

Frameworks for international cooperation: trends and challenges

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800+
MEMBERS

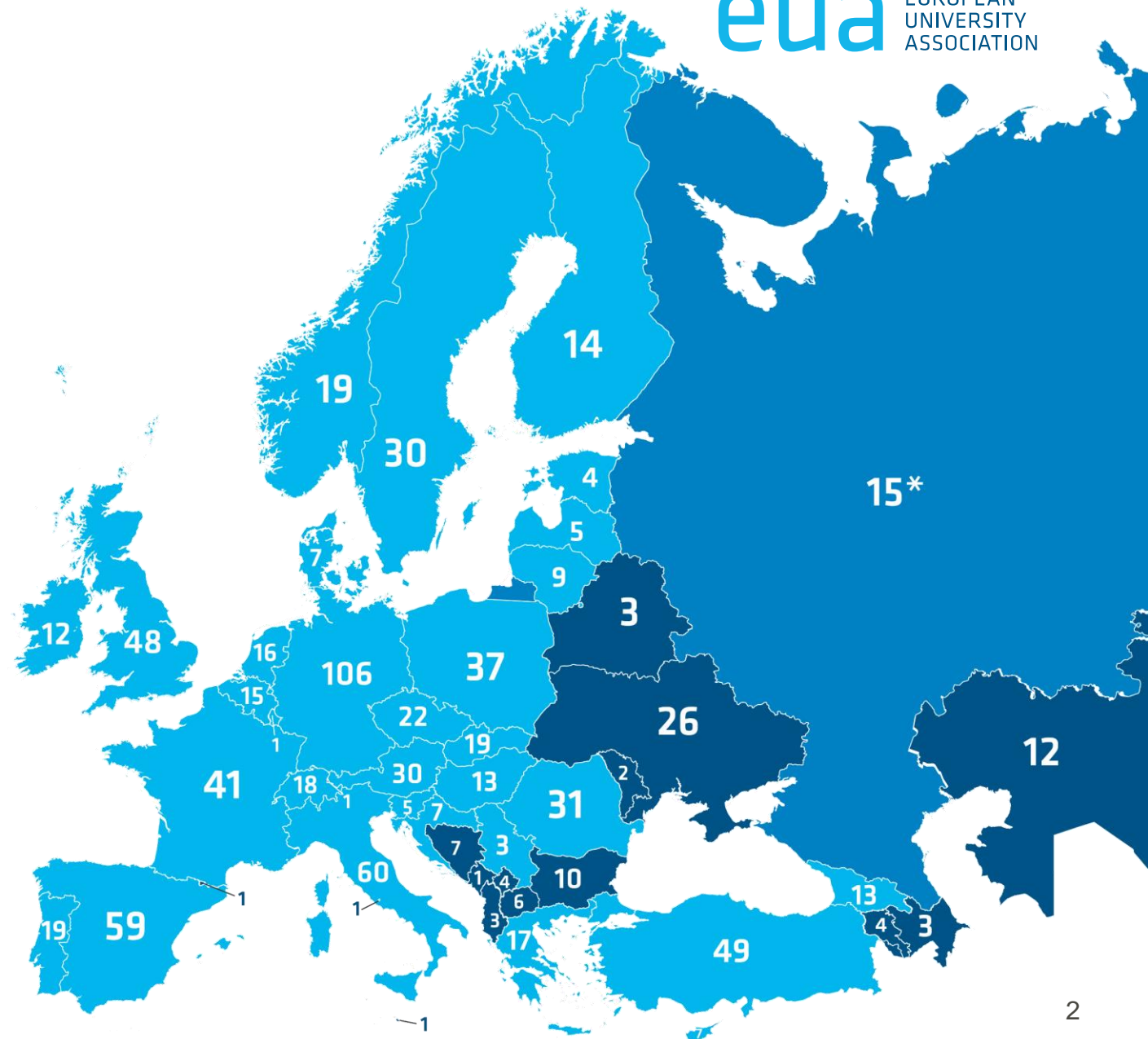


19
MILLION
STUDENTS




33
NATIONAL RECTORS'
CONFERENCES

eua EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY
ASSOCIATION



 Countries with EUA
collective members

 Countries with no EUA
collective members

EUA has over 850 members
in 49 countries

Evolving transnational cooperation

If **universities are to take a leap** in their transnational cooperation, **policy makers need to take a qualitative leap in reform implementation** to create enabling framework conditions.



Source: cover picture of "The big leap", Gay Hendricks

Universities seen from the European policy sphere

- Stronger focus on universities at European level with the launch of the concept of European universities in 2017-2018, then post-pandemic as contributors to Europe's resilience and recovery (2020 recovery package)
 - European Strategy for Universities: Universities as 'lighthouses of the European way of life'
 - Universities as crucial contributors to societal progress, digital and green transitions, resilience (role in Covid-19 pandemic crisis) and economic recovery
 - Actors of science diplomacy

At national level

- EUA's Autonomy Scorecard 2023: an overview of the regulatory frameworks in Europe
- Various governance reforms since 2017 (previous Autonomy Scorecard)
- The main narrative for governance reform promotes efficiency in decision-making and a stronger connection to societal and economic interests.
- Landscape consolidation:
 - Mergers vs differentiation
 - Alignment of regulatory frameworks across sub-systems



Overall developments

- Issues
 - Underfunding (general trend of underfunding and new investment needs)
 - Increasing ad hoc state interventions
 - Evolving geopolitical tensions (knowledge security, war in Ukraine)
 - Ripple effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine, energy crisis

Overall developments

- Accountability
 - Growing complexity, monitoring and control
- Leadership
 - Increased autonomy requires skilled leadership (lack of Leadership Development Programmes and funding for it)

newlead

INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE
MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Leading through disruptive
transformations in higher education**

Key takeaways from the NEWLEAD focus groups on
leadership development and institutional transformation
in higher education

By Luisa Bunescu and Thomas Estermann
October 2022

Overall developments

In this context... Turbulent times for deepened transnational cooperation, but strong push via the European Universities Initiative

- Which impact of national regulatory frameworks on transnational cooperation? And vice-versa?
- Challenges everywhere:
 - At system and institutional levels
 - Because of restrictions, differences, divergence between policy & practice

Autonomy supports transnational cooperation

- **Governance & organisational matters**

- Notably capacity to found legal entities, engage in contracts with foreign entities
- External members in university governance from abroad?

- **Finances**

- Internal financial allocation & capacity to make strategic investments
- Possibility to borrow, pool resources, etc
- Varying capacity for universities to decide on tuition fees

- **Staff**

- Autonomy of recruitment and salary setting - Joint staff hirings?
- Career reward structures (value of mobility for staff)

- **Academic matters**

- Institutional quality assurance: slow pace of transition!
- Joint programmes, degree structures, academic calendars, grading
- Capacity to decide on language of instruction
- Evaluations by foreign QA providers

Tensions around internationalisation

- New limits because of financial pressures
- ‘Foreign interference’: pressure on international research collaboration
- Growing interest from governments for the contents and organisation of both the academic offer and research

Key messages

1. Autonomy goes hand in hand with sound accountability frameworks. The notion of accountability is evolving and becoming increasingly complex, and as such, so is the interplay with institutional autonomy.
2. To reap the benefits of greater autonomy, universities must be supported to develop the right sets of skills, whether strategic, transversal or technical, to best exploit autonomy. Autonomous universities require strong leadership.
3. An institutional vision is necessary & it must be developed and shared with all governance stakeholders.
4. Transnational collaboration: implement what is there, before reinventing the wheel: e.g. European Approach to QA of Joint Programmes and other Bologna instruments!

University autonomy in Western Balkans



Strengthening university autonomy and
increasing accountability and transparency
of Western Balkans Universities.

- ✓ **Development of state of play analysis and action plans on university autonomy based on the Scorecard methodology for Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro**
- ✓ **Awareness-raising and dialogue-structuring national workshops**
- ✓ **Peer learning and exchange of good practice**
- ✓ **Capacity building**
- ✓ **9-10 March 2023 Workshop Autonomy & institutional empowerment**

THANK YOU

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