

BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024

Main conclusions from the last meeting and new updates

BFUG WG on social dimension meeting, Ghent, BE

Nino S. Schmidt, Co-Chair, CROATIA

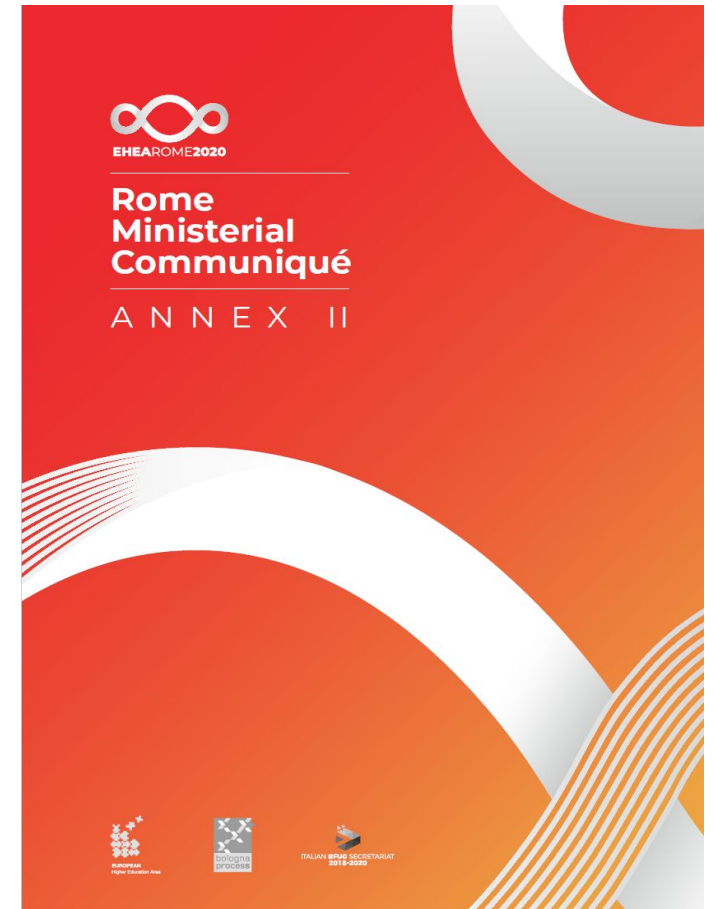
Horia Onita, Co-Chair, European Students' Union

24-25 October 2023

I. Background

BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024

Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA



- **Game changer** for strengthening social dimension in the EHEA.
- Evidence: an **increasing number of the EHEA countries** has started to **implement the principles** for social dimension into their national policies (Eurydice, 2022).

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice [EC]. (2022). Towards equity and inclusion in higher education in Europe. Eurydice report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.



Bologna Follow-up Group

Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024

Terms of Reference 2021-2024

Workplan 2021-2024

2021

- In 2020, the EHEA members expressed a **need for additional help** in ‘materializing’ the principles for social dimension in the particular policies



- Adoption of the **Terms of Reference** for the Working Group on Social Dimension in 2021.



- Main objective: Defining **indicators** for the Principles for social dimension.

II. Key achievements

BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024

Principles and Guidelines – already adopted in 2020

- Taken as a basis of our work > we did not change them! **The adopted Principles and Guidelines should not be changed.**
- **10 principles** for the social dimension for the upcoming decade:



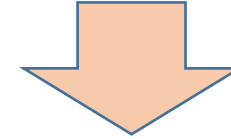
- **Principles** = should be understood as high-level statements that serve as a **basis for the conceptualization of different policies** for social dimension enhancement.
- **Guidelines** = recommendations intended to advise policy makers on how the principles should be implemented in practice.



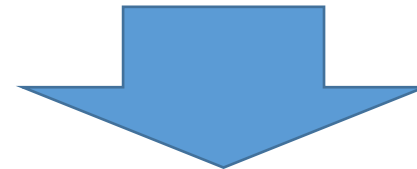
Key achievements - - NEW

Indicators and explanatory descriptors for Principles and Guidelines

- **Indicators** = instruments for measuring progress in the implementation of the principles for the social dimension.



- **(Explanatory) Descriptors** = each indicator has its explanatory descriptor, which describes the attributes, features, and characteristics of the indicators in more detail in order to help better understanding of the indicators and how they can be implemented.



- **not prescriptive!** > enable the EHEA countries to implement them in a way that suits their national higher education systems.
- for creating and strengthening **national systems of monitoring and evaluating** the progress in the implementation of the principles for the social dimension.

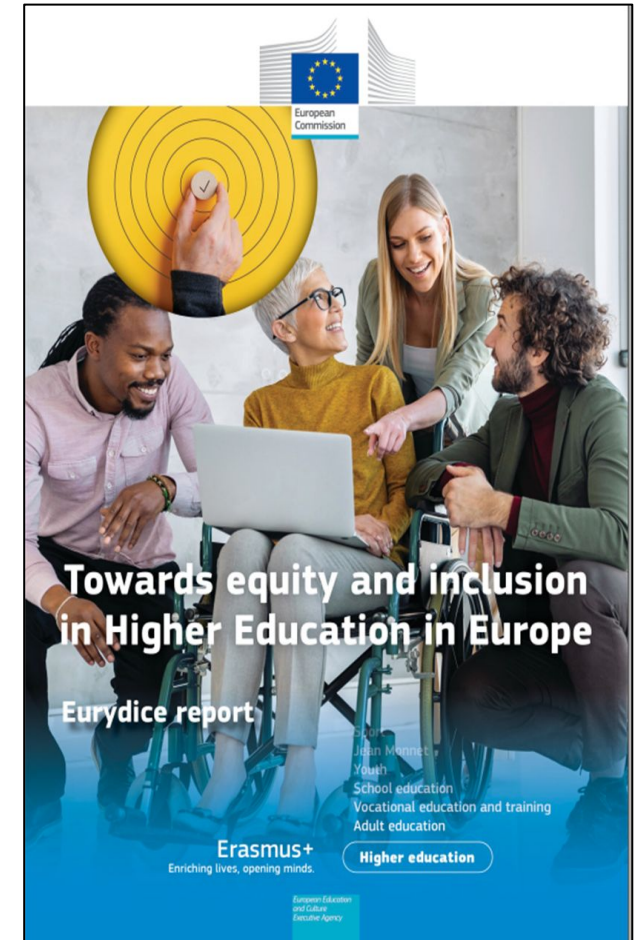
2020



Cooperation

- Cooperation with the European Commission/Eurydice > we agreed to **adopt most of the Eurydice's indicators** developed for the principles for the social dimension (Eurydice, 2022).
- The specific contribution of the BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension is that it expanded the scope of indicators and has also created additional **explanatory descriptors** for each indicator.

2022

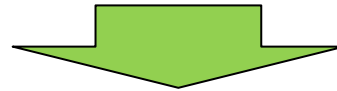


- **Evidence-based approach** to indicators

Comprehensive EHEA policy framework for the social dimension in higher education

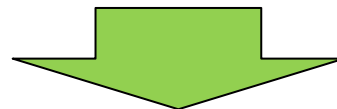
> new architecture for the social dimension in the EHEA:

10 principles for social dimension in higher education
+ **guidelines**



Indicators for each principle
+ **explanatory descriptors**

Subject of consultations



System of monitoring for the implementation of principles

European level

National level



Key achievements - **NEW**

Introduction

into the Principles, Guidelines
and Indicators

- Summary (**new**)
- **Definition** of the social dimension in higher education (Rome Communiqué)
- **Positive impact** of the social dimension on societies (Rome Communiqué)
- The comprehensive **EHEA framework** for the social dimension in higher education (**new**)
- **Policy alignment** with previous EHEA documents (Rome Communiqué)
- **Principles and guidelines** for the social dimension in higher education (Rome Communiqué)
- **Indicators and explanatory descriptors** for the social dimension in higher education (**new**)



- Proposal of the new and **extended title**: “Principles, Guidelines and Indicators to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area”

III.
Consultation with the BFUG members
2022 -2023

BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024



Consultation related to:

Proposal of indicators for Principles and Guidelines

- Indicators on social dimension presented at the **BFUG Meeting in Brno in November 2022** and at the **BFUG Board Meeting in March 2023** > BFUG members were asked to provide feedback.
- The WG on Social Dimension received **written comments by the ENQA on the link between social dimension and quality assurance:**
 - The director of the ENQA was at the WG meeting in Gent on 7 February 2023.
 - Consultation with the E4 members (ENQA, EQAR, EUA, ESU) at the WG meeting in Brussels on 24 April 2023.
 - **Successful outcome:** New solution implemented for the indicators that link the social dimension and quality assurance.



Consultation related to:

Proposal of indicators for Principles and Guidelines

- Consultation with the **Education International – ETUCE** (European Trade Union Committee for Education), Brussels, 24 April 2023.
 - Importance of including staff, in a similar way as students, in the final version of the document.
- **New improved version** of the “Principles, Guidelines and Indicators to Strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area” prepared for the BFUG meeting and presented in Stockholm 12-13 May 2023.
 - Additional comments received



Consultation related to:

Proposal of indicators for Principles and Guidelines

- **WG SD online meeting, 12 June 2023**
 - All of the comments analysed
 - Additional 3 written comments received by the EUA, ESU, Belgium-Wallonia
 - Improved text after the meeting + EI – Annette improved the English
 - It was decided to have an online consultative meeting with the whole BFUG on September 6, 2023

**IV.
Consultation with the BFUG members on
6 September 2023**

BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024



Consultation related to:

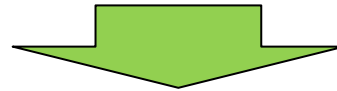
Proposal of indicators for Principles and Guidelines

1. **Indicators and explanatory descriptors + introduction:** revised after the BFUG Plenary Meeting in Stockholm (12-13 May 2023), according to the feedback received at the meeting and after the meeting (until 5 August 2023).
2. Approx. 20 participants at the online meeting
3. **Modality of the adoption** of the ‘Principles, guidelines and indicators’ document:
 - a. The same as in the 2020: annex to the 2024 Tirana Communiqué, or
 - b. As a separate, stand-alone document adopted by the ministers at the 2024 Tirana Ministerial Conference, with clear link to the Communiqué

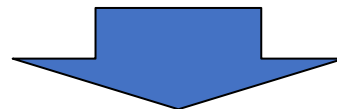
Comprehensive **EHEA policy framework for the social dimension** in higher education

> new architecture for the social dimension in the EHEA:

10 principles for social dimension in higher education
+ **guidelines**



Indicators for each principle
+ **explanatory descriptors**; + text of the **Introduction**



Modality of the adoption by the BFUG?

1. Subject of
the
consultation

2. Subject of
the
consultation

Written comments by the BFUG members

- In line with the meeting conclusions, the BFUG members were invited to send the written comments on the text of the indicators and descriptors, as well as on the introductory part, to the Co-Chairs of the BFUG Working Group on social dimension:
 - Send email to the BFUG Secretariat at secretariat@ehea.info
 - **Deadline 25 September 2023**



Consultation related to:

Proposal of indicators for Principles and Guidelines

Conclusions:

- General satisfaction with the content of the document
- Emphasized the need for improved clarity, deletion of repetitions, stressed the need for conciseness
 - Use only descriptors, not explanatory descriptors
 - Use the same style in formulating descriptors
- It was recommended adding a short description to clarify the document's aims.
- Co-chairs have improved the text following the recommendations from the BFUG members
 - sent to the WG SD members with Track changes prior to the Ghent meeting



Bologna Follow-up Group

Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024

Workplan 2021-2024

Prepared by Co-Chairs:
CROATIA – Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt
EUROPEAN STUDENTS' UNION – Martina Darmanin

January 2022

V. Workplan 2021-2024

BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension 2021-2024

BFUG WG on Social Dimension Workplan for 2023

- WG on Social Dimension-meetings in 2023 – 5 meetings per year:
 - ✓ 9th meeting in February 2023: 7-8 February 2023 (Belgium, Ghent).
The PLA-2 within the project PLAR-U-PAGs: 9-10 February 2023 in Ghent
 - ✓ 10th meeting in April 2023: 24-25 April 2023 (Belgium, Brussels).
 - ✓ 11th meeting in June 2023: 12 June 2022 (on-line).
The PLA-3 within the project PLAR-U-PAGs will take place online on 13-14 June 2023.
 - ✓ 12th meeting in October 2023: 24-25 October 2023 (Belgium, Ghent).
 - ✓ 13th meeting in December 2023: 7-8 December 2023 (Belgium, Ghent).
- We do not have dates for the 2024 meetings!**
- Web site for the WG on SD at the www.ehea.info + cloud-folder (Google Drive):
 - Key documents related to the work of the WG on Social Dimension and its subgroups
 - Documents related to the WG-meetings

BFUG WG on Social Dimension Workplan for 2023

- ✓ **Erasmus+ project that supports fulfillment of the objectives of the WG on Social Dimension > project started on June 1, 2022:**
 - the project „**Peer Learning Activities and Resources to Underpin the Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension**”
 - Project coordinator: Flemish Community, Department of Education and Training, Belgium-Flanders
 - Partners: SIHO-Support Centre Inclusive Higher Education (Belgium), Ministry of Education and Science (Croatia), Institute for the Development of Education (Croatia), European Students’ Union
 - **1st PLA meeting on social dimension: 16-17 November 2022, Zagreb-Croatia**, hosted by the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education
 - **2nd PLA meeting on social dimension: 9-10 February 2023, Brussels-Belgium**, hosted by SIHO
 - **3rd PLA meeting on social dimension: 6-7 December 2023, Ghent-Belgium**

>>> follow us at www.inclusivehighereducation.eu

Thank you very much for your attention!

- Co-Chair – CROATIA:

Ninoslav S. Schmidt

Institute for the Development of Education
in Zagreb

nscukanec@iro.hr

- Co-Chair – ESU:

Horia Onita

European Students' Union

horia.onita@esu-online.org