of degree programmes. In Estonia and Iceland, universities are accredited for certain study fields, while in Finland, institutions can only offer degree programmes within their previously defined educational remit. In addition, Finland applies some constraints on the choice of instruction language.

The **second (“medium high”) cluster** includes systems scoring between 61% and 80%, and consists of Austria, Brandenburg, Cyprus, Hesse, Luxembourg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Sweden, Switzerland and Poland. Among these systems, only Luxembourg and Poland allow their universities both to *decide on overall student numbers* and to *select students at Bachelor and Master's level*. In all other systems, varying restrictions apply. Overall student numbers are in some cases negotiated with an external authority (BB, CY, HE, NRW); Austria and Switzerland practice a system of free admissions. The selection of students may be co-regulated (AT, BB, CY, HE, NRW, SE) or externally controlled (AT, CH)¹³. Universities in a majority of systems in the “medium high” cluster retain the ability to set selection criteria for Master's programmes (BB, CY, HE, LU, NRW, PL).

¹² Ireland's universities are obliged to draw on the Irish Universities Quality Board to review and validate their processes externally through an institutional audit. Although this does not technically constitute a free choice of quality assurance mechanisms and providers, an institutional audit system is seen to enhance greatly quality assurance processes by minimising bureaucratic costs, increasing efficiency, and ensuring high standards of teaching and learning (Policy Statement on Quality and Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, EJA, 2010). Ireland therefore did not receive a deduction for this indicator. A similar situation can be found in Estonia, Finland, Norway and the UK.

¹³ Two restrictions may apply for some countries (see Austria, for example), since this question was asked both for Bachelor and Master's students.

Regarding the *accreditation of degree programmes*, there is considerable variation between the countries in the “medium high” cluster. Luxembourg and Switzerland do not require any prior accreditation, while Austrian and Swedish institutions face only minor constraints: in Austria, the introduction of degree programmes is related to the performance agreements negotiated between universities and the government. In Sweden, only a minority of programmes must be accredited before being introduced. In the remaining systems of the group, prior accreditation – or in the case of Cyprus, approval by the ministry – is compulsory for both Bachelor and Master’s degrees (BB, HE, NRW). Poland is a particular case in that new programmes at all levels must feature on a national list of standard fields of study. The introduction of doctoral programmes is less strictly regulated. *Programmes may be discontinued* either independently by universities (CY, CH, HE, LU, NRW, PL, SE) or upon negotiation with an external authority (AT, BB).

The picture is similarly varied in the area of quality assurance. In three countries in the “medium high cluster”, universities can freely choose both *quality assurance mechanisms and providers* (AT, CH, CY). By contrast, institutions in Luxembourg, Poland and Sweden can select neither the quality assurance regime nor the agency. A particular situation applies in the three German states where, although quality assurance processes are prescribed, universities are able to choose between German, Austrian and Swiss agencies accredited by the national Accreditation Council.

Universities’ freedom to *choose the language of instruction* and to *design the content of degree programmes* is not significantly curtailed in the “medium high” cluster. Only in Cyprus does the law specify strict guidelines concerning the language of instruction: Bachelor programmes must be taught in the national language and Master’s degrees may only be offered in another language if they are also available in Greek. In Poland, some academic

standards, rather than actual degree contents, are externally prescribed.

Institutions in systems with “**medium high**” **academic autonomy** thus retain near-complete freedom in choosing the language of instruction and designing the content of degree programmes. By contrast, nearly all face limitations when deciding on overall student numbers and admission mechanisms, though institutions may still set selection criteria for Master’s programmes in a majority of systems. With regards to accreditation and quality assurance, regional and national situations differ strongly. Options here range from no formal accreditation requirements to compulsory accreditation for Bachelor programmes, Master’s programmes or both, and from a free choice of quality assurance procedures and providers to the ability to select neither.

The **third (“medium low”) cluster**, which includes systems scoring between 41% and 60%, consists of the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey. Much like the “medium high” cluster, systems in the “medium low” group impose a variety of restrictions regarding universities’ capacity to *decide on the overall student numbers* and *determine admission mechanisms*. In three countries (DK, IT, LV), universities themselves set the number of study places. In all other higher education systems restrictions apply, such as the need to negotiate with an external authority (CZ, ES, PT) or a free admission scheme (NL). An alternative system whereby universities decide on fee-paying study places while an external authority fixes state-funded ones can be found in Hungary, Lithuania and Slovakia. Only in Turkey are overall student numbers decided unilaterally by an external authority. Similarly to the systems in the second cluster, those in the third are characterised by a distinct discrepancy between the ability of universities to set admission criteria for Bachelor programmes and Master’s programmes. Institutions in eight out of 11 systems (CZ, ES, IT, LV, LT, PT, SK, TR) may set admission

criteria for Master's students; only in three (CZ, IT, SK) may they do so for Bachelor students. In the remaining systems, Bachelor admissions are either co-regulated (ES, LV, NL, PT, TR) or entirely controlled by an external authority (DK, HU, LT).

The difference between the "medium low" and "medium high" clusters is most marked in the areas of *prior programme accreditation and quality assurance procedures*. While a number of systems in the "medium high" group offer considerable flexibility in this respect, countries in the third cluster do not let institutions choose quality assurance mechanisms and agencies. Whereas programme accreditation is required only in some systems and for some degree types in the "medium high" cluster, it is compulsory for practically all degree levels in almost all higher education systems in the "medium low" cluster. Constraints include the need for prior accreditation for programmes to be introduced or funded (CZ, DK, ES, HU, IT, LT, NL, PT, SK), the requirement of an institutional operational licence (LV), or the need for the national higher education council to approve all programmes (TR). Only doctoral programmes in Denmark and the Netherlands can be introduced freely. By contrast, universities in nearly all systems are free to *terminate programmes* independently. In Turkey, institutions negotiate the termination of programmes with an external authority.

The freedom to decide on the language of instruction is curtailed only in the Czech Republic, Latvia and Lithuania. For example, in the Czech Republic programmes taught in languages other than Czech do not receive public funding. On a different note, Lithuanian universities can only choose the instruction language for programmes that form part of an internationalisation strategy.

In three of the "medium low" systems (IT, LV, LT), some academic content is prescribed. For instance, the law defines educational objectives and learning outcomes in Italy. In Latvia, certain modules, such as entrepreneurial skills, are compulsory for all programmes.

In setting overall student numbers and selecting students, the countries of the "medium low" group display characteristics similar to those of the "medium high" group. The picture is a varied one, with options ranging from independent institutional decisions to the unilateral regulation of student numbers and admission criteria by an external authority. Universities in a minority of countries in the "medium low" cluster are constrained in selecting teaching languages and designing academic content. The defining feature of the "medium low" group is that universities cannot select quality assurance processes and providers and that their programmes usually have to be accredited before being introduced.

France and Greece are included in the "low" group, which includes countries scoring below 41%. First, universities in both systems lack flexibility in *setting overall student numbers*: in Greece, they are negotiated with the government, while France uses a system of free admission. Heavy constraints also relate to the *introduction of degree programmes*: all must be submitted to prior accreditation. *Quality assurance processes and providers* are prescribed, and institutions' *ability to choose the language of instruction* is curtailed in both systems: all Bachelor and a set proportion of Master's programmes must be taught in the national languages.

There remains some leeway concerning *student selection*: though admission to Bachelor programmes is regulated by an external authority, universities are free to set selection criteria for Master's degrees. Significantly, both French and Greek universities are capable of *designing the academic content of their degrees* without state interference.

The fourth cluster contains those higher education systems whose level of autonomy is perceived to be **low**. The countries in this group face heavy restrictions in nearly all areas of academic autonomy. Crucially, however, they remain free to develop their own academic programmes.

4. PERCEPTIONS AND CHALLENGES

During the interviews, respondents were asked a number of general questions, which aimed to provide a snapshot of their perceptions of the major challenges associated with university autonomy and the overall level of autonomy in their respective systems. The responses have again confirmed that perceptions of autonomy are contingent on a system's specific historical, social and cultural background. For example, while in some systems the inclusion of external members in institutional governing bodies is seen as an important accountability measure, it is regarded in others as undue interference in internal university affairs (particularly if external members are mainly appointed by external authorities). It is interesting to note that views on the main challenges for university autonomy have not changed significantly compared to those given in the context of EUA's previous study "University Autonomy in Europe I". Perceptions may be grouped in the following categories.

Challenges linked to reform implementation

Although advances in governance reforms in the past decade have generally been welcomed by higher education stakeholders, changes in the law have also become a cause for concern in a number of countries. The actual consequences of major regulatory adjustments were often considered as unclear. In a number of countries, new reforms are being developed while previously adopted legal changes remain to be implemented. It was often commented that public authorities have not sufficiently supported the development of a new set of skills and competencies, particularly in the area of leadership and management, to enable universities to make use of newly acquired institutional autonomy. In some, mostly southern

European, countries the implementation of reforms remains an important challenge due to internal difficulties linked to the organisational structure of the institutions.

Differences between formal and practical autonomy

A number of respondents noted considerable discrepancies between formal and practical autonomy. In many countries, for instance, universities' capacity to own and use buildings as assets was seen as largely theoretical. Similarly, despite the almost universal use of block grants, institutions see restrictions in the internal allocation of their public funding through earmarking and the setting of target agreements as limiting. On the other hand, universities in some higher education systems may in actual fact have more freedom of manoeuvre than the legislative framework would suggest.

Financial issues

Financial matters were identified by the majority of national rectors' conferences as the most pressing challenges faced by universities today. The main issues mentioned related to a limited use of block grants, short funding periods and the inability to own and sell buildings, to keep a surplus and charge tuition fees. The inability to freely decide on staff salaries was seen as another limitation that can lead to competitive disadvantages in a global higher education market. The impact of the economic crisis on the current state of university autonomy was universally recognised as a major challenge. In a number of countries, new regulations following austerity measures were also perceived as reducing autonomy. In systems where access to studies is free, the inability to select students was seen as a major challenge. This was perceived as

all the more problematic when combined with low or reduced levels of funding and an increasing student population.

Accountability requirements

Interviewees highlighted excessive accountability requirements, in many cases following funding cuts and the tightening of public budgets, as an additional difficulty. While it was readily acknowledged that universities should be held accountable to society and towards their funders, it was stated that the introduction of overly resource- and time-intensive bureaucratic measures is also preventing universities from achieving their full potential. Rather than setting long-term targets and taking a strategic lead, some governments have displayed a growing tendency to micro-manage university affairs. Quality assurance processes also raised concern. Strict programme accreditation and, in some cases, a new legal status of quality assurance agencies were considered as limiting autonomy.

General level of autonomy

When comparing the regulatory frameworks in which institutions operate to those of previous decades, it emerged that the level of university autonomy has indeed increased over the long term. Despite the numerous restrictions that still curtail autonomy, interviewees generally rated their system's level of institutional freedom as satisfactory in comparison to the past. Only in a small minority of countries was the prevailing level of autonomy regarded as unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, in a number of countries, changes following the adoption of austerity measures were considered to have reduced financial and staffing autonomy alike. And when levels of institutional freedom were compared to other systems, many interviewees felt that their autonomy was markedly lower than that of institutions in other countries.

5. TRENDS

Recent governance reforms in many European countries have affected universities' **organisational autonomy**. In several cases, their legal status has changed. Due to the diversity of national legislative frameworks, individual organisational forms are difficult to compare. However, the new status usually offers greater freedom from the state and, in most cases, goes hand in hand with increased participation of external members in the university governing bodies.

In a majority of European universities, external members now participate in the most important decisions in the institution's governing bodies. In systems where decision-making bodies did not previously include external members, this development is discussed rather controversially, particularly if some of these members are selected by the government. This is often seen as a way for governments to gain greater influence over internal decision-making processes, thus reducing institutional autonomy.

In most Northern European countries, universities are able to select their external members freely, although in some of these systems, an external authority formally appoints the external members who were put forward by the university. In a majority of systems, the government still partly or completely controls the appointment of external members. Although there is a noticeable shift towards smaller and more effective governing bodies, very large governing bodies still exist in several systems, particularly in the Mediterranean countries.

Most universities are free to decide on their internal academic structures and can create legal entities. In a number of cases, institutions can carry out certain additional activities more freely through such distinct legal entities.

The executive head is always chosen by the institution itself. In half of the surveyed systems, the selection or election needs to be confirmed by an external authority. This is a formality in most, though by no means all, cases: in some systems, the external authority may carry considerable weight in the selection process. The length of term is almost always specified in the law, which either indicates an exact or a maximum period.

To drive the future development of organisational autonomy, it will be important to strengthen further the move towards smaller governing bodies and to grant universities more independence in the selection of external members in their governing bodies.

Financial autonomy is crucial for universities to achieve their strategic aims, which is why restrictions in this area are seen as particularly limiting. In almost all countries, universities receive their core public funding through block grants. Line-item budgets are now extremely rare. Nevertheless, in nearly half of the systems that use block grants, internal allocation possibilities are somehow limited by law. This ranges from a division into broad categories with no or limited possibility to shift funds between them to the earmarking of certain parts of the grant for specific purposes. In almost all systems, universities receive their funding for a period of one year, which makes long-term planning difficult.

In over half of the surveyed systems, universities can retain financial surpluses. In the remainder institutions are either unable to keep a surplus or are heavily constrained due to specific restrictions. Universities are now able to borrow money in a majority of systems, although various limitations still apply. For instance, they can either borrow only limited amounts or require the authorisation of a public authority to do so. Only in six systems can universities borrow without restrictions.

Institutions can own real estate in the majority of the countries surveyed. However, this does not mean that institutions actually own most of their buildings. They may be owned by public or private real estate companies. Even those institutions that own their buildings often require an external authorisation to sell them or are entirely prohibited from doing so.

With regard to tuition fees, the situation is highly complex. The various student populations – Bachelor, Master’s and doctoral as well as national/EU and international students – are treated very differently. Fees are charged for national/EU students at Bachelor and Master’s level in a majority of systems. However, only in very few systems may institutions freely set fees for Bachelor degrees. In the remainder, an external authority either determines fee levels unilaterally, sets an upper limit, or cooperates with institutions in setting student contributions. Slightly more systems – eight – enable their universities to set fees at Master’s level.

The picture looks very different for international students. Universities are unable to charge fees at Bachelor and Master’s level in only six systems. In 12 systems, universities can set fees independently at Bachelor level; in 13 systems, they can do so at Master’s level. Recent reforms, particularly in some Northern European systems, have enabled universities to set fees for non-EU students, either freely or under an externally imposed ceiling. In other cases, fees have been abolished, mostly following a change in government.

Future reforms regarding financial autonomy should specifically aim to extend the length of the funding period. It is also important that austerity measures applied by governments following the economic crisis do not lead to tighter controls and a more direct steering of university budgets.

Staffing autonomy has improved in relation to recruitment procedures. Universities in most countries are free to recruit their senior academic

and administrative staff. The appointment needs to be confirmed by an external authority only in a small number of countries.

However, in most systems universities are not entirely free to set the salaries of their staff. A broad range of restrictions exists. Although in some countries civil servant status for university staff has been abolished or is being phased out, in many systems it still applies to at least some parts of university staff. In most cases, this implies stricter regulations for these staff categories compared to national private labour law regulations. In some countries, the autonomy of universities remains limited by prescribed salary bands.

In more than half of the surveyed countries, universities follow specific regulations (on top of standard labour laws) for staff dismissals. Staff can be promoted freely by universities in 12 countries. In most other countries the overall number of posts is still regulated by the government, and universities can therefore only proceed with promotions if a position is available at higher level.

With regard to **academic autonomy**, recent reforms of quality assurance processes in particular have had a strong impact. Most countries impose some regulations on the overall number of students. Free admission for everyone holding the basic qualifications is the exception; and even in these countries, pressures on public funding might lead to future changes. In all other countries, the number of students may be co-regulated with a public authority or decided upon solely by either a public authority or the universities. The selection of students is carried out independently by the university in over a third of the surveyed countries. Universities are unable to select students only in a minority of countries, either because admissions are regulated by an external authority or due to free admission.

The introduction of new degree programmes usually requires some form of approval from a

public authority. In approximately a quarter of the surveyed countries, universities are able to open degree programmes without prior accreditation. In most of the remaining systems, universities require prior accreditation for programmes to be introduced or publicly funded. This picture is very similar for Bachelor and Master's programmes; it only differs more strongly in the case of doctoral programmes.

Universities in most countries have full authority to close programmes. Only in a small number of systems do they need to negotiate this with a public authority. In approximately two thirds of the countries studied, universities can choose the language of instruction. In the remaining countries, there are varying restrictions which are seen as a great competitive disadvantage when trying to attract international students and staff.

Universities are generally unable to select their quality assurance mechanisms. Only in four countries are they free to do so. However, in just under one third of the surveyed systems, universities can at least select the quality assurance agency.

Future reforms should focus on giving universities greater freedom in setting their own admission criteria. It will also be crucial to find the right balance between autonomy and accountability by promoting institutional audits or evaluations of internal quality processes.

Although the analysis shows that improvements have been made in many countries and areas, many systems still do not grant their universities enough independence. It is important to note that the economic crisis, which hit Europe in 2008, had long-term effects not only in financial terms but also on other aspects of institutional autonomy and accountability. In some countries, governments have applied more direct steering mechanisms. In many cases, this has resulted in a significant increase in accountability measures, which are not always appropriate. Debates on the efficiency of higher education systems and the 'right degree' of institutional diversity might also lead some governments to establish more direct steering mechanisms. It is therefore important to establish mechanisms, such as stakeholder dialogue, that increase efficiency and foster diversity without curtailing institutional autonomy.

The frequent divergence between formal and practical autonomy has already been pointed out. This study and other EUA reports have shown that one of the key challenges of governance reforms lies in the practical implementation of regulations. To implement legal reforms successfully, they need to be accompanied by support for institutional capacity building and human resources development. In order to make full use of greater institutional autonomy and to fulfil new tasks, additional management and leadership skills are needed. Support to facilitate the acquisition of such skills is essential for successful governance reforms.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Contributors to the study

The following national rectors' conferences and partner institutions have contributed to this study.

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Steering committee members

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Annex 3 – List of indicators and restrictions

Organisational autonomy

Selection procedure for the executive head		Selection of the executive head is not validated by an external authority
		Selection of the executive head is validated by an external authority
Selection criteria for the executive head		Selection criteria for executive head are not stated in the law
		Law states that the executive head must hold an academic position
		Law states that the executive head must hold a doctoral degree
		Law states that the executive head must come from within the university
		Other restrictions
Dismissal of the executive head		Procedures for the dismissal of the executive head are not stated in the law
		Confirmation of dismissal by an external authority but the procedure is decided by the university
		Dismissal by an external authority but the procedure is decided by the university
		Confirmation of dismissal by an external authority and the procedure is stated in the law
		Dismissal by an external authority according to a procedure stated in the law
		Other restrictions
Term of office of the executive head		Length of the executive head's term of office is not stated in the law
		Maximum or range of length is stated in the law
		Minimum range of length is stated in the law
		Exact length is stated in the law
External members in university governing bodies	Inclusion of external members in university governing bodies	Universities cannot decide as they cannot include external members
		Universities cannot decide as they must include external members
		Universities can decide to include external members
	Selection of external members in university governing bodies	University can decide freely on external members
		Proposal by university and appointment by an external authority
		Part of the members appointed by the university and part appointed by an external authority
		Appointment completely controlled by an external authority
		Other appointment process
Capacity to decide on academic structures		Universities can decide on their academic structures without constraints
		Guidelines exist in the law
		Faculties/other academic structures are listed in the law
		Other restrictions
Capacity to create legal entities		Universities can create legal entities without constraints
		Universities are only allowed to create not-for-profit legal entities
		Universities are not allowed to create any type of legal entity
		Other restrictions

Financial autonomy

Length and type of public funding	Length of public funding	More than one year
		One year
		Less than one year
	Type of public funding	Line-item budget
		Block grant and there are no restrictions on the allocation of funding
		Block-grant is split into broad categories and there are no or limited possibilities to move funds between these
Block grant but internal allocation possibilities are limited by law		
	Other restrictions	
Ability to keep surplus		Surplus cannot be kept
		Surplus can be kept without restrictions
		Surplus can be kept up to a maximum percentage
		Surplus can be kept but approval of an external authority is needed
		Surplus can be kept but its allocation is pre-determined by an external authority
		Surplus can be kept with other types of restrictions
Ability to borrow money		Universities cannot borrow money
		Universities can borrow money without restrictions
		Universities can borrow money up to a maximum percentage
		Universities can borrow money with the approval of an external authority
		Universities can borrow money from specific banks (designated by an external authority)
		Universities can borrow money with other types of restrictions
Ability to own buildings		Universities are not allowed to own their buildings
		Universities can sell their buildings without restrictions
		Universities can sell their buildings with the approval of an external authority
		Universities can sell their buildings with other types of restrictions
		Universities are not allowed to sell their buildings
		Other restrictions
Ability to charge tuition fees	National and EU students (at BA, MA and doctoral level)	Universities are free to set the level of tuition fees
		Universities and an external authority cooperate in setting the level of tuition fees
		Universities can set the level of tuition fees under a ceiling set by an external authority
		Only an external authority is allowed to set the level of tuition fees
		There are no tuition fees
	Non-EU students (at BA, MA and doctoral level)	Universities are free to set the level of tuition fees
		Universities and an external authority cooperate in setting the level of tuition fees
		Universities can set the level of tuition fees under a ceiling set by an external authority
		Only an external authority is allowed to set the level of tuition fees
		There are no tuition fees

Staffing autonomy

Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior academic/senior administrative staff)	Recruitment is done freely by universities
	Appointment needs to be confirmed by an external authority for some staff
	Appointment needs to be confirmed by an external authority for all staff
	Number of posts regulated by an external authority for some staff
	Number of posts regulated by an external authority for all staff
	Recruitment carried out by an external authority for some staff
	Recruitment carried out by an external authority for all staff
	Other restrictions
Capacity to decide on salaries (senior academic/senior administrative staff)	Universities can freely decide on staff salaries
	Decision on individual staff salaries is restricted due to an overall limit for all staff payments
	Salary band is negotiated with other parties
	Salary band is prescribed by an external authority for some staff
	Salary band is prescribed by an external authority for all staff
	Salary is set by an external authority/civil servant status for some staff
	Salary is set by an external authority/civil servant status for all staff
	Other restrictions
Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior academic/senior administrative staff)	There are no sector-specific regulations concerning dismissals (national labour regulations apply)
	Dismissal is strictly regulated due to civil servant status for some staff
	Dismissal is strictly regulated due to civil servant status for all staff
	Dismissals are subject to other regulations specific to the sector
Capacity to decide on promotions (senior academic/senior administrative staff)	Universities can freely decide on promotion procedures
	The law states who has to be included in the selection committee
	Promotion only if there is a post at a higher level
	Other restrictions

Academic autonomy

Capacity to decide on overall student numbers		Exclusive decision of the university
		Universities decide on the number of fee-paying students while an external authority determines the number of state-funded study places
		Universities negotiate with an external authority
		Exclusive decision of an external authority
		Free admission
Capacity to select students (at BA and MA level)		Admission criteria set by the university
		Admission criteria co-regulated by an external authority and universities
		Admission entirely regulated by an external authority
Capacity to introduce and terminate degree programmes	Capacity to introduce programmes (at BA, MA level)	Universities can open degree programmes without prior accreditation
		A minority of new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be introduced/funded
		All new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be funded
		All new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be introduced
		Other restrictions
	Capacity to introduce programmes (at doctoral level)	Universities can open degree programmes without prior accreditation
		A minority of new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be introduced/funded
		All new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be funded
		Only some universities/academic units can open new degree programmes
		All new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be introduced
	Capacity to terminate programmes	Universities can terminate degree programmes independently
		Termination of degree programmes requires negotiation between universities and an external authority
		Termination of degree programmes occurs on the initiative of an external authority
		Other restrictions
Capacity to choose the language of instruction (at BA and MA level)		Universities can only offer degree programmes/courses in the national language
		Universities can choose the language of instruction for all programmes
		Universities can choose the language of instruction for certain programmes
		The number of degree programmes/courses taught in a foreign language is limited by an external authority
		Universities can choose the language of instruction only if the programme is also offered in the national language
		Universities can choose their language of instruction, but will not receive public funding for foreign-language programmes

Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms and providers	Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms	Universities can select quality assurance mechanisms freely according to their needs
		Universities cannot select quality assurance mechanisms
	Capacity to select quality assurance providers	Universities can choose quality assurance agency freely according to their needs (including agencies from other countries)
		Universities can only select between national quality assurance agencies
		Universities cannot choose the quality assurance agency
Capacity to design content of degree programmes	Universities can freely design the content of their degree programmes and courses (other than for the regulated professions)	
	Authorities specify some content of academic courses	
	Authorities specify all of the content of academic courses	
	Other restrictions	

Annex 4 – Weighting factors per indicator

Organisational autonomy

Selection procedure for the executive head	14%
Selection criteria for the executive head	14%
Dismissal of the executive head	12%
Term of office of the executive head	9%
Inclusion of external members in university governing bodies	12%
Selection of external members in university governing bodies	12%
Capacity to decide on academic structures	15%
Capacity to create legal entities	12%

Financial autonomy

Length of public funding	14%
Type of public funding	13%
Ability to keep surplus	14%
Ability to borrow money	9%
Ability to own buildings	12%
Ability to charge tuition fees for national/EU students	17%
Ability to charge tuition fees for non-EU students	21%

Staffing autonomy

Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior academic staff)	13%
Capacity to decide on recruitment procedures (senior administrative staff)	13%
Capacity to decide on salaries (senior academic staff)	12%
Capacity to decide on salaries (senior administrative staff)	12%
Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior academic staff)	12%
Capacity to decide on dismissals (senior administrative staff)	12%
Capacity to decide on promotions (senior academic staff)	13%
Capacity to decide on promotions (senior administrative staff)	12% ¹⁴

Academic autonomy

Capacity to decide on overall student numbers	14%
Capacity to select students	14%
Capacity to introduce and terminate programmes	16%
Capacity to choose the language of instruction	13%
Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms	15%
Capacity to select quality assurance providers	11%
Capacity to design content of degree programmes	16% ¹⁵

¹⁴ The weighting factors do not add up to 100%, since digits had to be rounded to calculate the weighting factors.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Annex 5 – Non-weighted scores per autonomy area

Organisational autonomy		Financial autonomy	
AT	77%	AT	44%
BB (DE)	57%	BB (DE)	31%
CH	56%	CH	62%
CY	49%	CY	18%
CZ	51%	CZ	35%
DK	94%	DK	53%
EE	82%	EE	93%
ES	60%	ES	40%
FI	91%	FI	42%
FR	56%	FR	33%
GR	40%	GR	29%
HE (DE)	77%	HE (DE)	24%
HU	63%	HU	75%
IE	80%	IE	73%
IS	45%	IS	31%
IT	63%	IT	62%
LT	73%	LT	62%
LU	31%	LU	93%
LV	62%	LV	85%
NL	76%	NL	78%
NO	77%	NO	33%
NRW (DE)	85%	NRW (DE)	45%
PL	64%	PL	47%
PT	74%	PT	75%
SE	56%	SE	44%
SK	42%	SK	64%
TR	29%	TR	44%
UK	100%	UK	90%

Staffing autonomy		Academic autonomy	
AT	72%	AT	72%
BB (DE)	54%	BB (DE)	65%
CH	95%	CH	75%
CY	46%	CY	69%
CZ	95%	CZ	49%
DK	86%	DK	55%
EE	100%	EE	92%
ES	47%	ES	58%
FI	92%	FI	88%
FR	42%	FR	39%
GR	13%	GR	34%
HE (DE)	60%	HE (DE)	68%
HU	65%	HU	43%
IE	82%	IE	100%
IS	67%	IS	85%
IT	48%	IT	58%
LT	83%	LT	44%
LU	87%	LU	83%
LV	93%	LV	59%
NL	72%	NL	57%
NO	66%	NO	98%
NRW (DE)	60%	NRW (DE)	68%
PL	80%	PL	70%
PT	62%	PT	52%
SE	95%	SE	72%
SK	52%	SK	55%
TR	59%	TR	51%
UK	96%	UK	97%

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