

National Developments in Learning and Teaching in Europe

A report from the Leadership and Organisation for Teaching and Learning
at European Universities (LOTUS) project

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List of country codes

Listed by alphabetic order of the country name.

All country codes used in this report are in accordance with the European Union's list of country codes: <http://publications.europa.eu/code/pdf/370000en.htm>.

AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BE FL	Flanders
BE FR	Federation Wallonia-Brussels (French-speaking Community)
BG	Bulgaria
HR	Croatia
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
DE	Germany
EL	Greece
FI	Finland
FR	France
GE	Georgia
HU	Hungary
IS	Iceland
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
KZ	Kazakhstan
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
NL	The Netherlands
NO	Norway
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
ES	Spain
SE	Sweden
CH	Switzerland
UK	United Kingdom
UK EN	England
UK SC	Scotland

List of acronyms

This list leaves out acronyms that are specific to a project or a national initiative. These acronyms are explicated when they are cited in the report.

AIPU	International Association for University Pedagogy (https://www.aipu-international.org/)	KRASP	Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (https://www.krasp.org.pl/)
AKKR	Danish Accreditation Institution (https://akkr.dk/en/)	LNO2	Flemish Learning Network of Educational Developers (https://www.lno2.be/)
ANECA	National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (http://www.aneca.es/eng/ANECA)	OeAD	Austrian Agency for Education and Internationalisation (https://oead.at/en/)
ASHE	Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education (https://www.azvo.hr/en)	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CPD	Continuous Professional Development	OER	Open Educational Resources
CZC	Czech Rectors' Conference (https://www.crc.muni.cz/en)	QA	Quality assurance
CRUI	Conference of Italian University Rectors (https://www.crui.it/)	QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/)
CRUP	Council of Rectors of Portuguese Universities (https://www.crup.pt/)	MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
DELT	Digitally enhanced learning and teaching	NRO	Netherlands Initiative for Education Research (https://www.nro.nl/)
DIKU	Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (https://diku.no/en)	NSD	Norwegian Centre for Research Data (https://www.nsd.no/en/)
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System	RVŠ	Czech National Higher Education Policy Council (www.radavs.cz)
EHEA	European Higher Education Area	SHEEC	Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/about-enhancement-themes/how-the-themes-are-managed)
EQA	External quality assurance	SUHF	Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (https://suhf.se/in-english/)
ESF	European Social Fund	SURF	Collaborative organisation for IT in Dutch education and research (https://www.surf.nl/en)
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area	UNICA	Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (https://www.unica-network.eu/)
EU	European Union	UNIFI	Universities Finland (https://www.unifi.fi/en/about-us/)
EUA	European University Association	UNIKO	Universities Austria (https://uniko.ac.at/)
EUI	European Universities Initiative	VLHORA	Flemish Council for University Colleges (https://www.vlaamsehogescholenraad.be/)
FBK	Austrian Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (https://www.fhk.ac.at/)	VLIR	Flemish Inter-University Council (https://vlir.be/)
FTE	Full-time equivalent	VLOR	Flemish Education Council (https://www.vlor.be/)
HEI	Higher education institution	VLUHR	Flemish Council for Universities and University Colleges (https://www.vluhr.be/)
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council in England (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/higher-education-funding-council-for-england)	VSNU	Association of Universities in the Netherlands. Changed name into Universiteiten van Nederland (https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/) in November 2021.
HK-dir	Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (https://hkdir.no/)		
HRK	German Rectors' Conference (https://www.hrk.de)		

Key findings

The study provides an overview on national initiatives aiming to support and enhance learning and teaching in 30 European Higher Education Area countries (see Annex 1). It is based on the main findings from a series of interviews conducted in Spring and Summer 2021 with national experts in learning and teaching.

Recent national measures

While not all countries have adopted new legislation or national strategies, various policy initiatives are gradually changing learning and teaching in the higher education sector. Ministries in charge of higher education and higher education institutions' (HEIs) leaders are also becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to promote teaching, and introducing incentives to this end. Legal reforms are not the most common form for countries to promote teaching, and ministries do not necessarily take the lead in policy making for learning and teaching. In some countries, interviewed experts pointed to no further need for new legislation; instead, institutional autonomy and sufficient capacity for HEIs to develop and implement own measures were underlined. In addition, national initiatives on learning and teaching can be implemented following a project-based approach, with the support of national and/or European funding. Examples include Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain. Quality assurance was also cited as an influential factor for enhancing learning and teaching, and more specifically changes in the external quality assurance framework. Recent examples could be found in Belgium, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the UK (Scotland).

A full range of actors, from ministries to national rectors' conferences, student representatives, and many others, typically participate to policy making in learning and teaching. Coordinating stakeholders' contribution to policy making can also be the task of a dedicated umbrella or representative organisation, specifically created to serve this purpose. However, even in countries where the higher education sector is widely consulted, having many stakeholders taking part in policy making does not imply that all stakeholders have the opportunity to understand each other's views. Several national experts pointed out that different stakeholders might offer valuable ideas and suggestions, but there are not enough opportunities for them to exchange views and reach a common understanding of enhancing learning and teaching.

Support structures for learning and teaching

National, system-level structures for supporting the enhancement of learning and teaching could be found in five countries: Germany, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Norway and the United Kingdom. In other countries, several actors, such as national rectors' conferences, networks of HEIs, teachers and education developers, quality assurance agencies, foundations, national Erasmus+ agencies, or organisations specialised in specific topics such as digitalisation, may play a role in supporting learning and teaching at system level. The importance of learning and teaching centres based at HEIs is generally pointed out as a development trend: national authorities grant increased attention to the implementation and development of such centres, and support them with funding.

Inter-institutional cooperation

Inter-institutional cooperation in learning and teaching considerably differs across the countries considered in this study, in terms of organisation, support received, and financing. It can take place under the remit of a dedicated national structure, or through bi-lateral cooperation between HEIs or networks of HEIs. EU funding programmes, including the European Universities Initiative through the Erasmus+ programme, is in many systems the only or most commonly used funding source for higher education cooperation on learning and teaching. Interviews with national experts also confirmed that open education and the development of Open Educational Resources (OER), notably through repositories, has not become widespread, and might not become a real game changer any time soon. In 19 higher education systems examined, there is no national repository for sharing resources and material in teaching. But such repositories may exist at regional and local level, and, in addition, HEIs may have their own.

Teaching enhancement

Teaching enhancement, understood as any kind of formal pedagogical staff development, is typically organised and provided by the HEIs – as in 28 out of 30 countries examined. This offer from HEIs can be complemented by an additional offer from networks of teachers or education developers, or a national structure. Teaching enhancement is compulsory by law in eight countries – in Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, and Norway. Interestingly, in nearly all countries where such regulations exist, a change in this regulation occurred in recent years, with the aim of supporting academics' commitment towards teaching. In countries with no legal obligation, pedagogical staff development may still be recognised as an asset in teachers' recruitment and careers. It may be strongly encouraged through a range of measures at national level: quality assurance and accreditation obligations, a national continuous professional development framework for teaching, a framework for excellence in teaching generally, or a certificate for teachers recognised by all HEIs in the country. In addition, in countries without regulation, HEIs often set their own requirements on teaching when hiring new staff or for career progression. Insufficient recognition of teaching in academic careers is regularly pointed out as a main obstacle for the enhancement of learning and teaching.

Leadership in teaching

Teaching is to be apprehended as both an individual and a collective endeavour. In this regard, leadership in teaching should be understood as both the (individual) agency to develop strong strategic oversight, coordination and implementation for learning and teaching, and as a collective, institutional capacity to gear organisational development towards enhancement. Leadership in teaching is mostly an emerging issue in the EHEA, not yet a priority in national systems. It can be associated with a role and defined responsibilities (vice-rector, dean, study programme director), and with communities of practice or communities of “change agents” in learning and teaching, i.e., teachers interested in innovative pedagogies and active in taking part to teaching-related initiatives. The two approaches are complementary: both simultaneously address the individual and collective aspects of leadership in teaching. One challenge is that, in some countries, leadership in teaching is seen as a role by default, with a number of administrative obligations and additional workload, but not as drivers of innovation in teaching and advancing careers.

Obstacles and enablers in a post-pandemic future

Asked about mid- and long-term plans following the pandemic, most national experts interviewed mentioned reforms or support measures for digitally enhanced learning and teaching, better integration of hybrid and blended learning in HEIs' education offer, and exploring the added value of on-site learning. Many pointed to the need to approach learning and teaching more holistically, as taking place in an ecosystem, and requiring education design and methods. In 11 higher education systems, public authorities are also still mapping and evaluating lessons learnt from the pandemic. When asked about main obstacles to the enhancement of learning and teaching, national experts pointed to the lack of recognition for teaching in higher education careers; the lack of support for, and clear national commitment towards learning and teaching; the need for more expertise in pedagogy and capacity building at HEIs; and uncertainty towards the future. Experts also identified enablers that would matter for the future of learning and teaching: a general and genuine interest in improving teaching in the higher education community; increased attention towards teaching during the pandemic; collaboration on learning and teaching; and HEIs and teachers being better equipped thanks to recent changes in several countries.

Introduction

Learning and teaching has gained increased attention in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). As demonstrated in the 2018 Trends report of the European University Association (EUA) (Gaebel and Zhang, 2018), a great majority of higher education institutions (HEIs) are in the process of establishing more systematic and strategic approaches, with central structures for better support for, and coordination of, bottom-up developments in learning and teaching. More recently, the pandemic has challenged ways people learn and teach, with HEIs switching to emergency remote teaching overnight. Throughout the last months and academic years of pandemic, topics such as digitally enhanced learning and teaching, different modes of delivery (online, on-site, blended, hybrid), and generally attention granted to pedagogy, have come under the spotlight. At the same time, the pandemic has magnified existing issues such as equity and social inclusion in higher education.

At the European policy level, the Bologna Process has put strong emphasis on learning and teaching since the 2018 Paris Communiqué, with the commitment to “developing new and inclusive approaches for continuous enhancement of learning and teaching across the EHEA”.¹ With the Rome Communiqué of 2020, the Ministers for Higher Education adopted a set of *Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching in the EHEA*,² which propose increased support for learners, staff, and HEIs, in order to foster dialogue and collaboration on learning and teaching in national systems and at the EHEA level.

In-between bottom-up, institutional practices and the European policy level, there is a need to better understand what the state of

play is at national level, and share already existing good practices and lessons learnt. To this end, EUA published in 2018 *National Initiatives in Learning and Teaching in Europe* (Bunescu and Gaebel, 2018), a study which provided a comparative analysis of the existing national learning and teaching initiatives.

The present report provides an update and brings complementary information on national initiatives aiming to support and enhance learning and teaching. The purpose was to find out what has changed or evolved since the 2018 study, and whether some initiatives started at that time have yielded results. EUA conducted this study in the framework of the project “Leadership and Organisation for Teaching and Learning at European Universities” (LOTUS),³ which aims to explore, among other things, how learning and teaching can be best supported by national and European policies.

The report is based on the findings from a series of interviews and written responses to a semi-structured questionnaire (Annex 2), conducted in Spring and Summer 2021. Experts in learning and teaching in 30 EHEA countries provided input (Annex 1). For most countries, one expert was interviewed. In a few cases, and specifically in devolved systems (BE, ES, UK), two or several experts were interviewed, separately or together, in order to provide complementary information. Results were analysed in terms of general trends, and, where relevant, the report points to countries where examples of practice illustrate such trends.

1 http://ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/EHEAParis2018_Communique_final_952771.pdf

2 http://ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique_Annex_III.pdf

3 <https://eua.eu/resources/projects/786-lotus.html>

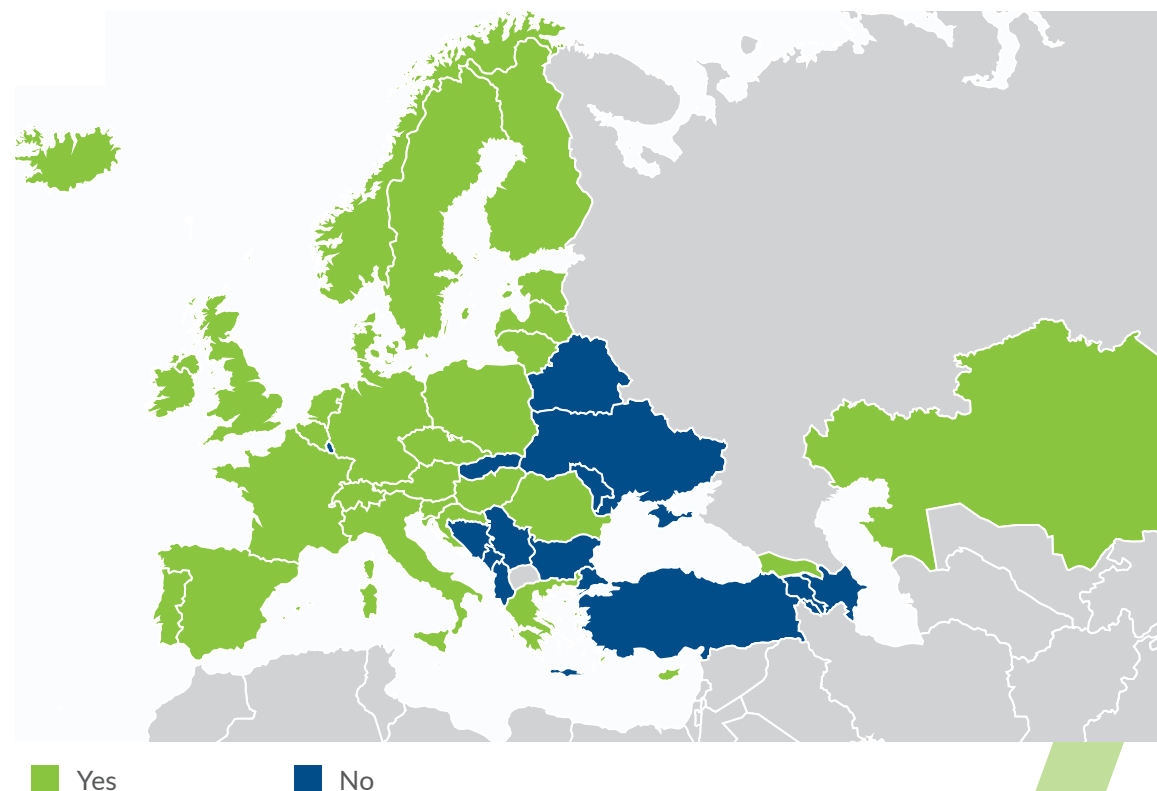
The report is structured into six chapters:

- Chapter 1 addresses **national measures and developments** that took place between 2018 and 2021 in the field of learning and teaching. The chapter examines system-level regulations, quality assurance (QA) and project-based approaches on the enhancement of learning and teaching. It also provides an overview of the involvement of different types of stakeholders in policy making.
- Chapter 2 focuses on **structures** in place for supporting learning and teaching.
- Chapter 3 examines **inter-institutional cooperation**: how it is facilitated through networks and projects, and valued in the national higher education system. A specific point of inquiry was cooperation on open education and Open Educational Resources (OER).
- Chapter 4 analyses how **teaching enhancement** is provided and regulated in the EHEA countries.

In the context of this report, “teaching enhancement” points to any kind of formal pedagogical staff development, in different ways and formats, such as initial teacher training and continuous professional development (CPD). By contrast, the “enhancement of teaching and learning” covers a wider array of measures to encourage, support, incentivise, recognise, and improve learning and teaching. This may include, but is not limited to, teaching enhancement.

- Chapter 5 explores attention given to the concept of **leadership in teaching** in national systems.
- Chapter 6 summarises the **post-pandemic plans for the future** that are emerging in EHEA countries, which should be considered against **drivers and enablers** currently in place for improving learning and teaching.
- The conclusions look into points of convergence that have emerged from the report, and offer calls for further action.

Fig. 1 – Countries considered in this report



Chapter 1: Recent national measures

Interviews with national experts have confirmed that, while not all countries have adopted new legislation or national strategies dedicated to learning and teaching, various policy initiatives are gradually changing general perceptions about teaching in the higher education sector. There is a general assumption that “old solutions do not work anymore”, and time has come to take action to better respond to societal needs through education provision. Evidently, the pandemic was a catalyst for shedding light on digitalisation and equity agendas. Moreover, interviewees pointed to ministries and institutional leaders becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to promote teaching, and introducing incentives to this end.

Developments take different shapes:

- system-level regulation
- project-based approaches to incentivise higher education institutions to further develop and enhance learning and teaching, with specific priorities
- better or stronger consideration of teaching in the national quality assurance (QA) framework

It is important to underline that this chapter addresses “regulation” in the sense of measures that include legislation, national strategies or plans, or any other measure taken by regulatory bodies to address the system level, i.e., with an expected impact on the entire higher education system. Therefore, “regulation” is not used interchangeably with “legislation”.

Finally, the chapter offers an overview of main stakeholders involved in policy making for learning and teaching across countries.

1.1. System-level regulation

In the past three years, national changes in legislation concerning learning and teaching took place in only a few countries. However, in several countries, previously adopted regulations have been implemented, and in some reached a certain level of maturity. In others, implementation is just starting, in some cases with a considerable lead time.

In countries where there was no change in the law as such, the ministry may have adopted a new national strategic plan or regulations that may not address learning and teaching directly, but have an impact on HEIs – such as regulations on funding.

Country examples

Austria

Principles for performance funding of public universities include a focus on teaching quality and student progress.

In their performance agreements, universities commit to concrete measures for improving student progress throughout the student lifecycle, providing staff development and carrying out external evaluations to monitor the effectiveness of the measures.

Belgium (French speaking Community)

The last major higher education legal reform (*Décret Paysage*, 2013) included, among its goals, the enabling of more flexible learning paths for students. In line with this, since 2017, there are academic advisors in each HEI, to assist students to build up their own curriculum. In addition, the initiative *E-Paysage*,⁴ initiated in 2016, simplifies student data management, and creates more interoperability between existing databases (mostly, between HEIs), which eases student learning paths and their transfer between HEIs.

Czech Republic

The ministry's strategic plan for the period 2021-2025 (SP2021+)⁵ formulates a general vision for higher education, and identifies successful learning and high-quality teaching practice as main priorities, to be addressed through several operational objectives, such as supporting the development of staff competences for teaching and curriculum design, developing QA with a focus on learning outcomes, strengthening the link between theory and practice, better preparing for employment, supporting interactive methods for teaching and engaging with students.

While initiated before the pandemic, the strategic plan also addresses hybrid and online forms of learning.

Greece

Based on a 2011 law, the implementation of institutional learning and teaching centres started in 2019, first with three universities (Democritus University of Thrace, University of Patras and University of the Aegean), and now two additional universities joining (University of Crete, University of Thessaly).

Ireland

A new Higher Education Act was published in 2021,⁶ with objectives in promoting excellence in teaching, learning and research; supporting higher education in contributing to social, economic, cultural and environmental development and sustainability; etc.

The Act also states that the minister shall prepare a strategy that includes teaching, learning and research, within two years. The Higher Education Authority is vested with the responsibility of implementing the objectives of the Act.

Kazakhstan

In 2017, amendments to the law on education gave universities more autonomy in curriculum design and teaching and assessment. While in the past, curriculum was heavily regulated at ministry level, institutions now have some freedom in designing it. Since 2017, the ministry has regularly organised capacity building activities for universities on curriculum design.

Lithuania

During the period of 2018-2021, the study field descriptors (i.e., identified learning outcomes for each study field, and requirements for study programmes) have been revised.⁷ They include requirements for academic staff and recommendations on teaching and learning, including on assessment of student achievement.

4 <https://formations.siep.be/actus/e-paysage-des-bases-de-donnees-partagees-par-lenseignement-superieur/>

5 <https://www.msmt.cz/areas-of-work/tertiary-education/strategic-plan-of-the-ministry-for-higher-education-for-the?lang=2>

6 <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/70ed2-general-scheme-of-the-higher-education-authority-bill/>

7 <https://www.skvc.lt/default/en/quality-assurance/study-program-descriptions>

The Netherlands

A 2015-2025 national plan, the Quality Investment, supports learning and teaching in various ways, notably for HEIs to invest into an institutional learning and teaching centre, teacher training, connecting education and research, etc. All universities invested in teaching and learning centres.

Since 2017, a national programme called Comenius⁸ supports innovation in higher education through funding scholarships to build up a network of teachers in higher education (60 scholarships, 6.3 million EUR per year). Scholarships are equally distributed between several defined profiles: teaching fellows, senior teachers, and the leadership level. The ambition is to stimulate innovation and enhancement in teaching and learning, and facilitate teaching careers through recognition and rewards (see also Chapter 4.1). Teachers take part of the Comenius network, sharing ideas and progress through various activities. The network is also trying to connect with the work of learning and teaching centres based at HEIs. Comenius is managed by the national body in charge of managing education and research funds, the Netherlands Initiative for Education Research (NRO). The NRO contributes to overall coherency for research on education by providing a direction at national level, and facilitates links between this research and educational practice. The NRO has increased its support to research on higher education teaching, from three million EUR to five million EUR. Funding is awarded as grants for high quality research and innovation in education.

A National Higher Education Award, organised by the Ministry since 2020, complements the efforts for putting teaching at the forefront in higher education. The award promotes collaborative teaching: HEIs are invited to apply with their best, innovative teaching initiatives. The best six projects receive funding, up to 1.2 million EUR for the first prize, 800 000 EUR for the second, and 500 000 EUR for the third. A brief budget plan needs to be submitted, but awardees are free to use the funding as they see suits best.

Norway

The 2016-2017 White Paper *Quality Culture in Higher Education*⁹ triggered follow-up measures in several areas. Among these, the government requested all HEIs to develop a scheme rewarding excellent teachers, based on a national standard for scholarship of learning and teaching (research-based teaching development, with publication of articles on teaching or use of scientific methods to evaluate teaching initiatives). The reward system aims to build up teaching competences and collegial approaches to teaching over time, thus creating impact on the overall academic environment.

Each HEI can develop its own scheme to make best use of this national initiative. For instance, the University of Oslo has rewarded seven teachers with the status of “excellent teachers” in 2020 and six in 2021. This entails a salary increase, offer of a sabbatical for developing their teaching, and membership in the university’s teaching academy.

United Kingdom - England

The higher education landscape changed since the Higher Education and Research Act of 2017, and the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). In 2018, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in England was replaced by UK Research and Innovation¹⁰ and the Office for Students,¹¹ which stands as a regulatory body for the sector. HEIs have autonomy to pursue teaching and learning as they see fit; however, they are accountable for their education offer: students can launch a complaint through a dedicated body¹² and seek compensation, if they feel that their experience was insufficient.

The TEF was recently reviewed and assessed regarding its added value, and there is currently a debate as on how to continue: what metrics to use and how (graduate employability, questions in the National Student Survey,¹³ etc.), whether the next step should be to address subject-level, or institutional level, and how the TEF will fit into the wider regulatory environment.

8 <https://www.nro.nl/en/researchprogrammes/comenius-programme>

9 <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/meld.-st.-16-20162017/id2536007/>

10 <https://www.ukri.org/>

11 <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

12 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator, operating in England and Wales (<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>).

13 <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-information-and-data/national-student-survey-nss/>

The series of interviews point to a common trend: across the EHEA, legal reforms are not the most common approach to promoting teaching and changing the way education is being provided. Interestingly, in some countries including Estonia, Greece, Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, interviewees were of the opinion that from perspective of the sector, there is no need for new legislation. This might be due to institutional autonomy and sufficient capacity for institutions to develop and implement own measures to enhance learning and teaching, hence a sign of maturity. It might also be a concern about external interference and over-regulation, and confidence in initiatives coming from the grassroots level as the right way to progress.

The following section examines other, system-wide approaches for engaging in the enhancement of learning and teaching.

1.2. Project-based approaches

“Project” is a generic term that can take different forms and cover different realities. This section examines “projects” in the broad sense of initiatives that provide funding (through calls for proposals or another selection mean) to HEIs or individuals (e.g., teachers) for undertaking activities within a certain timeframe, and with the purpose to achieve defined priorities or goals. National authorities may see such project-based approaches as complementary to recent regulatory changes to enhance learning and teaching through incentives and rewards, or as measures supporting ongoing changes in higher education. In this regard, it is interesting that a number of projects analysed in the publication *National Initiatives in Learning and Teaching in Europe* (Bunescu and Gaebel, 2018) are either being continued, at times through another project, or have yielded results in terms of putting learning and teaching on the national policy agenda.

In several countries, national projects include, or focus on, the enhancement of learning and teaching, including promoting teaching as part of the academic profession. This can be financed from national budgets, and supported through EU funds such as the European

Social Fund (ESF), or through OECD funding, in particular in several Eastern and Central European countries (EE, HU, LV, SI among others). Large EdTech or consultancy companies may also offer to assist HEIs in handling applications to open calls, and later support the implementation of selected projects (HU).

One of the challenges in using a project-based approach, is to ensure sustainability and mainstreaming of good practice. Projects by definition have a limited lifespan. In countries where the development of learning and teaching mostly depends on fixed-term projects, measures such as teaching enhancement and continuous professional development may not be continued in a systematic way once the project ended. Alternately, they have to be continued by HEIs with their own means, thus integrating them into institutional planning and structures in a sustained way. This was the case for example in Germany and Estonia.

This poses the question of whether and how fix-term projects can ensure full implementation of long-term goals (such as enhancing teaching) in the higher education system. In this regard, a 2013 EUA report on strategies for efficient funding in higher education concluded that “public authorities, as the universities’ first and main funder, have a special responsibility in ensuring that their higher education system is financially sustainable over the long term.” (Estermann, Bennetot-Privot and Claeys-Kulik, 2013, 17).

Through interviews with national experts, a number of successful projects could be identified. In some countries, such as the Netherlands or Slovenia, national priorities are covered through a combination of complementary projects.

Country examples

Estonia

The ASTRA¹⁴ project, and before this the PRIMUS¹⁵ programme, have drawn universities' attention to teaching, and may have changed the way academics approach teaching. Under ASTRA, each university was to decide how to use the funding provided for the development of learning and teaching. The project has just finished, but almost all Estonian universities have decided to continue the activities with their own funding.

France

Following a previous funding round under the Excellence Initiatives for innovative education,¹⁶ the *Programme d'Investissements d'Avenir* (PIA) provides funding for digital initiatives for innovating teaching (launched in 2015; 12 million EUR), and new curricula at universities (calls launched in 2017 and 2018; 36 projects over 10 years funded across the country; 326 million EUR). The PIA aims to foster the competence-based approach, student orientation, flexible learning paths and flexibilisation of curriculum at bachelor level, transdisciplinarity, creation of digital contents and resources, etc.

Finland

A series of flagship projects have taken place in the past two to three years, among others DigiVision.¹⁷ It aims at enhancing digital capacity in Finnish HEIs at a broad scale, and setting the outlook for the future of Finnish higher education, with a student-centred approach. It includes the development of digital platforms to provide online education in a number of universities. DigiVision also aims to provide a nation-wide system where learning outcomes can be easily explicated and documented by the universities.

Germany

The Quality Pact for Teaching¹⁸ supported almost two hundred German HEIs in their efforts for good teaching. It ended in 2020, after 10 years, leaving it to the institutions to continue structures and processes initially set up with support of the Quality Pact for Teaching, but with their own budget.

At the national level, a new structure dedicated to learning and teaching, the Foundation for Innovation in Higher Education Learning and Teaching,¹⁹ has started operating from January 2021.

Ireland

Over the last years, the government has invested a 160 million EUR budget to the Human Capital Initiative project,²⁰ parts of which focus on recognition of higher learning, partnership with employers, micro-credentials, and agile curricula. A Strategic Innovation and Transformation Fund²¹ also grants support for various projects, from student retention up to developing digital capacity within the university sector. These funds are managed through the Higher Education Authority.

14 https://www.astra-project.org/02_estonia_tallin_paernu.html

15 <https://zeroproject.org/policy/access-to-higher-education-in-estonia/>

16 The *Initiatives d'Excellence en Formations Innovantes* (IDEFI), excellence initiatives in innovative education, launched in 2012, are about to end. There has been a total of 36 projects funded, for a total of 186 M EUR.

17 <https://digivisio2030.fi/>

18 <https://www.qualitaetpakt-lehre.de/>

19 <https://stiftung-hochschullehre.de/>

20 <https://hea.ie/skills-engagement/human-capital-initiative/>

21 <https://hea.ie/funding-governance-performance/funding/innovation-call/>

Latvia

The Ministry of Education and Science runs several EU-funded projects on higher education, which interact with each other and support better learning and teaching experience for teachers and students. This comprises a wide range of activities, including:

- reducing the fragmentation of study programmes and strengthening resource sharing;
- developing international study programmes, including joint doctoral programmes;
- direct investments for enhancing academic staff capacity (attracting foreign academic staff, supporting the involvement of doctoral candidates in academic work, providing internships in the industry, strengthening digital skills and leadership in learning and teaching);
- innovative initiatives addressing digital transformation, with the aim of enhancing the quality of education;
- innovation grants for students (development of entrepreneurship and innovation skills, cooperation with industry).

In addition, on the basis of a 2020 report from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Latvian government proposes to introduce research-based, competitive and innovation-oriented doctoral education in Latvia by 2026, to be implemented through EU-funded projects. The report recommended to set out new principles for doctoral funding, in order to strengthen the place of research in doctoral programmes, set up a new process for granting a doctoral degree, increase academic research capacity, establish doctoral schools, and overall fully align doctoral programmes with the Salzburg Principles.²²

Romania

Romania Educata,²³ an initiative by the Romanian presidency, is a most important and systemic approach dedicated to reforming education, including higher education. One part is dedicated to stimulating and developing ways to enhance continuous professional development, teacher training, and promote innovative pedagogies. The initiative still needs to secure funds for its continuation, notably from the EU Resilience and Recovery funds.

Slovenia

In the past four to five years, three major ESF-funded projects took place, which the government launched after consultation of the HEIs. The projects address teacher training, their digital competences, and the most important one, INOVUP,²⁴ innovation in learning and teaching. It is co-funded by ESF and national funding. Under INOVUP, approx. 5000 teachers participated in trainings in the course of 2.5 years. 120 training courses per year were organised, for teachers and future teachers.

INOVUP builds on lessons learnt from previous ESF-funded capacity building projects, where individual universities managed their own project, resulting in little coordination across the sector. INOVUP, by contrast, requires a consortium-led approach of four major HEIs in the country, and is expected to boost inter-institutional cooperation.

The universities involved will prepare their institutional strategies for learning and teaching. In addition, as one of the project outcomes, the project consortium is to propose, in consultation with the sector, a draft national strategy on learning and teaching by September 2022, in order to feed into a legislation to be adopted by the Slovenian Parliament.

Spain

In Catalonia, the regional government has run the Margalida Comas I Camps²⁵ programme since 2018, with several workshops and activities on innovation in learning and teaching, quality, and career development. The programme is generally well received by the universities.

22 <http://www.ehea.info/cid102053/doctoral-degree-salzburg-2005.html>

23 <http://www.romaniaeducata.eu/>

24 <https://www.inovup.si/en/>

25 <https://www.upc.edu/es/sala-de-prensa/noticias/el-programa-margalida-comas-impulsa-la-innovacion-docente-en-la-universidad>

1.3. The importance of quality assurance

In several EHEA systems, measures aiming at enhancing learning and teaching are embedded into the quality assurance (QA) framework. The intrinsic relation between quality assurance and learning and teaching is not new nor surprising. Since 2005, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) have provided a European reference framework for developing national reforms addressing the quality of education. The revised version of the ESG (2015) provided a stronger emphasis on learning and teaching specifically, through explicitly including student-centred learning as a new standard. Higher education institutions, which have the primary responsibility for the quality of education, are expected to ensure through their internal QA that they have policies and processes in place for ensuring that learning and teaching is student-centred. National experts interviewed frequently referred to the QA framework as influencing, or even serving as the main regulatory framework for learning and teaching in the country.

Consequently, national external QA (EQA) frameworks (evaluation, accreditation, review of institutions and/or study programmes) typically address areas such as the periodic review of study programmes, but also teaching enhancement, student support systems, student satisfaction, institutional structures such as learning and teaching centres, etc.

National experts pointed to the following recent changes in the EQA framework, with impact on learning and teaching:

Country examples

Belgium (FL and FR)

In Flanders, the external QA framework was revised in 2019, to gradually shift from a programme-based accreditation system towards a mixed system of institutional and study programme reviews. EQA reviews also look into innovation and teaching enhancement practices, both at programme and university level.

A similar EQA methodology shift is being currently piloted and evaluated in the French-speaking part of Belgium.

Slovenia

A set of *Minimum Standards for the Election to the Title of Higher Education Teacher, Researcher and Faculty Assistant at Higher Education Institutions*²⁶ stands as the national regulation for teaching and learning. These Minimum Standards regulate both individual teachers and HEIs, and their implementation has an impact on public funding allocation, in a country where 90% of HEIs are publicly funded. HEIs and their faculties have the autonomy to establish more demanding criteria than required under the Minimum Standards.

Recently, government and HEIs are also considering diversifying policy approaches for learning and teaching, from being solely QA-driven to institutional capacity building, including for staff, and supporting a range of institutional developments, to be partly funded through the European Social Fund (ESF).

26 <https://www.nakvis.si/?lang=enContent%2FGetFile%2F1245>

Spain

The new EQA framework based on programme accreditation per institution (all study programmes at one HEI to be accredited at the same time) is currently being piloted. This methodology is expected to better address learning outcomes in study programmes, including transversal ones across programmes.

Academic career progression is subject to the accreditation of individual teachers, undertaken by QA agencies. The national QA agency, ANECA, leads the Docentia programme,²⁷ established in 2008, and revised in 2021. Docentia provides a canvas for the evaluation of individual teachers at universities – including teaching enhancement, a teaching portfolio, and evaluations from peers and students. Three areas are typically covered: self-reflection about teaching activities (self-evaluation report, including plans for innovation, capacity to engage with students, contribution to the quality of the department, etc.), results from student satisfaction surveys, and a report from the head of department. Under this national umbrella framework, regional QA agencies in Spain may work with their own guidelines.

It is not mandatory for teachers to participate in Docentia; however, they need it for documenting their teaching performance for career progression.

Sweden

By 2012-2013, Sweden opted for an EQA approach that evaluated the quality of education solely based on outcomes (e.g., student thesis, number of graduates, etc.). This approach was rather unique in the EHEA, and did not fully comply with the ESG. In 2018, the Swedish Higher Education Authority,²⁸ the body responsible for EQA in Sweden, returned to a process-oriented approach, with a renewed interest towards the institutional level and responsibility. One direct impact was the engagement of education developers at HEIs, and institutional learning and teaching units becoming widespread in Sweden.

United Kingdom – Scotland

In Scotland, a handbook for the EQA review process, called Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR), was published in 2017,²⁹ as part of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework: it is an evidence-based method of peer review, meaning a higher education institution is assessed by a team of reviewers consisting of staff and students from other institutions. ELIR is now in its fourth cycle. ELIR reports provide a judgement, commendations and recommendations covering five broad areas of institutional activity, including approach to enhancing the student learning experience, strategy and practice for enhancing learning and teaching, and collaborative provision. Another element addressing learning and teaching is the national programme of Enhancement Themes³⁰ led by the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) and managed by QAA Scotland, which aims to improve the learning experience of students. Quality reviews under the overall enhancement-led quality framework address both assurance and enhancement, as does reporting on quality. The higher education sector collectively chooses themes to work on via the Enhancement Themes.

²⁷ <http://www.aneca.es/Programas-de-evaluacion/Evaluacion-institucional/DOCENTIA>

²⁸ <https://english.uka.se/>

²⁹ https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaas/reviewing-he-in-scotland/elir4-handbook-2017.pdf?sfvrsn=178af581_20

³⁰ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/en/quality-enhancement-framework/enhancement-themes>

1.4. Stakeholder involvement in policy development and making

National level learning and teaching policies may involve a range of stakeholders, who contribute to their development implementation, and benefit from them. In the interviews, national experts identified the following as main stakeholders in policy making:

Who	Countries where they are cited as participating in policy making
Ministry in charge of higher education	BE FR, BE FL, CZ, FR, GE, DE, IS, NO, PL, PT, RO, SI, ES, CH, UK
Ministries other than higher education (employment, general education, science)	FI, LV, LT
Other national bodies in charge of learning and teaching, or specific areas connected with it	IE (the Higher Education Authority) RO (The Council for validating titles and positions for academic staff, CNTDCU – part of the Ministry) SI (the Council for Higher Education, which assesses and proposes national strategies for higher education)
National agencies providing funding for learning & teaching enhancement	FR, GE, NL, NO, RO, ES, UK
Student associations Some discipline-based associations might be more vocal, depending on the policy agenda (e.g. medical students if there is a <i>numerus clausus</i> on the policy agenda).	AT, BE FL, DK, EE, EL, IS, IE, IT, LV, LT, NO, PL, RO, ES, SE, UK
Quality assurance agencies and accreditation bodies	CY, GE, DE, IT, LT, NL, NO, PL, UK
National Rectors' Conferences	BE FL, CZ, IT, LV, NO, PL, RO, ES, SE, CH, UK
Social partners	LV, LT, PL, PT
Associations of higher education teachers	DE ³¹
Networks of education developers, pedagogy advisers	BE FL, FR, NL
Labour market and employer representatives, associations of business and industry	IE, LT, NO, PL, UK

31 In Germany, for instance, there are two: the Deutscher Hochschulverband for the universities (<https://www.hochschulverband.de/>) and the Hochschullehrerbund for the universities of applied sciences (<https://www.hlb.de/>).

Ministries in charge of higher education do not necessarily take the lead in policy making related to learning and teaching. It is more common that the ministry is involved in supporting some identified priorities at the system-level.

National experts generally pointed out the level of institutional autonomy, and the complementarity of roles between the different actors, as crucially important for fruitful policy making processes, which would yield results for enhancing learning and teaching. This may especially be the case in devolved systems where regional authorities have prerogatives for organising education (DE, ES), and in countries where management at HEIs is highly decentralised into faculties (SI). Interestingly, very few interviewees (only CH and SI) mentioned the direct involvement of HEIs themselves into policy making.

In Belgium (BE FL and BE FR) and in Ireland, there is an umbrella or representative organisation specifically created to coordinate sector-wide contribution in policy making, with all stakeholders (staff, institutional leadership, students) represented, and policy makers have a legal obligation to officially consult them on new legislative proposals. This umbrella body may also include stakeholders from outside the higher education sector (social, economic, political actors). Topics typically discussed with external stakeholders are curriculum and study programme development, regional cooperation and outreach.

Interviews pointed to an interesting challenge, even in countries where the higher education sector is widely consulted: a participatory culture that involves many stakeholders in policy making does not necessarily mean that there is coordination across different types of stakeholders. Several national experts noted that different stakeholders might offer valuable ideas and suggestions, but there are not enough opportunities for them to exchange views and reach a common understanding of measures to be adopted. More resources and time could be dedicated to policy coordination.

Finally, some interviews highlighted that the ministry or government may need to be better or more closely connected to what is happening in the higher education sector because their vision of universities no longer corresponds to the reality. National strategic plans for higher education should take into account fast-paced developments in the sector. Above all, these plans need to be more evidence-based, following discussions based on study or research outcomes, and thorough knowledge of how the system and its different stakeholders operate.

Chapter 2: Support structures for learning and teaching

This chapter examines what structures exist across the EHEA to support the enhancement of learning and teaching. While interview questions (Annex 2) initially targeted national, system-level structures, interviews showed that support for learning and teaching may come from an interplay between different types of actors. These include: national structures in the few countries where they exist, but also HEIs and other organisations with a role in higher education, yet not limited to learning and teaching matters. Besides support and coordination, some structures also play a regulatory role. In addition, the chapter offers an insight into the work and role of learning and teaching centres based at HEIs, as they may play a role that benefit the entire higher education system, in countries where they are well established.

2.1. National structures to support the enhancement of learning and teaching

A national structure specifically dedicated to supporting learning and teaching could be identified in five countries – with different capacities, status, and relation to funding bodies:

Country examples

Germany

The Foundation for Innovation in higher education learning and teaching³² has started operating in January 2021. The Foundation was set up by the German federal government and the states (*Länder*), with funding mostly coming from the federal level, complemented by the *Länder*. The main objective is to support the capacity of the higher education institutions to innovate teaching in long-term perspective. Universities receive support for adapting faster and better to new societal challenges and needs, through projects implemented by individual institutions or networks. The Foundation promotes exchanges of practices and support knowledge transfer across universities. It also offers networking opportunities for specific target groups, such as educational designers. The Foundation launched a first call³³ for forward-looking projects that would test, implement and make sustainable innovation in face-to-face, blended and online teaching. Innovativeness and transferability are important criteria for selection.

³² <https://stiftung-hochschullehre.de/>

³³ <https://stiftung-hochschullehre.de/ausschreibungen/foerderbekanntmachung-2020/>

Ireland

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education³⁴ is the national body responsible for leading and advising on the enhancement of teaching and learning in Irish higher education. It is geared towards professional development of teachers, and other staff contributing to teaching.

The Forum's 2018 strategy focusses on learning and teaching in a digital world, teaching for transitions, and teaching within and across disciplines (e.g. with the DELTA Award which calls for disciplinary excellence in learning and teaching³⁵). The Forum also focuses on student success, in the context of a national higher education performance framework that require from HEIs to put in place a strategy/policy on student success. The Forum has developed a framework of 10 enablers for student success and a resource kit for HEIs, with a focus on engagement and development, not only student retention and progression.

The Forum received from the government (through the Higher Education Authority) a 5 million EUR budget every year, for funding institutional projects under competitive project calls. Its staff has been seconded from HEIs. By the end of 2021, the forum received an official status under the Higher Education Authority. The Board of the Forum will remain independent and make recommendations to the Higher Education Authority.

Kazakhstan

The national structure dedicated to supporting policy development in learning and teaching is the Republican Education and Methodology Council for Higher and Postgraduate Education. It is located at the Ministry of Education and Science, but acts independently from it. It works through dedicated methodological centres located in each university, and provides recommendations to the government on various topics, including teaching enhancement.

Norway

As a result of the merger of the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (DIKU), Skills Norway, Universal, and parts of Unit and of the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), the Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir)³⁶ was established on 1 July 2021, under the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. The HK-dir is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research, and covers all education sectors, from primary to higher education and vocational education. It coordinates incentive schemes and funding programmes for HEIs, and acts as a dedicated structure for teaching enhancement. It also advises the Ministry and implements national policies.

United Kingdom

Advance HE is the organisation resulting from the amalgamation, in 2018, of the Leadership Foundation, the Equality Challenge Unit, and the Higher Education Academy. The latter held the role of supportive and developmental body for teaching in the UK higher education sector since 2003. HEIs also run their own programmes for teaching enhancement, which may be accredited by Advance HE, a sector-wide organisation based on optional membership from HEIs, against the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in HE (UKPSF).³⁷ Advance HE also provides a range of teaching fellowships, which are now well-established and recognised in the UK higher education sector. Advance HE organises a national teaching fellow award and recognition of excellence in teaching for both individuals and teams.

34 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/about/>

35 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/awards/delta-award/>

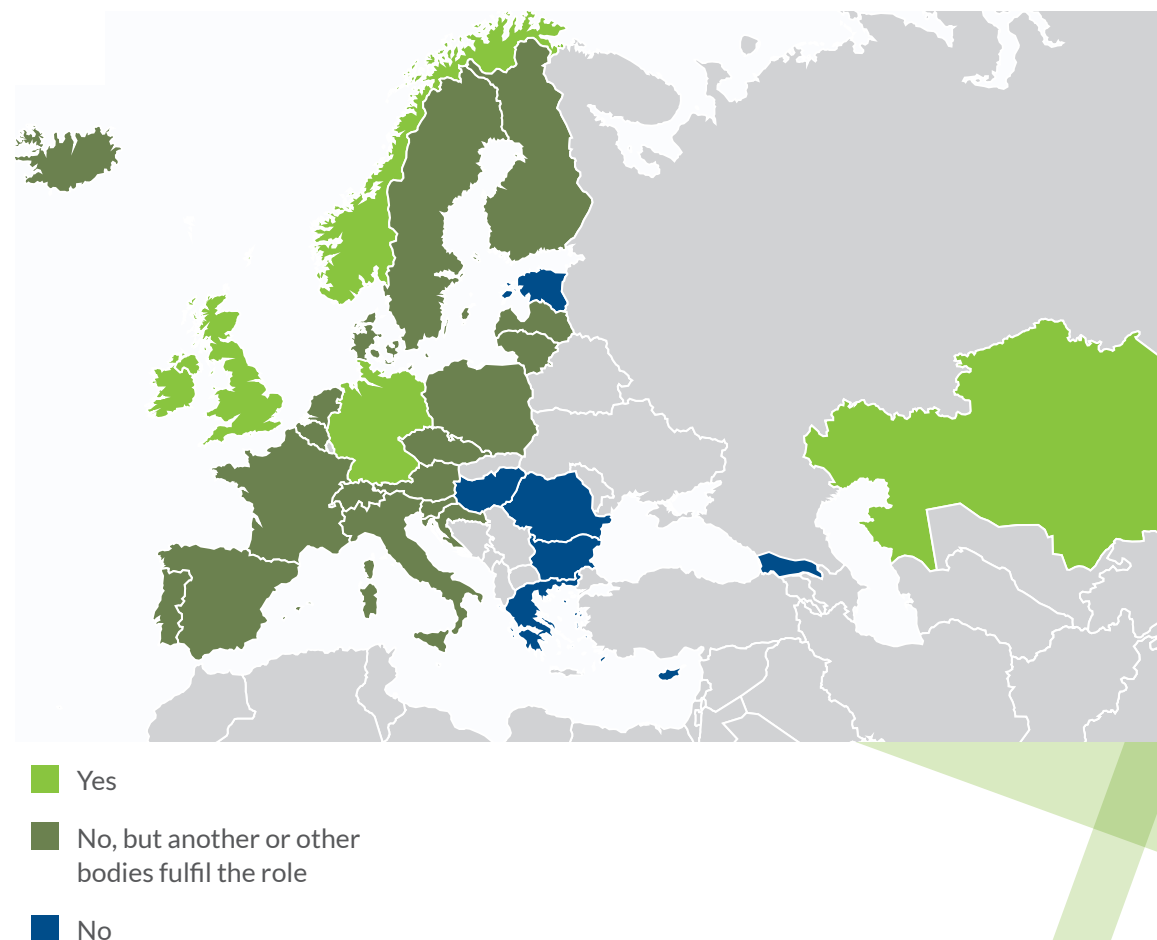
36 <https://hkdir.no/>

37 <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/teaching-and-learning/ukpsf>

In other systems, while there is no central dedicated structure for supporting learning and teaching, this task can be taken up by other actors:

- National Rectors' Conferences (cited in AT, BE FL, CZ, DK, FI, GE, IS³⁸, IT, PL, PT, SI³⁹, ES, SE, CH)
- Networks of HEIs organised on a geographical or other basis, sometimes providing training or opportunities to exchange on learning and teaching (*pôles académiques* in BE FR⁴⁰)
- Communities/networks of education developers and/or staff working in learning and teaching, and/or centred on university pedagogy (BE FL, DK⁴¹, EE, FI, FR, IT⁴², LV⁴³, PT, SE⁴⁴, CH⁴⁵). Such networks can be organised at national, local or regional level, or along linguistic boundaries (AIPU⁴⁶ for French-speaking education developers).
- Quality assurance agencies (HR, CY, DK, GE, LT, ES, UK EN, UK SC), which, besides external QA activities that impact learning and teaching, also offer conferences, training, and other opportunities for exchanges and cooperation with a focus on learning and teaching.
- Foundations providing funding support for learning and teaching, notably under the form of grants (FI⁴⁷)
- National Erasmus+ agencies (LT⁴⁸, PL)
- Other organisations active on specific topics such as digital learning (DE, NL, SE, UK⁴⁹)

Fig. 2 – National structures to support learning and teaching



38 https://www.hi.is/samstarf/samstarf_opinberu_haskolanna

39 Notably through two working groups in the NRC, on quality assurance and employability. There are for instance bi-annual conferences that have a focus on learning and teaching.

40 <https://www.mesetudes.be/enseignement-superieur/institutions/poles-academiques/>

41 The Danish network for educational development (<https://dun-net.dk/dun-in-english/>).

42 <https://asduni.it/about-us/>

43 <http://www.izglitibasbiedriba.lv/>

44 <http://www.swednetwork.org>

45 The Swiss Faculty Development Network, in addition to the Swiss chapter of AIPU (www.aipu-international.org).

46 <https://www.aipu-international.org/>

47 <https://wihurinrahasto.fi/?lang=en>.

48 <https://www.smpf.lt/en/about-us/about-us/>; <https://erasmus-plius.lt/>

49 <https://hochschulforumdigitalisierung.de/>; <https://www.surf.nl/>; <http://www.ithu.se/>; <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/>

Country example

In **Belgium** – Flanders, the network of educational developers, the LNO²,⁵⁰ connects educational support staff and experts from all universities and university colleges. LNO² pursues three goals: (1) the professionalisation of educational support in higher education; (2) developing educational developers' professional identity; (3) quality development in higher education.

A complete list by country of such actors can be found under Annex 3.

The existence of several actors can offer the advantage of a more diversified and dynamic offer, but potentially holds the risk of duplication and competition. A question is then how coordination and cooperation in the sector can be enabled. Some operators coordinate between them, formally or informally. Another issue is that it might cater to a wider range of needs, but also leave out some specific tasks. For instance, in the Netherlands, while there are several organisations with defined responsibilities (SURF for digitalisation in education and research⁵¹; Universiteiten van Nederland, the Dutch association of universities, formerly known as VSNU; the NRO for managing funding), there is no specific forum to gather different types of stakeholders (teachers, policy makers, experts, researchers).

2.2. Learning and teaching centres

When it comes to national structures for supporting learning and teaching, experts in several countries (BE FL, BE FR, EE, EL, HU, IS, PT, ES, SE) mentioned as a national trend the development of learning and teaching centres at HEIs, which provide knowledge and resources for teaching. National authorities are granting increased attention to their implementation and development, and supporting them with funding. The Trends 2018 report found that 65% of HEIs surveyed across the EHEA have such a centre at institutional level, and noted their important role in the implementation of institutional strategies in learning and teaching (Gaebel and Zhang, 2018, 18). A smaller number of HEIs combine institutional and faculty-based learning and teaching centres, while 7% of HEIs surveyed under Trends 2018 have such centres only at faculty or department level.⁵² In the Netherlands, Sweden⁵³, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the UK, all universities that have responded to the Trends 2018 survey have learning and teaching centres (*ibidem*).

The pandemic may also have put them in the spotlight: in HEIs where such centres exist, they were instrumental in providing support and advising on the use of technology and pedagogy related to digitalisation, and serving as coordinators for the exchange of good practices between teachers. At times they used a window of opportunity for introducing more innovative pedagogies. This role was particularly noted in France, Hungary and Portugal.

When connected through networks or collaborative initiatives, institutional learning and teaching centres can create opportunities for HEIs to cooperate on learning and teaching, and play a role at system level. This is for instance the case in Switzerland (by canton or linguistic zone), Estonia and Greece (through memorandums of understanding between centres for joint activities or mutualising training offers).

50 <https://www.lno2.be/>

51 <https://www.surf.nl/en>

52 This can be found for instance the case in Slovenia, where faculties have a high level of independence.

53 Some of the smaller Swedish HEIs do not have their own, but use and purchase services and courses from larger institutions.

Where there is no national policy or approach on having such centres, big differences can exist between universities, in terms of the CPD offer for teachers, pedagogical support, and expertise.

Finally, a variation of such centres are centres for excellence in teaching/education, or teaching academies. In Iceland, for instance, a newly funded Teaching Academy of Excellence started operating in September 2021 (see also Chapter 4.3). In Norway, centres of excellence for teaching are discipline-based and being implemented following national calls for funding.

Country example

Norway

Based on a recommendation of the 2017 White Paper *Quality culture in higher education*, the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (HK-dir) regularly issues competitive calls for universities to set up a Centre for Excellence in Education. Universities are awarded the centre status, and up to eight million Norwegian krona (approx. 772 000 EUR) for a period of five years, with a prolongation possible for another five years, subject to an interim evaluation.⁵⁴ The purpose of the centres is to explore innovative teaching in a particular discipline. A university can therefore host several centres, and they can also be shared across universities (e.g., Centre in Geosciences,⁵⁵ hosted at the University of Oslo, and shared with the Universities of Bergen and Tromsø). The scheme is highly prestigious, and has increased attention towards learning and teaching. However, a challenge is how to disseminate resulting good practices across institutions and disciplines.

⁵⁴ <https://diku.no/en/programmes/centres-for-excellence-in-education-sfu#content-section-1>

⁵⁵ <https://diku.no/en/news/four-new-centres-for-excellence-in-education>

Chapter 3: Inter-institutional cooperation

Peer exchanges and sharing of good practice have been identified as a successful strategy for the enhancement of learning and teaching. The Trends 2018 report demonstrates the importance and value of partnership and collaboration at all levels: within institutions, between institutions, and within and across higher education systems. In this regard, university alliances and associations also play a role in enabling collaboration and cooperation between institutions, and ultimately contribute to establishing learning communities at local, regional, national, and global levels (Gaebel and Zhang, 2018, 80). The pandemic seems to have further increased initiatives for exchange and collaboration between institutions, including in a bottom-up and informal way and internationally (Gaebel *et al.*, 2021, 47).

Across the countries considered in this study, inter-institutional cooperation in learning and teaching differs considerably regarding its organisation, the support it receives, and its financing. This chapter focuses on how inter-institutional cooperation works at national level, and how international cooperation between HEIs is valued and supported in national systems. It also explores open education, an area where such cooperation could serve as virtue of example.

3.1. Inter-institutional collaboration facilitated through networks and projects

According to national experts, inter-institutional cooperation may take the following shapes:

- bi-lateral institutional cooperation, on the institutions' own initiative, and/or their own funding, which is the most common approach (cited by AT, HR, CY, EL, FI, GE, PL, PT, RO, ES, UK England);
- networks of institutions with a similar profile (e.g. engineering schools in FR);
- national rectors' conferences (cited by BE FL, FI, IS, IT, NO, PL, SI, ES, SE, CH), through specific activities on learning and teaching (such as conferences), and/or through specific bodies (e.g., working groups gathering vice-rectors for education, expert group⁵⁶);
- national structures that support the enhancement of learning and teaching (DE, IE⁵⁷);
- other organisations involved in the enhancement of learning and teaching (QAA Scotland);
- networks of HEIs creating inter-institutional cooperation on a territorial basis (BE FR, FR, CH⁵⁸).

56 Since 2021, the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF), i.e., the national rectors' conference in Sweden, has a permanent expert group with a mandate to create shared knowledge for learning and teaching, establishing a platform for exchange, taking stock of what has been done in this area, and ultimately designing a sector-wide shared framework on vision for learning and teaching, to which HEIs could commit. This expert group was preceded by a two-year working group working towards the feasibility and need for such expert group.

57 In Ireland, the National Forum developed inter-institutional collaboration in learning and teaching notably through promoting collaboration as a criterion for project funding in previous years. The National Forum now considers that the goal of installing such collaboration has been reached, and complements it with a series of events and activities that cumulatively generate a lot of networking opportunities.

58 *Pôles académiques* in Belgium – French speaking Community (<https://www.mesetudes.be/enseignement-superieur/institutions/poles-academiques/>); *Communautés d'universités et établissements* in France (<https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/fr/federations-communautes-d-universites-et-etablissements-45671>); and in some cantons in Switzerland.

Inter-institutional cooperation also takes place in the framework of projects. In some countries (AT, CZ, DK, LT, LV, NL, NO, SI), specific calls for projects aim at developing cooperative ways of working across institutions. There can also be national prizes specifically rewarding team teaching, including inter-institutional teaching.

Besides these examples, experts interviewed also noted limits and obstacles for inter-institutional cooperation. Particularly in systems where HEIs compete with each other for students and funding (BE FL, BE FR, GE, UK EN), there might be a lack of interest in sharing practices in learning and teaching. But competition and cooperation do not necessarily exclude each other: in the Netherlands, for instance, a new strategic agenda published in 2019 raised awareness towards inter-institutional collaboration, while the national system is designed as highly competitive for HEIs.

Finally, there are two systems where a funding body for developing inter-institutional cooperation existed, but was abolished: in Sweden, in 2008; and in UK-England, in 2018, with the end of the HEFCE that used to play a more supportive role and provide funding for collaborations.

3.2. National funding for inter-institutional cooperation

While HEIs highly value international exchange and collaboration on learning and teaching, according to the interview experts, most national systems do not specifically support or encourage such cooperation in a systematic way (BE FL, CY, DK, EE, FI, EL, HU, PT, RO, SE). The Erasmus+ programme is often considered as the primary source of funding for inter-institutional cooperation in teaching. Some national experts (DK, IE) pointed out that funding for inter-institutional cooperation in learning and teaching with HEIs abroad

usually comes from European or international sources rather than national ones. International cooperation, through EU funded projects for instance, is considered as a potential driver for change in learning and teaching (HR, GE, KZ, RO).

The most often cited national funding for inter-institutional cooperation concern support provided for HEIs to apply to a European Universities Initiative (EUI)⁵⁹ and for co-funding their participation once selected (AT, BE FR,⁶⁰ HR, CZ, FI, FR, DE, IT, PL, SI, ES). This is probably telling in terms of the importance granted by some national authorities to the European University Initiative.

Country examples

France

A budget of 10 million EUR over 10 years has been earmarked to support French universities that are selected to take part to a European University Initiative alliance.

Germany

The situation differs across the *Länder*, but generally there is some funding available for supporting universities to engage into the European University Initiative.

Finland

There is national funding available for taking part in a network under the European Universities Initiative, in which most of the Finnish universities are involved, and which is considered to be one of the most visible vehicles for international collaboration for learning and teaching at the system level.

Slovenia

The government has adopted a four-year plan with a dedicated budget. There is a clear, systemic incentive for all HEIs to propose different development initiatives in learning and teaching (e.g., student-centred learning, research-based curriculum, etc.), and in relation with the European University Initiative.

⁵⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area/european-universities-initiative_en

⁶⁰ In BE FR, there is additional funding available for supporting HEIs at application phase (100 000 EUR available, notwithstanding if they are selected or not at the end). However, this support does not imply specific attention or focus on learning and teaching; it is for inter-institutional cooperation in the EUI context in general. The level of commitment towards learning and teaching would mostly depend on the alliances under the EUI themselves, once set up. In BE FL, the government decided in December 2021 to allocate extra funding for HEIs participating in a EUI too, but focusing on research, innovation and valorisation.

Besides dedicated funding for the EUI, financial support for international cooperation between HEIs in learning and teaching can also be embedded under other programmes for internationalisation (CZ, GE) or cooperation to development (BE FR). More specifically, in Norway, the HK-dir offers the INTPART programme,⁶¹ which supports institutions with funds for international collaboration in education. Research centres, for instance, can apply for funding to add educational dimension to their research collaboration.

The non-participation of Switzerland and the United Kingdom in Erasmus+ is perceived as a real miss for the sector, even if there are national programmes or schemes for compensating mobility and cooperation funding. However, it was also felt that international exchanges, including on learning and teaching, already existed, and there are ways to make them continue. In addition, in the UK, the consequences of Brexit remain a major concern in the sector.

Finally, incentivising inter-institutional cooperation can also imply types of support or encouragement other than funding. For instance, in Latvia, international collaboration with Latvian and international organisations in a given study field is an evaluation criterion under the accreditation procedures.

3.3. Open education and Open Educational Resources

Open education could be defined as a way to carry out education, often using digital technologies, with the aim to widen access and participation to everyone, by removing barriers and making learning accessible, abundant, and customisable for all. It offers multiple ways of teaching and learning, building and sharing knowledge. It also provides a variety of access routes to formal and non-formal education, and connects the two (Inamorato dos Santos, Punie and Castaño-Muñoz, 2016).

One way to boost inter-institutional cooperation in learning and teaching would be to address open education in a more systematic way, as sharing resources in teaching was experienced in HEIs during the pandemic. However, interviews with national experts confirmed that open education and the development of Open Educational Resources (OER), notably through repositories, has not become more widespread, and might not become a real game changer any time soon.

In 19 systems interviewed (BE FL, CY, CZ, DK, EE, GE, DE, IS, IT, KZ, LV, LT, PL, PT, ES, SE, CH, UK EN, UK SC), there is no national repository for sharing teaching material and resources. However, in several countries, some individual HEIs would have their own repository (DE, HU, LV, NO, PL, PT, RO, ES, SE, UK). Repertories may also exist at regional level, especially in devolved systems where regions have competences for higher education.⁶² Interviewees also pointed to the issue of some OER being available for students (open courses from different universities in the country in Estonia, for instance), but without such OER available for teachers.

61 <https://diku.no/programmer/intpart>

62 For instance, the Virtuelle Hochschule Bayern (<https://www.vhb.org/>) in Germany. In Scotland, QAA Scotland manages large repositories of resources to support the development of teaching.

A few countries had national repositories or initiatives for open education in place before the pandemic, or just launched it:

Country examples

Austria

In 2013, the *iMooX.at* platform was created to offer OER to all sectors of higher education. Since 2020, as part of the “Open Education Austria” portal, a virtual platform was created as an infrastructure for OER. The aim is to link inter-university services from (e-) learning centres, libraries, and central IT services. In addition, teachers can provide learning objects based on the OER principle.

France

In 2013, the *Université numérique* has been established as an association and a platform grouping eight thematic/discipline-based areas.⁶³ It provides pedagogical and digital resources for teaching, for teachers and students (e.g., on flipped classrooms, distance learning, etc.). The quality of these resources has to be validated by academics in each of the areas, and from a technical, scientific and pedagogical perspective. All resources are open access, and the majority of them are free. This initiative is funded nationally.

Besides, during the pandemic, additional national funding was available, for producing shorter resources, that could be more easily reused by a large number of teachers.

Ireland

The National Forum also launched a national resource hub in June 2021.⁶⁴

The Netherlands

The organisation for digital in education and research, the SURF, provides support and serves as the backbone for education materials, in open access and open science perspective.

One challenge mentioned by several national experts is the teachers' reluctance to share teaching materials – less because they are concerned by intellectual property rights, than because they fear judgement by colleagues, and to feel exposed (ES, UK).

Interviews also confirmed that the situation of open education can differ across HEIs of the same country, and even within the same institution. In Sweden, for instance, the government made efforts to stimulate open education, but due to the diverse organisational approaches across HEIs, some disciplines are taking more advantage of open education than others.

63 Engineering and technology (<http://www.unit.eu/>), Fundamental sciences (<http://www.unisciel.fr/>), Economy and management (<http://www.aunege.org/>), Human and social sciences, languages and cultures (<http://www.uoh.fr/>), Legal and political sciences (<http://www.unjf.fr/>), Environment and sustainable development (<http://www.uved.fr/>), Health and sport sciences (<http://www.unf3s.org/>), Technology (*IUT en ligne*).

64 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/2021/06/18/national-forum-launches-new-national-resource-hub/>

Chapter 4: Teaching enhancement

This chapter examines how regulation and recognition for teaching enhancement have progressed, and the state of play for teaching enhancement offers across the EHEA. Teaching enhancement, in this context, is understood as any kind of formal pedagogical staff development.

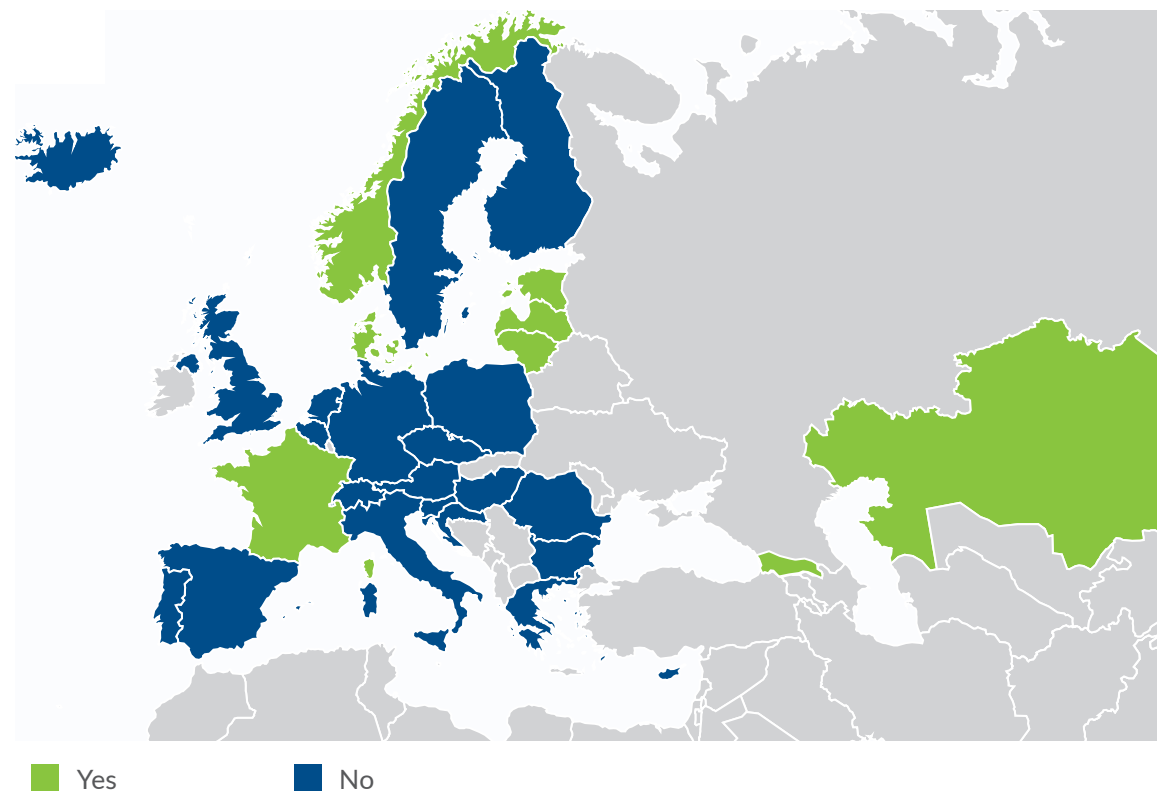
While regulation in teaching enhancement exist in eight countries, the main trend is that recognising as well as organising teaching enhancement mostly lies with HEIs themselves.

4.1. Regulation and recognition

Where they exist, regulation in teaching enhancement provide for minimum standards for teachers or teaching at higher education institutions, and stand as a way to better recognise teaching in academic careers. The 2018 report *National Initiatives in Learning and Teaching in Europe* found that in seven systems, teaching enhancement was regulated at national level; whereas in four other systems, it is commonly used without being a national requirement. In 2021, the situation has not dramatically changed. Regulation in teaching enhancement exist in only in eight systems: Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Latvia, and Norway. In other countries, teaching enhancement is not regulated at national level.

Interestingly, in nearly all countries where such regulations exist, a change in this regulation occurred in the recent years, with a perspective toward supporting academics' commitment to teaching.

Fig. 3 – Countries with regulation in teaching enhancement



Country examples

Denmark

A new regulation on university careers provides for a stronger focus on education, with pedagogical development being required throughout a career. Continuous professional development (CPD) and teaching enhancement have an increased weight in decisions on career advancement. The national regulations require HEIs to offer teaching enhancement, but leave it to each institution to decide how they would want to implement teaching enhancement provision.

In addition, in February-March 2021, university rectors in Denmark approved a common framework for teaching qualifications that was developed among universities. This framework applies to all current and future university teachers. Implementation is expected to start in 2021, with each institution deciding on own modalities for implementing. An evaluation of the framework is planned after 3 years.

Estonia

As of 2015, a new national regulation has come into effect: employment contracts of academics changed from a fixed-term model into an unspecified-term model. Academics have to undergo regular evaluation, in which developing one's own teaching is one aspect. Universities decide on the content and the criteria for evaluation.

France

Several recent changes aimed at improving the recognition of teaching in careers:

1. As of 2018, a new law requires new enseignants-chercheurs, or teaching and research staff, during their first year as assistant professors to undergo teacher training for 1/6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE).⁶⁵ This new law contributed to boost the activity and role of learning and teaching centres or support services for pedagogy at universities. There is increasing acceptance towards this new law in the higher education sector.
2. The new law also addresses CPD: 5 years after recruitment, a teacher can request another 1/6 FTE for teaching enhancement. This CPD is a right, but not an obligation. The ministry commissioned researchers for conducting an evaluation of this mechanism.
3. In addition, since 2019, it is possible to request a sabbatical leave for pedagogical projects. But so far, the demand falls behind funding available, as a teacher's workload during the sabbatical has to be distributed among colleagues – a challenge in particular at smaller departments and faculties.
4. A salary increase has been introduced for non-tenured lecturers towards the end of their careers, to acknowledge their investment in pedagogy.⁶⁶
5. A 2021 law on higher education and research introduced mandatory mock lectures during the hiring process at university. The practice already existed before, but was not mandatory.

⁶⁵ <https://www.letudiant.fr/educpros/entretiens/pedagogie-le-defi-de-la-formation-des-enseignants-chercheurs.html>

⁶⁶ https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/pid20536/bulletin-officiel.html?cid_bo=127466&cbo=1

Latvia

Since June 2020, a new academic career framework is under development, in order to integrate teaching and research, and further strengthen collaboration between university staff and staff at research institutes. It will also:

- provide PhDs with pedagogical skills;
- create broad, systemic opportunities for CPD;
- support the professional development of academic staff across institutions, e.g., through mobility for teaching purposes;
- introduce teachers to different teaching methods;
- and balance pedagogical and research workload, including in later stages of career.

In February 2021, the Latvian government revised the procedure for evaluating scientific and pedagogical qualifications or artistic creativity. This procedure targets both professors and associate professors, and candidates to these positions.⁶⁷ Although not focused on teaching enhancement, the regulation addresses teaching experience and achievement. It stipulates that teaching qualifications shall be assessed according to a number of criteria, including supervision of doctoral and Masters' theses and teaching courses at these levels, supervision of foreign students, teaching abroad, teaching material produced incl. for publication, and upgrading in teaching qualifications.

Lithuania

In June 2020, the Minister of Education, Science and Sport issued a set of *Guidelines for Improvement of the Academic Performance of Teachers at Higher Education Institutions*,⁶⁸ to assist HEIs in developing a consistent and targeted scheme for improving academics' competences. The competences for academic staff are envisaged in a holistic way: they include general competences (digital, leadership, intercultural), research competences, and teaching and learning competences. All HEIs are expected to set up an internal system for systematic, continuous and targeted development of academic staff competences as a strategic activity, and with a lifelong learning perspective.

In addition to the regulation, a number of Lithuanian state universities participating in the existing national scheme for the consolidation of HEIs (institutional mergers and review of study provision) were offered additional funding for improving their teachers' academic performance.

Norway

As a result of the 2017 White Paper, taking 200 hours of teaching enhancement within two years after starting a teaching position has become a mandatory minimum requirement for academic staff. Further, the national regulation stipulates that those applying for a position of professor must document pedagogical qualifications or training beyond these 200 hours. The national regulation is not prescriptive for how universities should apply this; it just stipulates that the continuous interest in pedagogical work should be documented.

⁶⁷ <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/321300-procedures-for-evaluating-the-scientific-and-teaching-qualifications-or-results-of-artistic-creation-work-of-an-applicant-for-the-position-of-professor-or-associate-professor-and-of-a-professor-or-associate-professor-holding-the-position>

⁶⁸ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/9b11a070b22111eab9d9cd0c85e0b745>

In other systems, regulations may exist only for non-university higher education institutions (university colleges, art schools, conservatoires or specialised HEIs). In the Federation Wallonia-Brussels (the French-speaking Community of Belgium), for instance, a specific certificate for teaching in higher education, the *Certificat d'Aptitude pédagogique approprié à l'Enseignement supérieur* (CAPAES),⁶⁹ is required to be passed within six years after entering into a teaching position at a university college or social promotion school (that offer bachelor degrees). Likewise, in Switzerland, teachers in specialised university colleges (*hautes écoles spécialisées*) are requested to follow a number of hours of training during the two first years upon hiring.

In countries without any legal obligation, national experts confirmed that undergoing pedagogical staff development may still be recognised as an asset in teachers' recruitment and careers, and strongly encouraged through a range of measures at national level:

- Through **quality assurance and accreditation arrangements**. It should be noted that the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) mention “professional development of teaching staff” – with primary responsibility of HEIs for the quality of their staff and providing them with a supportive environment.

Country example

In **Austria**, HEIs have a responsibility for assuring teaching competences and professional development for teaching staff, although it is not prescribed by law that individual teachers have to undergo teaching enhancement, or in what way. Teaching may also be a component required for the appointment of professors, and for individual tenure tracks, e.g., under the form of giving a lecture as an example.

What the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* say

1.5 Teaching staff

Standard: Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Guidelines: The teacher's role is essential in creating a high quality student experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills. The diversifying student population and stronger focus on learning outcomes require student-centred learning and teaching and the role of the teacher is, therefore, also changing (...).

Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. Such an environment:

- sets up and follows clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment and conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching;
- offers opportunities for and promotes the professional development of teaching staff;
- encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;
- encourages innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

(ESG, 2015, 13)

69 <http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=16142>

- Through a national reference framework such as a **(continuous) professional development framework**, which contributes to a good awareness towards professional development across HEIs. This is notably the case in Ireland, with the Irish National Professional Development Framework,⁷⁰ and in the UK, with the UK Professional Standards Framework.⁷¹
- Through a national **framework on learning and teaching generally, part of which has an impact on teaching enhancement**, such as the Teaching Excellence Framework⁷² in the United Kingdom – England, against which HEIs can measure up as a scale. Originally optional, participation in the TEF is now mandatory for all HEIs in England, with requirements to meet minimum standards on various aspects of learning and teaching. Pedagogical staff development may contribute to meet these standards, but the approach is not prescriptive as such on this matter.
- Through a **certificate for teachers** that the higher education sector recognises nationally.

Country example

In the **Netherlands**, although there is no national regulation as such, a compulsory certificate of quality for university teachers (the University Teaching Qualification, or *Basis Kwalificatie Onderwijs, BKO*) has been created by the Dutch university association, the Universiteiten van Nederland (formerly known as VSNU), and is recognised and implemented by all Dutch universities (Bunescu and Gaebel, 2018, 15-16).

In addition, the Ministry finances universities and universities of applied sciences for working on recognition and reward for teaching,⁷³ which generally has grown in importance in the country. and involves the Dutch public knowledge and research funding organisations (Universiteiten van Nederland as the Dutch association of universities, the Dutch Federation of University Medical Centres or NFU, the Royal Academy of Sciences of the Netherlands, the Dutch Research Council, and the organisation promoting health research or ZonMw).⁷⁴ The initiative calls for a system of recognition and rewards that:

- enables the diversification and vitalisation of career paths, thereby promoting excellence in education and research
- acknowledges the independence, individual qualities and ambitions of academics, as well as recognises team performances
- emphasises the quality of work over quantitative results (such as the number of publications)
- encourages all aspects of open science
- encourages high-quality academic leadership.

Each university now has a committee on recognition and rewards. In 2018, universities have also started to work towards changing career paths in a long-term perspective, and now grant more value to teaching in careers.

70 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/our-priorities/professional-development/the-national-professional-development-framework-pdf-for-all-staff-who-teach-in-higher-education/>

71 <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/uk-professional-standards-framework-ukpsf:>

72 <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/about-the-tef/>

73 <https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/recognitionandrewards/inspiration-education/index.html> and <https://recognitionrewards.nl/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/position-paper-room-for-everyones-talent.pdf>

74 <https://www.nfu.nl/>, <https://www.knaw.nl/en/homepage>, <https://www.nwo.nl/en>, <https://www.zonmw.nl/en/about-zonmw/organisation/>

Country example

In **Sweden**, in the period 2003-2008, almost all HEIs have established learning and teaching centres, and there has been a strong push into education development and teaching enhancement – also because, by law, all university teachers were obliged to take teaching courses. The 2011 law granted more autonomy to HEIs and dropped the obligation on teaching enhancement. HEIs committed to continue nevertheless, with existing structures (learning and teaching centres), resource people (education developers), and related institutional regulations and practices already in place, and this has installed and continued a tradition of teaching enhancement in the country.

In Sweden nowadays, most universities require that, over the course of their career, teachers should take either five weeks of pedagogical development courses, or a minimum of 7.5 ECTS. Some HEIs increase this requirement, up to 15 ECTS throughout the career. Implementation differ across HEIs: some HEIs have a compulsory competence development framework for their teachers; others offer teaching enhancement courses. Most PhD candidates take pedagogical development courses, so that they can show a better portfolio when they graduate and start applying for entry-level academic positions.

In addition, about half of the Swedish HEIs introduced a teaching merit system. This system rewards excellent teaching, and offers to academics a possibility to apply for being reviewed by an external panel, on the basis of a teaching portfolio. Rewards take place at institutional level (funding, valorisation of their status as excellent teachers). An evaluation of this merit system was conducted in 2021 by two researchers from Umeå University.⁷⁵ The evaluation shows that most, but not all universities have used it, and there are visible outcomes, e.g., with higher rates of positive feedback from students in departments where many teachers got awarded.

Finally, with the noticeable exception of Ireland (where professional development addresses “those who teach” and is not limited to teachers as such⁷⁶), interviews show that there are fewer training offers, and, generally, less attention to the pedagogical development of teaching support staff – identified as technicians, librarians, or related (Gaebel and Zhang, 2018, 63). This confirms findings from the Trends 2018 report: while 60% of institutions indicated that a substantial contribution to teaching comes from teaching support staff, training courses for them is a requirement in only 20% of institutions. Comparatively, participation in teaching enhancement courses is required for professors in 30% of institutions (*Ibidem*, 63-65). National experts reported training offers that may be open to teaching support staff on a voluntary basis, but not specifically adapted to them (BE FL, EE, NO), or mandatory training on matters such as language and digital skills at some institutions (EL).

4.2. The role of higher education institutions

Interviews with national experts confirmed that individual higher education institutions are driving forces in promoting pedagogical staff development in contexts where there is no established national rule or approach.

In 14 systems (AT, BE FL, BE FR, CZ, EE, FI, EL, LT, NL, RO, SI, ES, SE, UK), HEIs typically have their own requirements when hiring academic staff and for newly hired staff. Such requirements can include: mandatory or voluntary follow-up or support offered by the university’s learning and teaching centre; advancement or achievement in pedagogy to demonstrate through evaluations, teaching enhancement, examples of innovating teaching, examples of teaching with different types of approaches, etc. As institutions are autonomous, policies and practices may differ within the same country. For instance, it is more common for German-speaking universities in Switzerland, compared to other Swiss universities, to require a teaching qualification for permanent employment.

75 Winka, K. and Ryegård, Å., 2021, “Pedagogiska meriteringsmodeller vid Sveriges universitet och högskolor 2021”, *Innovative Higher Education*, 27, 5-23. <http://umu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1608541/FULLTEXT02.pdf>.

76 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/our-priorities/professional-development/the-national-professional-development-framework-pdf-for-all-staff-who-teach-in-higher-education/>

One issue identified by national experts was continuous professional development: typically, training and support is offered, and tailored, to newly hired staff, but support through teaching enhancement is less specifically planned for more senior academics, for whom it is mostly available on a voluntary basis. Nevertheless, examples of practices incorporating teaching enhancement in career progression could also be found. They include, for instance, teaching experience and pedagogical training documented through a teaching portfolio that accounts for career promotion (BE FL), or regular evaluations of teaching that include pedagogical training undertaken as continuous professional development (CH). Such practices are handled by HEIs, and each institution typically manages them in their own way.

4.3. Who is offering teaching enhancement?

The 2018 report *National Initiatives in Learning and Teaching in Europe* found that teaching enhancement is usually organised by individual higher education institutions, often through their learning and teaching centres and/or faculties of education (Bunescu and Gaebel, 2018, 14).

In 2021, in 28 out of 30 countries where interviews took place, continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers is organised by higher education institutions (AT, BE FL and FR, HR, CY, CZ, DK, EE, DE⁷⁷, EL, FI, GE, HU, IS, IE, IT, KZ, NL, NO, LV, LT, PL, PT, RO, SI, ES, SE, CH, UK). At institutions, CPD is typically organised by a learning and teaching centre, where there is one. For instance, in the Netherlands, all universities have learning and teaching centres that provide courses and training at several levels: basic teaching qualification in education, senior qualification in education, and courses in educational leadership (or leadership in teaching).

In some countries (LT, NL, NO, SE, CH), experts noted a teaching enhancement offer shared among institutions, to the benefit in particular of smaller institutions that might not have such centres, or are lacking a fully developed CPD offer to cover all needs. In universities with more decentralised governance systems where faculties and departments play an important role (SI), faculty-based learning and teaching centres may be the drivers for teaching enhancement, sometimes with the support of the university's central level.

Interviewees in eight countries (AT, BE FL and FR, FI, DE, SI, ES, CH, UK) mentioned that the pedagogical staff development offer at HEIs is complemented by an additional offer from networks of teachers or education developers. In countries where there is a national structure dedicated to the enhancement of teaching and learning, these typically propose CPD. In addition, in Iceland, a new Teaching Academy has started operating in 2021.

77 A 2020-2021 study from the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) shows that individual higher education institutions in Germany offer a wide range of activities on teaching enhancement and qualifications. See https://www.hrk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/hrk/02-Dokumente/02-04-Lehre/HRK_Survey_on_teaching_qualification_offers_at_German_HEI_April_2021.pdf.

Country examples

Iceland

A newly founded Teaching Academy of Excellence has started operating at national level in September 2021. Initially an initiative from the University of Iceland, it now involves all public universities in the country and is supported by the ministry. The Academy expects to shape a community of teachers who would demonstrate excellence in using theory in their teaching and through their teaching practice. Activities such as conferences, a journal on teaching, and a network of teaching champions within faculties, are planned.

Ireland

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning offers a mix of online, in person and self-study opportunities for professional development. The offer includes a MOOC platform for professional development,⁷⁸ which gathered approximately 700 participants in Spring 2021, and had a goal to double this number by September 2021. In 2020, a full evaluation of this MOOC platform showed that 89% of respondents have changed their practice after using it. The peer-learning approach is prioritised in all professional development activities. Each course from the National Forum has a facilitator training proposal attached to it, and a facilitators' network is being constituted, with those who attended a previous training course having the possibility to become facilitators themselves.

Finally, in the framework of the Valuing Ireland's Teaching and Learning (VITAL) project,⁷⁹ the forum also produced a report on the recognition for professional development, as a way of valuing learning and teaching, at the institutional, discipline, and system levels.

United Kingdom

Advance HE plays a role of national-level umbrella organisation for professional development, through the fellowship scheme. In doing so, Advance HE serves as a catalyst for discussions on learning and teaching, taking place in the context of its activities and taking its frameworks (such as the UKPSF) as a reference point. This may lead to a certain harmonisation of views about what CPD and pedagogical staff development should address, including at individual HEIs. For instance, it can be observed that HEIs across the UK more and more address similar priorities in their training offers.

Very rarely were for-profit organisations mentioned as providers of teaching enhancement, and when they were (ES, UK), it was limited to a transactional relationship related to the purchase of a tool. For instance, some companies offer a training for using a technological product purchased by the university.

Finally, the French Ministry in charge of higher education has proposed since 2017 a MOOC on teacher training, to support HEIs in establishing a learning and teaching centre.⁸⁰ This MOOC has evolved through time, with additional themes added (competence-based learning, distance learning). This takes place in a context where, since 2018, it is mandatory to undertake pedagogical training prior to teaching at HEIs. Many French universities have established learning and teaching centres since 2017, and took the themes explored in the ministry's MOOC as a departure point for organising their pedagogical staff development offer. The ministry itself does not see its role in the long run as organising training, and the MOOC stands as a kick-starter for HEIs, rather than an offer to cover all training needs.

78 <https://opencourses.ie/>

79 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/vital/>

80 <https://www.fun-mooc.fr/fr/cours/se-former-pour-enseigner-dans-le-superieur>

Chapter 5: Leadership in teaching: a concept in-the-making

Teaching relates to a whole learning ecosystem, where curriculum and pedagogy matters can be coordinated at study programme, faculty/department or institutional level, and where HEIs are increasingly attentive to learning and teaching policies and strategies. While individual teachers clearly play the major role on how to teach, teaching should also be looked at as a collective process and responsibility, where teachers can rely on collaboration and support (Gaebel and Zhang, 2018, 54-58). At system level, and as demonstrated in the previous chapters, there are measures and initiatives for addressing teaching in a structured, strategic manner. In this context, it is worth paying attention to how a change in learning and teaching policies, in pedagogical paradigms or in the education offer, can be led, and by whom.

This chapter explores the different meanings of “leadership in teaching”, and examples of practices related to it in different national contexts. Results confirm that this is mostly an emerging issue, not yet a priority in national systems.

5.1. Who are leaders in teaching?

Under the LOTUS project, leadership in teaching is understood as both the agency to develop strong strategic oversight, coordination and implementation for learning and teaching, and as a collective, institutional capacity to address organisational development and gear it towards enhancement. It encompasses the idea that teaching is not only an activity to be conducted in the classroom between the teacher and her/his students.

Leadership in teaching also relies on the concept of distributed (or shared) leadership (van Almeijde *et al.*, 2009), which regards

leadership as a shared process to which several individual actors can contribute through interactions, mutual influence and dispersed expertise. Arguably, distributed leadership may fit the higher education context particularly well. When it comes to teaching, it is important to grant a fair and balanced importance to both individual capacities, agency and autonomy of teachers, and contributions from collective, institutional-level or even national-level actions.

Leadership in teaching can be:

1. associated with a role within the institution, a faculty, a department or a study programme, and/or with responsibilities associated to managing an education offer.

Such roles are typically deans, directors of study programmes, pedagogical coordinators for departments or study programmes, and the like. At institutional level, such roles are vice-rectors. It should be noted that the role of vice-rector or vice-president for education may be understood very differently across HEIs, even in the same country. Responsibilities associated with managing an education offer may range from curriculum design to innovative teaching endeavours, and include a focus on community-building and awareness-raising among colleagues.

Through interviews with country experts where leadership in teaching is acknowledged, it is also clear that such roles are associated with academics. In other words, leadership in teaching seems to happen in a *primus inter pares* approach among academics – and for people who themselves teach. There was no mention of senior administrative managers, such as a director for academic affairs, being identified as target audience for leadership in teaching.

2. associated with the idea of communities of practice or communities of “change agents” in learning and teaching. These can stem from teachers particularly engaged in pedagogies and actively participating in initiatives or training at their institutional or faculty. In this context, leadership in teaching is not so much about a defined responsibility for enhancing learning and teaching. Rather, it relates to helping create a shift in mindset among peer teachers—by promoting the usefulness of getting trained in pedagogy, getting involved in scholarship in learning and teaching, innovating teaching practices, or simply exchanging ideas about how to teach.

The two approaches are complementary and may overlap. Several rounds of peer groups with European higher education institutions, organised by EUA since 2017, have also led to the conclusion that the interplay between institutional leadership inputs and participatory approaches, including grassroots support, is key for enhancing learning and teaching (Loukkola and Peterbauer, 2019, 7-8). In countries where leadership in teaching is a discussion topic, it is common to find a combination of both approaches through a mix of training programmes offered, activities organised for teachers, and/or, at times, national policy priorities.

5.2. National initiatives on leadership in teaching

Leadership in teaching is becoming a point of attention at national level in the following countries:

Country examples

Ireland

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning conducted a series of interviews in 2014 and 2017 to better grasp senior managers and university presidents’ experience, vision and perspectives on learning and teaching. The Forum developed a course for learning and teaching aiming senior managers. It also gathers leaders in teaching, with its Associates Assembly,⁸¹ which meets several times a year and brainstorms ideas to shape the work of the Forum. The associates are middle or senior management representatives and representatives with learning and teaching responsibilities from HEIs.

The Netherlands

The focus on leadership in teaching comes along with various initiatives to recognise, reward and further support teaching (such as leadership in education programmes proposed by universities⁸² or through the National Prize). Under the national Recognition and Rewards initiative,⁸³ there is also a focus on “high-quality academic leadership”.

Norway

Following the 2017 White Paper, regulation stipulates that applicants to a professor position needs to have experience in “pedagogical leadership”, e.g., being in charge of a study programme, taking up responsibilities for evaluating projects, etc. Following this, HEIs offer training for leadership in teaching. For instance, the University of Oslo offers teacher training courses, including for new teachers, that address leadership. In addition, teachers from the university and from other institutions can participate in an educational leadership programme of one year. It is usually attended by 30-40 persons per year, selected through an application process.

81 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/about/associates/>

82 For instance, <https://www.uu.nl/en/education/centre-for-academic-teaching/educational-leadership-programme>.

83 <https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/recognitionandrewards/recognition-and-rewards/index.html>

Slovenia

There is no national policy document or specific mechanism for supporting leadership in teaching. However, attention towards leadership in teaching is growing at institutional level, with the role and responsibility of vice-deans for pedagogical affairs coming more at the forefront – including in exchanges with national bodies such as the QA agency.

For instance, the University of Ljubljana supports vice-deans in pedagogical affairs through a targeted training offer. Such training can be provided by external expertise (e.g., Advance HE from the UK). There are also institutional mechanisms to identify and support educational leaders, proposing enhancement-led visits, an introduction to their role, and overall creating the atmosphere for performing in a change-agent, education leader role.

Sweden

In the past 10 years, attention towards “educational leadership” has been growing. An increasing number of HEIs run training courses for directors of study programmes and similar profiles, shifting the profile from administration, to educational culture, and support for teachers and other staff members. This is more common at larger universities than in smaller ones.

In addition, leadership in teaching was confirmed to receive some attention at institutional learning and teaching centres (BE FR, BE FL) or at the ministry level (IT). But it is not yet a priority or trend. Beyond these few examples, interviews with national experts suggest that, in most EHEA countries, enhancing learning and teaching is not associated with the concept of leadership in teaching. It is neither a topic for discussion nor a point of attention. Expectedly, in such context, there is no specific national-level training offered for this, and no specific interest among staff or university leadership.

5.3. Training offers and initiatives

Interestingly, the lack of interest for leadership in teaching at national level does not mean there are no activities at HEIs. Individual HEIs organise initiatives on, or offer training courses for leadership in teaching. Some national experts reported that individual HEIs discuss how to attract the most suitable and competent candidates for different leadership positions, as well as competences to be developed in these positions.

Examples of practice, which can also commonly take place at other HEIs than those cited and in other countries, include:

- regular gatherings of study programme directors, coordinated at institution’s leadership level (vice-rector) (University of Tartu, EE);
- a network of appointed people responsible for learning and teaching innovation (and present in each department), championing for learning and teaching, with specific activities organised for them and with them, and several routes at the institution for giving value to, and promoting their experience (University Pompeu Fabra, ES);
- activities on leadership in teaching organised by international networks (EUA, UNICA⁸⁴), or in the framework of international collaborations (CZ);
- specific training offers for education leaders organised at HEIs. The University of Aalto provides pedagogical education focused on the role of study programme directors (FI). These offers can target specific positions (deans, programme directors, etc.), or target profiles (CH). For instance, universities can offer specific training and/or short modules for study programme coordinators, those responsible for mobility programmes, etc. (ES);
- training offers that can be complemented by a commercial offer (i.e. by a for-profit, consultancy type of company) across HEIs, with trainers coming from the university system (DK). There has been a discussion about setting up a national academy on leadership in education, but it did not succeed;

- programmes on leadership in education offered by individual faculties, for example, the programme offered by the Graduate School of Education at Nazarbayev University (KZ).

In addition to specific offers and initiatives on leadership in teaching, national experts also mentioned that there can be an offer for higher education leadership generally (i.e., not limited to learning and teaching matters).⁸⁵ The private sector also provides training for higher education managers.

5.4. Challenges and changing situations

The series of interviews showed that, in some countries, leadership in teaching is seen as a role by default, and not necessarily an enviable one. For instance, in countries where regulations or the external QA framework require a number of administrative obligations for study programme directors and the like, it can be challenging to build up models for leadership in teaching that focus more on transformation, enhancement and pedagogy. Moreover, taking leadership roles and responsibilities in teaching may not help career progression where the overall career track focuses on research. Therefore, positions with responsibilities for the education mission may be perceived as unattractive, while creating bureaucratic work overload.

Country example

In **Hungary**, study programme directors are typically heads of departments, who have arrived in this position by virtue of academic seniority more than by interest towards, or specific expertise on, learning and teaching. They are in a good position to influence teaching in their study programme. However, the number and complexity of administrative tasks required to run a study programme may be exhausting, and academics already lack time to fulfil all their tasks in teaching, research, governance-related tasks, and service to society.

In many countries, it is still early days for national and institutional learning and teaching policies that address leadership in teaching. Although there is some interest and discussion on the issue, priority usually goes to other, more concrete reform actions, such as establishing learning and teaching centres or implementing teaching enhancement measures. In this context, one approach to leadership in teaching may be to focus on identifying the range of responsibilities and roles for leaders in teaching, and identify areas for improvement. Concretely, improvement is possible for both strengthening individual leadership with attitudes and competences, and for enhancing institutional and departmental policies and structures. For instance, at institutional level, this would mean reviewing capacity and fitness for purpose in several areas: decision-making processes and structures, management approaches, human resource policies, communication channels and strategies, and expertise and capacity-building in pedagogy and education sciences to provide for evidence-based approaches to teaching.

⁸⁵ For examples, see Bunesu and Estermann, 2021, 23-32.

Chapter 6: Obstacles and enablers in a post-pandemic future

This chapter examines how different countries envisage mid- to long-term national plans for learning and teaching after the pandemic. The overall picture across the 30 EHEA countries clearly points to digitalisation and digitally enhanced learning and teaching. In a number of countries, it is also difficult to identify immediate policy measures or plans at post-pandemic stage, because there is still an ongoing mapping and evaluating phase in progress. In a future-oriented perspective, national experts also identified main obstacles and drivers/enablers for improving learning and teaching in their country.

6.1. After the pandemic

Two major trends are emerging from the pandemic, both concerning digitally enhanced learning and teaching (DELT):

1. National regulations, accreditation standards, and/or funding formula to address online and blended learning are being reformed, in countries where such reforms did not take place until the pandemic. This is for instance the case in:
 - **Belgium – Federation Wallonia-Brussels:** Rules will be adapted for funding virtual mobility in addition to physical mobility.
 - **Czech Republic:** A national strategic plan will be put into place to address hybrid and online forms of learning, which are considered vital for the future resiliency of the higher education system.
 - **Georgia:** A national plan 2021-2027 for higher education is put into place to address digitalisation, including online modes of study.

- **Latvia:** Remote learning has been included in the Education Law as a part of the full-time education process. The Ministry of Education and Science issued guidelines for remote learning during the pandemic, and committed to work on a regulation.
- **Slovenia:** Continuing blended or hybrid learning would mean that the current funding formula for remunerating teachers, which is based on workload calculated as a minimum number of direct contact hours with students, will become obsolete. The “direct contact hour” unit would need to integrate various modes of delivery. While a regulatory change seems unlikely immediately, HEIs will put in place a formula for the continuation of practices experimented with during the pandemic.
- **Sweden:** The SUHF expert group on learning and teaching will issue a framework on educational development, which will include the issue of blended and hybrid education in a synchronous environment.

Such reforms go hand in hand with a reflection on the interplay of on-site and online provision. Reorganising learning and teaching requires the integration of hybrid and blended learning in HEIs’ existing education offer. This also means rethinking the added value of on-site learning, and ultimately thinking of learning and teaching as a holistic activity, taking place in an ecosystem, and requiring education design and methods. In this perspective, HEIs are currently mapping which courses may remain online, and which can go hybrid or blended. This is also an opportunity for HEIs to discuss how to use digital tools to enhance on-site teaching, without necessarily offering more online learning.

2. In addition to reforms in national regulations, there is also increased and specific national support for digitally enhanced learning and teaching. In a number of countries (BE FR, DE, NL, SE, CH), additional funding will be provided for digitally enhanced learning and teaching, mainly to enhance digital infrastructures and digital competences. Generally, national experts predicted that digitalisation and digitally enhanced learning and teaching will remain a priority. Also, the general attitude and approaches have changed, which may impact the way how national plans and initiatives will be developed and implemented. Several experts (FI, RO, SI, ES) pointed to increased awareness that digitalisation should address pedagogy and not focus on technology only. It is also crucial to distinguish digitally enhanced learning and teaching from emergency remote teaching during the pandemic, which teachers themselves may reject after the crisis has passed.

Other examples of support for digitalisation include:

- **Austria:** Performance-based funding agreements with public universities for the period 2022-2024 include reference to the experience on distance learning and open educational resources.
- **Finland:** The pandemic has accelerated reforms already planned before. For instance, the Finnish DigiVision project⁸⁶, which was planned before the pandemic and started in 2020, will continue for a few years, with the goal of defining a country-wise vision for digitalisation in higher education, and concrete measures for HEIs.
- **The Netherlands:** The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science co-funds a four-year Acceleration Plan⁸⁷ (2019-2022; 17.5 million EUR), which mainly aims to enable HEIs taking substantial steps in digitalisation. The Acceleration Plan is carried out through a collaboration between the Universiteiten van Nederland, the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, and SURF. Under

this plan, 39 universities and universities of applied sciences are working together on opportunities that digitalisation offers for higher education.

- **Norway:** HEIs are expected to continue using online learning in effective ways. Norway opted for a national approach to address costs related to digitalisation (licences), with a governmental agency negotiating deals with large software companies on behalf of all universities.
- **Spain:** A new plan is expected on digitalisation.

In 11 systems where interviews were conducted (BE FR, EE, DK, DE, LV, IT, KZ, PL, PT, SI, UK), there is no distinct national-level plan yet for the aftermaths of the pandemic. The main reason cited is that policy makers are first awaiting results from studies or research commissioned by the ministry, to generally map and reflect on lessons learnt from the pandemic (BE FR, DK), specific aspects such as the evaluation of digitalisation at HEIs (LV), or the workload of students (EE).

Country example

In **Ireland**, the Irish Ministry launched a project called “Next Steps for Learning and Teaching: Moving forward together”,⁸⁸ where every stakeholder group in the higher education sector was called to contribute, based on lessons learnt during the pandemic, and what they mean for learning and teaching. The report gathering all contributions from the sector was launched on 10 November 2021.⁸⁹ Among other key messages, it underlines that “decision-making and leadership can be effectively shared across the whole institutional community”, and one of the next steps for reviewing, developing and supporting the sector should be to prioritise and resource “leadership development for those currently in leadership roles, as well as staff and students at all levels of the institution, including a focus on teaching and learning leadership and change management”.

86 <https://digivisio2030.fi/>

87 <https://www.versnellingsplan.nl/en/>

88 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/2021/05/11/minister-launches-national-teaching-and-learning-partnership-project/>

89 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/vital/nextsteps/>

In nine countries (BE, HR, CY, CZ, IT, LV, LT, RO, ES), experts would expect that the national Recovery and Resilience plans submitted to the European Union address needs in higher education. For example:

- In **Belgium**: The plan submitted to the EU include funding for supporting digitalisation in higher education, reforming study programmes towards more flexible curricula, and training for teachers to improve their digital skills.⁹⁰
- In **Italy**: The plan includes measures to improve didactical and digital skills. Among other measures, the plan foresees the creation of three teaching and learning centres to improve the digital competences of teachers, and three digital education hubs to improve the capacity of the higher education system to offer digital education.⁹¹
- In **Latvia**: The plan includes further developing the digital competences of teachers. This measure is much awaited in the sector, as higher education has not received any financial support, including for purchasing technology during the pandemic, unlike primary and secondary education.
- In **Spain**: The plan announces a reform of the university system to be accompanied by 383 million EUR investments in the training of teachers, to attract and retain talent in Spanish universities.⁹²

Finally, various other areas were cited that have gained increased attention during the pandemic, and are likely to continue drawing attention at national level:

- attention to academic integrity (LT⁹³);
- curriculum development (BE FL);
- flexible learning paths (NL, CH);
- innovative pedagogies (RO);
- team teaching (CH), and collaboration at curriculum/study programme level on student workload, in particular;

- assessment (CH, SE) and more attention needed for qualitative assessment, focused on critical thinking and analytical skills;
- equity, equal opportunities and inclusion agenda (NL, RO);
- student welfare (BE FL, NL);
- attention to labour market needs in strategic professional sectors (e.g., health) (NL).

6.2. Obstacles and enablers

Post-pandemic plans are mainly geared towards digitalisation and teaching delivery modes, but at the same time, developments in the past three years have demonstrated that general awareness towards the importance of learning and teaching keeps growing across the EHEA. National experts were asked to identify key obstacles and enablers that already exist within their systems, and could either hinder, or contribute to improve learning and teaching in the future.

Key obstacles and enablers can be summarised as follows:

Obstacles	Enablers
Lack of recognition for teaching in careers	General and genuine interest in the HE community to “do better”
Lack of national support for teaching, and of a clear framework or commitment at national level	Post-pandemic window of opportunity to enhance learning and teaching
Lack of expertise on teaching and teaching support at HEIs, and need for more capacity building	Recent changes have contributed to better equip HEIs and teachers
Uncertainty towards the future	Collaboration on learning and teaching

90 https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/recovery-and-resilience-plan-belgium_en

91 <https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/PNRR.pdf>, pp. 186-187.

92 <https://planderecuperacion.gob.es/> and https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/spains-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en.

93 During the pandemic, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of Lithuania issued *Guidelines for Academic Ethics Assurance in Distance Learning* (https://etikostarnyba.lt/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Gaires_Akademines-etikos-uztikrinimas-organizuojant-studijas-nuotoliniu-budu.pdf).

Obstacles

The first, main, and structural obstacle identified through the interviews is **the lack of recognition for teaching in careers** and the lack of parity of esteem for teaching compared to research. A 2019 study in Belgium shows that all teachers interviewed mention an overly strong emphasis on the research mission as a barrier for improving their teaching.⁹⁴ National experts also flagged as a second, related challenge that the academic profession has considerably changed in the past years, resulting into increased workload and pressure to achieve diverse tasks (teaching, research, service to society, coordinating projects, engaging in the university community's life, etc.).

Although initiatives exist to tackle this obstacle,⁹⁵ interviewees generally agree that there is still a lot to do for teaching to get fully recognised in the academic profession. Time spent on innovating pedagogy or working on teaching is not always valued or valorised. Institutional support measures may exist, but national regulations may not have evolved accordingly. A better understanding of the academic profession from the policy makers' side, as well as better acknowledgement and support for the needs of academic teaching, would be needed.

The second obstacle is **a lack of national support for teaching** at higher education institutions, and more particularly a **lack of clear commitment at national level**. This includes a general lack of a clear national strategy or policy priorities for learning and teaching, and a lack of interest from policy makers. National experts also pointed to issues related to funding:

- (public) underfunding with little possibility to raise additional funding besides the university's core budget;

- a lack of funding for valuing teaching activity in general, as resource distribution and allocation model at universities profile research funding as a priority;
- activities to support teaching (teaching enhancement and other measures) mostly taken in charge by HEIs themselves;
- no sustainable funding scheme to acknowledge and mainstream innovation in teaching;
- a lack of budget for technology purchase and learning infrastructures.

Interviews also suggested that a helpful means of enhancing learning and teaching would be a national policy approach that would shift from solely controlling and quantitatively measuring the accountability of HEIs, to one that would combine accountability with supportive policies. For instance, in a country where teaching performance is examined through accreditation standards, a recognition and incentive system could provide value and motivation for teaching. But this would require a clear policy commitment, at national level, that teaching and teachers matter.

Thirdly, interviews with national experts also pointed to how HEIs themselves may **lack expertise and resources, and need capacity-building to enhance learning and teaching**. One example is digitalisation, where significant gaps in teachers' and students' digital skills could be noted, as well as insufficient technical equipment. HEIs could also benefit from sharing institutional practices on how to organise a learning and teaching centre, how to establish recognition policies for teaching, or how to provide training. Several interviewees mentioned that this knowledge and know-how gap may relate to the lack of recognition or prestige for education as a scholarly discipline, which can bring input and added value to teaching practices at HEIs.

94 De Clerq, M., Frenay, M., Wouters, P., and Raucant, B., *Pédagogie active et enseignement supérieur : Entre recueil de pratiques, expériences de terrain et analyses théoriques*. Peterlang, forthcoming.

95 Examples: the Recognition and Reward initiative in the Netherlands (<https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/recognitionandrewards/inspiration-education/index.html>); the French Ministry's guidelines for activities and competences in the academic profession (<https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid143194/reperes-pour-l-exercice-du-metier-d-enseignant-chercheur.html>).

Finally, and not surprisingly given the current context, **uncertainty towards the future** was identified as an obstacle. Some national experts pointed to the “teaching fatigue” among staff at HEIs: after almost two years of pandemic and intense effort into teaching under difficult circumstances, teachers are tired, and some just want to return to a somewhat normal, i.e., physical teaching life, or resume research that has been paused since the pandemic started. This intense pressure on teaching will probably continue, as the pandemic situation is still evolving in many countries, and teachers can be required to deliver the same class in several modes (on-site, hybrid, online). The pandemic also created concerns over how education is ready for the future. The difficulty to plan ahead, one year and a half after the beginning of the pandemic, contributes to this overall anxiety

Drivers and enablers

Firstly, interviews with national experts highlighted **a general and genuine interest from the higher education community to improve learning and teaching**, with HEIs themselves setting the pace for changing their practices. The Trends 2018 report also confirmed that learning and teaching has become an institutional priority (Gaebel and Zhang, 2018, 14). In this context, some experts pointed to a generational effect as well, with new generations of students demanding a more active role in their learning, increasing willingness from younger teachers to engage in continuously improving and innovating the way they teach, and new generations of institutional leadership with a shift of mindset in strategically thinking about (and through) the education that HEIs offer.

The second driver identified through interviews is the current **window of opportunity for reinvesting into learning and teaching**, which has drawn considerable public attention during the pandemic. The pandemic has accelerated some changes that were already on their way and mainstreamed them – such as digitally enhanced learning

and teaching, blended learning, and increased awareness towards pedagogy and need to innovate teaching. The innovation boost also relates to ongoing reflection at HEIs on how to give a new signification and value to face-to-face teaching.

Thirdly, national experts pointed to **improvements that already took place because recent changes in their country have contributed to better equipping HEIs and teachers**. Such encouraging changes include: creating learning and teaching centres at HEIs as a mainstream trend across a country; national prizes, awards or schemes for excellent teaching; changes in the funding model; new regulations regarding academic careers or new national frameworks for teaching qualifications yielding better recognition of teaching; sustainable support from the ministry for HEIs to engage in enhancing learning and teaching; and many other recent measures mentioned in the previous chapters. Several experts also cited more and better community-building within and across HEIs on learning and teaching matters.

Finally, it has become clear from interviews that **collaboration at several levels** is seen as an enabler: between HEIs and the ministry, among HEIs, among teachers, with students (in the context of a participative culture at HEIs and/or for national policies), and with external stakeholders from different sectors (professional sectors, civil society). Collaboration between teachers has also increased during the pandemic, making them more aware of existing resources. Moreover, collaborating on learning and teaching with international partners is seen as important to keep abreast of most recent international trends in learning and teaching. In this regard, in some countries, HEIs’ participation in the European Universities Initiative is co-funded by ministries (see Chapter 3), with the expectation that this will help to enhance learning and teaching across the higher education sector.

Conclusions and ways forward

The current study does not provide quantitative data on learning and teaching, nor an in-depth analysis of the state of play in individual systems across the EHEA. However, qualitative and comparable data about the different ways by which public authorities and national policy makers contribute to learning and teaching is an interesting starting point for conversations about how learning and teaching could be best supported at national level.

The study also highlights points of convergence and calling for further action:

- The level of **institutional autonomy** is crucial for the enhancement of learning and teaching. In all countries, individual HEIs are expected to take initiative and primary responsibility to enhance learning and teaching. In countries where existing policies, regulations and structures are deemed satisfactory, HEIs play the biggest role, be it for offering teaching enhancement, implementing a variety of collaborative measures with other institutions, or better supporting teachers and promoting teaching at the institution. Other actors, such as ministries or national organisations, acknowledge the central role of HEIs in learning and teaching, respect it, and see their own role as a supportive and/or complementary one. Autonomy also requires capacity for HEIs to engage in enhancing learning and teaching. In this regard, peer support, experience sharing and collaboration between HEIs and individuals (teachers, education developers), as well as structural support and commitment from national level (policy makers, funding structures), are much needed.
- The lack of recognition of **teaching in academic careers** remains the main, structural obstacle. There is still little attention on the changing professional role of academics, who work under the increasing pressure of multiple university missions. A few countries recently changed their legislation in order to better take teaching into account, and in nearly all countries, HEIs set up their own requirements for teaching, as well as own measures to support teaching enhancement. However, the place of teaching in career progression has not reached parity of esteem with research. Research achievements are accounted for, and often mandatory for career progression, while in teaching, time spent on innovating pedagogy is not equally valued. Reward, recognition and professional

development opportunities should be available for teachers throughout their career, i.e., beyond their first years into the profession.

- At policy level, opportunities for all stakeholders involved in learning and teaching to exchange ideas could be increased. Many different stakeholders may be consulted for policy making purposes, however, there can still be **little dialogue and mutual understanding across different actors in the sector** (policymakers, institutional leadership, doctoral schools that train future academics, deans, and other similar entities). Different stakeholders look into learning and teaching from different perspectives and through their own lenses; they are also responsible for different (and complementary) types of actions. Building up consensus and a shared commitment on learning and teaching policies implies that stakeholders can exchange ideas to understand each others' views. Without such consensus-building, what would appear as a progress from one stakeholder group might appear differently to others.

This report concludes with questions for further investigation, which national policy makers and stakeholders in learning and teaching may wish to examine:

- What would be the right, fit-for-purpose complementarity between national structures and stakeholders active in learning and teaching?
- How to create a shared understanding of what is needed to enhance learning and teaching, for different stakeholders in the system, and for a critical mass of individual teachers?
- How to ensure the sustainability of good practices initiated through fix-term projects, and ensure that new practices (or attitudes) would be mainstreamed?
- In a general context of increased needs for expertise in teaching/pedagogy, how to support and grow a culture of evidence-based, research-based policy making for learning and teaching?

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Annex 1: List of countries and experts interviewed

Listed by alphabetic order of the country name

In the framework of this report, interviews took place in a total of 30 countries – all of which are part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

24 out of 27 EU countries are part of the study.

Positions are listed as they were at the time of the interview (Spring-Summer 2021).

Austria (AT)

Alexander Kohler, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research

Belgium (BE)

For Flanders (BE FL):

Ann De Schepper, Vice-Rector for Education, University of Antwerp

For the Federation Wallonia-Brussels (French-speaking Community – BE FR):

Kevin Guillaume, Director for International Affairs, Academy for Research and Higher Education (ARES)
Jacques Neiryck, Director for Academic Affairs, ARES

Mikael De Clercq, Researcher at the Department for Academic Affairs, ARES

Bulgaria (BG)

Ivana Radonova, State Expert, Ministry of Education and Science

Croatia (HR)

Marta Žuvić, Vice-Rector for Students, Studies and Quality Assurance, University of Rijeka

Cyprus (CY)

Charalambos Vrasidas, Executive Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (CARDET), University of Nicosia

Czech Republic (CZ)

Radka Wildová, Vice-Rector for Conception and Quality of Education, Charles University

Denmark (DK)

Jakob Ravn, Head of Teaching and Learning, Copenhagen Business School

Estonia (EE)

Mari Karm, Senior Specialist for Academic Development, Centre for Professional Development, University of Tartu

Finland (FI)

Petri Suomala, Vice President for Education, Aalto University

France (FR)

Philippe Lalle, Advisor for Pedagogy, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation

Georgia (GE)

Irine Darchia, Higher Education Reform Expert, Tbilisi State University

Germany (DE)

Christian Tauch, Deputy Secretary General, German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

Greece (EL)

Zoe Gavriilidou, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and Student Welfare, Democritus University of Thrace

Hungary (HU)

Istvan Vilmos Kovacs, Vice-Rector for International Academic Affairs, Budapest Metropolitan University

Ireland (IE)

Terry Maguire, Director, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

Iceland (IS)

Róbert H. Haraldsson, Head of Academic Affairs, University of Iceland

Italy (IT)

Giovanni Betta, Rector, University of Cassino and Southern Lazio

Kazakhstan (KZ)

Aida Sagintayeva, Dean of the Graduate School for Education, Nazarbayev University

Latvia (LV)

Nora Jansone-Ratinika, Director of the Centre for Educational Growth (CEG), Rīga Stradiņš University

Lithuania (LT)

Daina Lukošienė, Advisor, Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Education and Science

Netherlands (NL)

Christiaan van den Berg, Senior Policy Advisor for Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

Norway (NO)

Bjørn Stensaker, Director of the Centre for Learning and Education (LINK), University of Oslo

Poland (PL)

Andrzej Krasniewski, Advisor, Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (KRASP)

Portugal (PT)

Manuel João Costa, Pro-Rector for Pedagogical Innovation and Student Affairs, University of Minho

Romania (RO)

Romita Iucu, Head of the Board of Trustees, University of Bucharest

Slovenia (SI)

Tomaž Deželan, Advisor to the Rector, University of Ljubljana

Spain (ES)

Manel Jimenez Morales, Vice-Rector for Education Transformation, Culture, and Communication, Pompeu Fabra University

María Ángeles Serrano, Director for the teaching and learning and institutional assessment division, National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA), and Professor, University of Salamanca

Sweden (SE)

Klara Bolander Laksov, Director of the Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching, Executive member of SUHF Expert group on Teaching and Learning, and Professor of Higher Education, Stockholm University

Switzerland (CH)

Emmanuel Sylvestre, Head of the Centre for Learning and Teaching, University of Lausanne

United Kingdom (UK)

For England (UK EN)

Wyn Morgan, Immediate past Vice-President for Education, Sheffield University

For Scotland (UK SC)

Clare Peddie, Vice Principal for Education, University St. Andrews

Debra MacFarlane, Quality Enhancement Management, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Scotland

Annex 2: Interview questions

The interviews took place based on the following topics for discussion, which were communicated in advance to all interviewees:

1. What major developments have taken place in the area of learning and teaching in your country during the last 3-4 years?
2. Does your country have a national structure (body, network, association - outside of the ministry) in charge for supporting learning and teaching?
[If there is one, or several]
 - a. Name/website
 - b. By whom was it set up and what are its main objectives?
 - c. How is it funded?
 - d. What does it do?
 - How does it support institutions and/or individuals? How? (enabling exchange & cooperation, developing sector-wide instruments/initiatives – incl. on OER, funding support for grants and projects, etc).
 - Does it support teaching enhancement⁹⁶?
3. [For national experts already interviewed in 2017-2018] Has there been a change in relation to the country-level regulation on teaching enhancement?

[For national experts interviewed for the first time] Is there any country-level regulation on teaching enhancement (training and professional development for teachers in higher education)? Is there any obligation for teachers to undergo teaching enhancement? If so, could you briefly explain how it works and what these obligations are? (e.g. for entry-level teaching staff, as continuous professional development, or both)
 - a. For professors, is it required to have teaching experience and achievement, and participation in professional development?
 - b. Are there any rules or requirements for other staff taking up teaching responsibilities? (e.g. PhD holders, post-docs, experts teaching etc.)
 - c. Is there specific career track for teaching support staff?
4. In your country, who typically organises teaching enhancement courses/support and continuous professional development (CPD) measures?
 - Individual HEI
 - National, regional level government organisations,
 - University networks,
 - Network of teachers,
 - For-profit organisations?
 - Other?

⁹⁶ In the context of this interview, we propose “teaching enhancement” for any kind of formal pedagogical staff development or training provided to teachers, in different ways and formats, such as e.g., initial teacher training and continuous professional development (CPD). The term should not be confounded with “enhancement of learning and teaching”, which can signify a wider array of measures to encourage, incentivise, support and improve learning and teaching, which could be teaching enhancement, but also other means such as working groups, consultation, teaching prizes etc.

5. How is the interinstitutional collaboration in learning and teaching organised, financed and supported in your country? What would you see as the added value of such collaboration?
6. Is European or international collaboration in learning and teaching valued in your system? Does your country propose incentives (funding available, opportunities to network, ...) to stimulate this?
7. In your country, what stakeholders are involved in the development of HE learning and teaching policy (e.g. ministries, national agencies, associations and networks of HEI, student organisations etc.)? How could this collaboration improve?
8. Is leadership in teaching⁹⁷ a topic of discussion at institutional/national level in your country?
 - a. Are there any dedicated initiatives on this issue?
 - b. Are there training offers provided?
9. In your country, did the Covid-19 crisis have an impact on medium to long-term national-level plans for learning and teaching? What are the main issues that have been or will be addressed? For instance:
 - Rules for online/blended learning
 - Assessment / examinations
 - Curriculum development
 - Quality assurance
 - Funding for digital learning: infrastructure, training?
 - Other? (Please develop)
10. What was the state of open education⁹⁸ before Covid-19, and how is it changing due to the crisis?
 - a. Do institutions have central repositories for sharing teaching material and resources? Do you have a national repository? Is it widely used?
11. In conclusion: what would you see as drivers/enablers and obstacles for improving learning and teaching in your country?

⁹⁷ In the LOTUS context, “leadership in teaching” should be understood as both the agency to develop strong strategic oversight, coordination and implementation for learning and teaching, and the institutional collective capacity to address organisational development towards enhancement.

⁹⁸ Open Education is seen as a way of carrying out education, often using digital technologies. Its aim is to widen access and participation to everyone by removing barriers and making learning accessible, abundant, and customisable for all. It offers multiple ways of teaching and learning, building and sharing knowledge. It also provides a variety of access routes to formal and non-formal education and connects the two. (source: Opening Up Education. A Support Framework for Higher Education Institutions (2016), report from the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, available at <http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC101436/jrc101436.pdf>, and <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/open-education>)

Annex 3: Summary table of findings

Higher education system	A national structure specifically dedicated for supporting learning and teaching	Other national structures playing a role in supporting learning and teaching	National regulation on teaching enhancement	National incentives to stimulate European/ international collaboration	Enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Austria	No	Yes: Universities Austria (UNIKO) ⁹⁹ The Austrian Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (FHK) ¹⁰⁰ The Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OEAD) ¹⁰¹	No	Yes (EUI) ¹⁰²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance oriented, per capita funding • More attention given to quality and student progress (e.g., in performance agreements) • A culture of student participation and feedback • National and HEI's teaching awards • Innovation boost caused by Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High prestige and more visibility for research performance than for learning and teaching • Stronger need for student support services
Belgium (FL)	No	Yes: The Flemish Inter-University Council (VLIR) ¹⁰³ The Flemish Council for University Colleges (VLHORA) ¹⁰⁴ The Flemish Council for Universities and University Colleges (VLUHR) ¹⁰⁵ The Flemish Education Council (VLOR) ¹⁰⁶	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New QA framework focused on the quality of study programmes and enhancement of quality culture • Changes accelerated by Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underfunding: funding for higher education does not follow the growth in student population

99 <https://uniko.ac.at/index.php?lang=EN>

100 <https://www.fhk.ac.at/?lang=en>

101 <https://oead.at/en/the-oead>

102 The European Commission's European Universities Initiative (https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area/european-universities-initiative_en).

103 www.vlir.be

104 www.vlhora.be

105 <https://vluhr.be/>

106 <https://www.vlor.be/vlor-in-english>

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Belgium (FR)	No	Yes	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding/support from universities to recognise teaching and innovation in pedagogy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of recognition for teaching in academic careers. Disparity of importance between research and teaching, especially for early career teachers Lack of measures to facilitate careers for teachers across different types of HEIs, whilst many are teaching in both universities and university colleges
Bulgaria	No	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two new national programmes adopted to focus on the development of pedagogical competences of teachers and their digital skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of personal motivation among the university staff/academics
Croatia	No	Yes, the QA agency (ASHE) ¹⁰⁷	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International collaboration Funding to HEIs through the EU recovery plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and teaching not seen as a strategic goal No political commitment towards learning and teaching
Cyprus	No	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research performance rewarded more than teaching Resistance to change in teaching among academics
Czech Republic	No	Yes: The Czech Rectors' Conference (CRC) ¹⁰⁸ The Czech National Higher Education Policy Council (RVŠ) ¹⁰⁹	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systemic support from and cooperation with the Ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The support for quality in research and development is significantly stronger than the support for the quality of education.
Denmark	No	Yes, the QA agency (AKKR) ¹¹⁰	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new career framework and the new regulation which increases the value of teaching for career advancement Changes accelerated by Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue caused by Covid-19 Cuts in funding for higher education

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.azvo.hr/en/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.crc.muni.cz/en>

¹⁰⁹ www.radavs.cz

¹¹⁰ <https://akkr.dk/>

Higher education system	A national structure specifically dedicated for supporting learning and teaching	Other national structures playing a role in supporting learning and teaching	National regulation on teaching enhancement	National incentives to stimulate European/ international collaboration	Enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Estonia	No	No	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universities are not dependent on national support and have their own structures for enhancing learning and teaching Requirements for enhancement of teaching Awards and grants for enhancement of teaching Collaboration between the academic developers and the academic staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, funding for higher education falling behind compared to research and to other levels of education Increasing expectations for research and more emphasis on the third mission of universities
Finland	No	Yes, Universities Finland (UNIFI) ¹¹¹	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of collaboration at different levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for more resources for higher education, to maintain quality while student numbers are increasing Possible fragmentation and lack of collaboration on digital learning platforms
France	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (EUI)	None identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student population grows faster than teaching staff does: work overload for teachers and lack of time for pedagogy Teaching and research missions compete for academics' time: research also demands more and more time investment Imparity of esteem between teaching and research Lack of support to teaching at universities
Georgia	No	No	Yes	No	None identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of incentives for teaching enhancement Aging academic staff Inconsistent implementation of regulations aiming to enhance learning and teaching
Germany	Yes	-	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in blended and digital learning accelerated by Covid-19 Learning and teaching has been part of political discussions before Covid-19, with several initiatives conducted before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underfunding for higher education

¹¹¹ <https://www.unifi.fi/en/about-us/>

Higher education system	A national structure specifically dedicated for supporting learning and teaching	Other national structures playing a role in supporting learning and teaching	National regulation on teaching enhancement	National incentives to stimulate European/ international collaboration	Enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Greece	No	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of learning and teaching centres in several universities and start of a good collaboration dynamics between some HEIs • HEIs are free to provide initiatives themselves as there are no precise national regulations for learning and teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and unprecise laws, resulting in little support from the national level. • More expertise in pedagogy and capacity building for new learning and teaching centres is needed: better use/integration of education sciences for evidence-based policy making • Structural measures (such as performance-based funding) to create opportunities for creating a broader acceptance towards innovating in learning and teaching
Hungary	No	No	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest among the decision-makers for improvements • Communities of practice gathering dedicated teachers and education developers • EU co-financed projects and programmes • Learning and teaching adapted to the Covid-19 situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity/time among the university teachers • Lack of agreement on the importance of learning and teaching among different actors
Iceland	No	Yes, the Icelandic Rectors' Conference ¹¹²	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, regular cooperation with the government • Changes accelerated by Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance to changing traditions and ways people are used to work with on learning and teaching
Ireland	Yes	-	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The collaborative community developed throughout years • The National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning as a national support structure • The current funding and the right policy for learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative policy measures which sometimes can be introduced by the government
Italy	No	Yes, the national rectors' conference (CRUI) ¹¹³	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience sharing among the universities 	None identified
Kazakhstan	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	None identified	None identified

¹¹² https://english.hi.is/university/icelandic_rectors_conference

¹¹³ <https://www.crui.it/crui-english.html>

Higher education system	A national structure specifically dedicated for supporting learning and teaching	Other national structures playing a role in supporting learning and teaching	National regulation on teaching enhancement	National incentives to stimulate European/ international collaboration	Enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Latvia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and engaged universities focused on enhancing the quality of learning and teaching • Active student organisations • Ministry support, under the form of project-based funding • Collaborations through the EUIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term underfunding of the system • Lack of a centralised system and stable funding for staff development in learning and teaching • Lack of a national-level organisation to work on learning and teaching • Lack of evidence-based decision making on learning and teaching policies • Lack of a strategic framework and trustworthy state legal framework
Lithuania	No	Yes	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborations through the European University Initiative • Changes accelerated by Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a clear framework for the enhancement of learning and teaching • Lack of clear and direct initiatives for networking and peer-learning • The research career receives far more visibility and financial support than the teaching career • Resistance from teachers to do regular development of their teaching capacities • Fatigue caused by Covid-19
The Netherlands	No	Yes	No	No	None identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High time-pressure on academic teaching staff focused on efficiency rather than space for relaxed reflection • Lack of funding and attention to learning and teaching • Absence of a national center/organisation working on learning and teaching • Need for more evidence-based and debated policies on learning and teaching
Norway	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory teaching enhancement introduced through a regulatory framework • Funds to support excellence schemes on the national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with implementing good practices found elsewhere in the higher education world • Too strong focus on only excellent teachers: a more inclusive approach is needed

Higher education system	A national structure specifically dedicated for supporting learning and teaching	Other national structures playing a role in supporting learning and teaching	National regulation on teaching enhancement	National incentives to stimulate European/ international collaboration	Enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Poland	No	Yes	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national and institutional teaching awards • Collaboration through the European University Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research performance rewarded more than teaching • Insufficient funding for learning and teaching
Portugal	No	Yes, the national rectors' conference (CRUP) ¹¹⁴	No	No	None identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research performance rewarded more than teaching • Insufficient funding for learning and teaching • Lack of collaboration opportunities with countries with more significant progress on learning and teaching
Romania	No	No	No	No	None identified	None identified
Slovenia	No	Yes	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing international collaborations • The current support from the Ministry for HEIs to engage in learning and teaching activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty to change mindsets and traditions among some of the higher education leadership
Spain	No	Yes	No	Yes (EUI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness from a new generation of teachers to change the traditional way of looking at learning and teaching • New student generations asking for new methodologies and ways of teaching and learning • The idea of innovating teaching becoming more mainstreamed and accepted, including through finding new meanings to face-to-face teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives for teaching excellence and innovative teaching methodologies not always well visible and well supported • Insufficient recognition, including financial, for teaching • Unbalanced university funding system, where the amount of tuition fees had to be reduced, with no additional public funding to universities
Sweden	No	Yes	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for collaborative projects, including for research on HE; incentives and stronger push for valuing education integrated with research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient interest and knowledge on learning and teaching among different stakeholders • Research performance rewarded more than teaching • The need to look for research funding most of the time

114 <https://www.crup.pt/>

Higher education system	A national structure specifically dedicated for supporting learning and teaching	Other national structures playing a role in supporting learning and teaching	National regulation on teaching enhancement	National incentives to stimulate European/ international collaboration	Enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Switzerland	No	Yes, the National Rectors' Conference (Swissuniversities) ¹¹⁵	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened focus on the student as well as on the role of the teacher due to Covid-19. Strong awareness towards the need of pedagogical support for both Pedagogical development and training received by many teachers during Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers exhausted from Covid-19 crisis, and need to dedicate to tasks other than teaching in the upcoming months A need to rethink teaching in a holistic way after the pandemic, in terms of education design and related pedagogical activities Concern over how universities are future-ready, e.g. to face competition from global online education offers after the pandemic
UK (England)	Yes	Yes, the QA agency (QAA) ¹¹⁶	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A framework such as the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) has the potential to incentivise enhancement of learning and teaching beyond the minimum baselines required by the regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of appreciation of what HE does for the country Uncertainty around funding and international students: both hinder further planning at HEIs The constant pressure on universities during the last two years
UK (Scotland)	Yes	Yes, the QA agency (QAA Scotland)	No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student voice involved in learning and teaching policy development The approach of enhancement-led institutional reviews and the enhancement themes Improved professional recognition of teaching in academic careers throughout the years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding, insufficiency of which can have implications for enhancement.

¹¹⁵ <https://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/home>



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More information:
<https://www.eua.eu/resources/projects/786-lotus.html>