



Developing Indicators for the Social Dimension

Social Dimension working group meeting 2

*European Education and Culture
Executive Agency*

6 October 2021

Eurydice project on SD indicator development

Background: need for long-term indicators:

- to track implementation of Principles and Guidelines in the EHEA
- To follow progress on social inclusion in the European Education Area

Eurydice feasibility study:

- Following the spirit and text of the principles and guidelines.
- Collecting national level data (so implementation at HEIs remains a challenge for monitoring)
- Seeking objective, reliable and comparable information

To be completed by February 2022

State of play

- Questionnaires were completed by national units over the summer
- Currently checking and clarifying information received
- When checking is completed, indicators will be developed and discussed

Some first observations/challenges

P & G 1 (Strategy)

Countries want to say “yes” (when the answer should be “no”)...

Difficult to assess “strategic commitment”, as all countries claim to have it..

Some countries make the claim on the basis of:

- student financial support measures;
- an approved policy document with some mention of (some) SD issues;
- a strategy that is currently being prepared (but does not yet exist);

Some observations/challenges

P & G 2 (Legislation allowing flexibility, and focus on RPL)

Most countries *allow* part-time, blended & distance learning. So this is positive...

Extent of provision will not be known (from this study)...

For RPL we see where it can be used for access and progression.

But we won't be able to see (in this study) how many citizens actually make use of it.

Some observations/challenges

P & G 3 (coherence between different levels of education)

Like P&G 1, countries want to answer yes

But actually very few countries seem to have coordination mechanisms in place. They state that the Ministry is responsible for coordination...

P & G 4 (data, monitoring)

One interesting finding is that countries that participate in Eurostudent have much more information on different student characteristics than those that do not...

Some observations/challenges

P & G 5 (guidance and counselling)

Many countries leave this to HEIs, but are not clear/precise (at least in the questionnaires) about who has legal responsibility for quality assurance of services

P & G 6 (funding)

Impact of social dimension on HEI funding appears to be minimal/non existent in most systems...

P & G 10 (implementation) With very few exceptions, countries have not taken action to implement the P&Gs...

Self reflection on questionnaire

We tried to cover all main aspects of the P&Gs, but...

Difficult to remove all areas of ambiguity when asking questions... (We now have a number of questions to clarify with our national units)

Level of detail difficult to get right (for some issues we may be too detailed, and for others not enough)

However, we think that we'll have a reasonably good information base to construct indicators (probably a mixture of "neutral, descriptive" indicators and scorecard type indicators...)