University autonomy in Europe: The EUA Scorecard

Enora Bennetot Pruvot
Deputy Director for Governance, Funding and Public Policy Development

CEENQA Workshop
23/09/2022
EUA has about 850 members based in 48 countries

Universities & national university associations
EUA comparative data and analytical tools to understand the diversity of higher education systems

EUA university autonomy scorecard
www.university-autonomy.eu

Public Funding Observatory
Why pursue university autonomy?

Institutional autonomy:

- enables universities to determine and pursue strategic priorities according to their strengths;
- does not automatically lead to better performance but is an important requisite...
Objective

To meaningfully enhance the institutions’ ability to build strategic profiles through the development of their academic offer, supported by proper financial management capacity, adequate HR strategies and a reflection on the governance model.
The EUA University Autonomy Scorecard

A unique tool covering 30+ higher education systems across Europe

• Development supported by the EU
• Monitoring university autonomy in 4 dimensions
• Scoring and ranking systems for public universities
• Country specific comparisons and benchmarking
• Structured policy dialogue, High level events
• Long-term projects (i.e. ATHENA, TRUNAK, STAND)

Informing policies at European level

Providing institutional support
### Autonomy dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rector selection procedure/criteria</td>
<td>• Length/type of public funding</td>
<td>• Recruitment procedures</td>
<td>• Setting total student numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rector term of office/dismissal</td>
<td>• Keeping a surplus</td>
<td>• Salaries</td>
<td>• Selecting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inclusion/selection of external members for the governing bodies</td>
<td>• Borrowing</td>
<td>• Dismissals</td>
<td>• Introducing/terminating study programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Academic structure decisions</td>
<td>• Building ownership</td>
<td>• Promotions</td>
<td>• Choosing language of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creation of legal entities</td>
<td>• Tuition fees for national/EU students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Selecting QA mechanisms/QA providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tuition fees for non-EU students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Study programme content design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key enablers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic governance</td>
<td>• Facility use &amp; space optimisation</td>
<td>• Career path models adapted to new ways of conducting research and L&amp;T</td>
<td>• Technology enhanced learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic planning</td>
<td>• Strategic financial management &amp; allocation to priorities</td>
<td>• Incentives</td>
<td>• Design &amp; introduction of programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership engagement</td>
<td>• Procurement</td>
<td>• Skills development, staff training (diversity)</td>
<td>• Admission policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shared services</td>
<td>• Internal incentive schemes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organisational autonomy
Executive head appointment:

Public authorities intervene with different degrees of formality in 40% of the systems

- No external validation (internal appointment): AT, BE-FL, BE-FR, HE (DE), DK, EE, FI, FR, HR, IE, LT, NO, PL, PT, RS, SI, UK
- Formal validation by an external authority: CH, BB (DE), NRW (DE), ES, HU, IS, IT, LU, LV, NL, SE, SK

2017 data
Selection of external members in governing bodies:

Variety of models

- ** Universities can appoint external members:
  - DK, EE, FI, IT, LT, PT, UK
- ** Universities cannot appoint external members themselves but make proposals:
  - NO, SE, SK
- ** Universities can appoint part of the external members:
  - AT, BE-FR, HE (DE), FR, HR, IS, SI
- ** Universities do not control the external members appointment process:
  - CH, ES, HU, LU, NL, RS
- ** Other appointment process:
  - BE-FL, NRW (DE), IE
- ** Universities cannot include external members:
  - BB (DE), LV, PL

2017 data
Governance trends

- Evolution towards granting board-type bodies more power – more recently, certain degree of rebalancing
- Alterations in number and composition of certain governing bodies (role of external members)
- Multiple governance reforms driven by need to increase efficiency, save resources and minimise the administrative burden
- Reforms on legal status, co-existence of different models within system
- No single linear progress curve towards enhanced autonomy
Organisational Autonomy Scores

Clusters

- High (81% to 100% scores)
- Medium high (61% to 80% scores)
- Medium low (41% to 60% scores)
- Low (0 to 40% scores)
## Financial autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Selection procedure/ criteria for rector</td>
<td>• Length/ type of public funding</td>
<td>• Staff recruitment procedures</td>
<td>• Deciding on overall student numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dismissal/ term of office of rector</td>
<td>• Keeping a surplus</td>
<td>• Staff salaries</td>
<td>• Selecting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inclusion/ selection of external members in governing bodies</td>
<td>• Borrowing money</td>
<td>• Staff dismissals</td>
<td>• Introducing/ terminating programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deciding on academic structures</td>
<td>• Owning buildings</td>
<td>• Staff promotions</td>
<td>• Choosing language of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating legal entities</td>
<td>• Charging tuition fees for national/ EU students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Selecting QA mechanisms/ providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Charging tuition fees for non-EU students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Designing content of programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internal funding allocation:
Nearly half of the systems are still imposing restrictions, limiting the scope for strategic resource allocation.

- **No restrictions in allocating funding**
  - BE-FL, CH, BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE), DK, EE, ES, FI, IS, IT, LU, LV, NL, NO, UK

- **Limited/no possibility to shift funds across broad categories**
  - BE-FR, FR, HR, HU, LT, PT, SE, SI, SK

- **Line-item budget RS**
  - AT, IE, PL

- **Block grant with other restrictions**
  - AT, IE, PL
Tuition fees for national Bachelor students
Strongly regulated area but different models

- Universities can set fees freely
- Universities cooperate with external authorities
- Universities can set fees under an externally-set ceiling
- Fees are set externally
- Universities may not charge fees
Tuition fees for international students (Bachelor and Master)

More diversity
Evolving picture & policy experimentation

- Universities can set fees freely
- Universities cooperate with external authorities
- Universities can set fees under an externally-set ceiling
- Fees are set externally
- Universities may not charge fees
• Financial autonomy – trends

▪ More systems resort to multi-annual financial planning, although maintain annual allocation of funds

▪ Worrying trends linked to allocation of scarce resources:
  ▪ increased earmarking of public funds
  ▪ budget cuts reducing the universities’ scope for strategic financial management
  ▪ increased state involvement in financial decisions

▪ Persistence of measures taken in the context of the economic crisis – more constrained regulatory frameworks
Financial autonomy scores

Clusters

- High (81% to 100% scores)
- Medium high (61% to 80% scores)
- Medium low (41% to 60% scores)
- Low (0 to 40% scores)
Staffing autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Selection procedure/ criteria for rector</td>
<td>• Length/ type of public funding</td>
<td>• Staff recruitment procedures</td>
<td>• Deciding on overall student numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dismissal/ term of office of rector</td>
<td>• Keeping a surplus</td>
<td>• Staff salaries</td>
<td>• Selecting students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inclusion/ selection of external members in governing bodies</td>
<td>• Borrowing money</td>
<td>• Staff dismissals</td>
<td>• Introducing/ terminating programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deciding on academic structures</td>
<td>• Owning buildings</td>
<td>• Staff promotions</td>
<td>• Choosing language of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating legal entities</td>
<td>• Charging tuition fees for national/ EU students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Selecting QA mechanisms/ providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Charging tuition fees for non-EU students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Designing content of programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff recruitment: Recruitment of senior academic staff remains heavily regulated

**Senior academic staff**
- Universities can decide freely on recruitment
  - BE-FL, CH, DK, EE, FI, IS, LU, NL, NO, RS, SK, UK
- Universities cannot decide freely on recruitment (restrictions apply)
  - AT, BE-FR, BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE), ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, SE, SI

**Senior administrative staff**
- Universities can decide freely on recruitment
  - AT, BE-FL, BE-FR, CH, BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE), EE, FI, IS, LT, LU, LV, NL, NO, PL, SE, SK, UK
- Universities cannot decide freely on recruitment (restrictions apply)
  - DK, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, PT, RS, SI
Staff salaries:
Universities are rarely able to decide autonomously on salaries, especially for academic staff.

**Senior academic staff**
- Universities can decide on salaries: CH, EE, LU, LV, PL, SE
- Decisions on individual salaries are restricted due to an overall limit for all staff salaries: BE-F, BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE)
- Salary bands negotiated with other parties: DK, FI, IS, NL, NO, UK
- Salary bands set externally for some or all: BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE), FR, HU, IE, LT, RS
- Salaries set by an external authority / civil servant status for some or all: AT, BE-FR, ES, HR, IT, PT, SI, SK
- Other restrictions: BE-F, HU, IE, NO, PL

**Senior administrative staff**
- Universities can decide on salaries: CH, EE, LT, LU, PL, SE, UK
- Decisions on individual salaries are restricted due to an overall limit for all staff salaries: BE-FL
- Salary bands negotiated with other parties: BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE), FI, IS, NL, NO
- Salary bands set externally for some or all: DK, FR, HU, IE, RS
- Salaries set by an external authority / civil servant status for some or all: AT, BE-FR, ES, HR, IT, PT, SI, SK
- Other restrictions: BE-F, HU, IE, LV, PL
• Staffing autonomy - trends

• Half of the systems have **civil servant status** for a majority of senior university staff, but tendency of phasing out in several countries

• Employment modalities of senior academic staff tend to be more regulated than those of senior administrative staff

• The economic crisis has had a long-lasting effect on staffing policies
Staffing Autonomy Scores

Clusters:
- High (81% to 100% scores)
- Medium high (61% to 80% scores)
- Medium low (41% to 60% scores)
- Low (0 to 40% scores)
Academic autonomy

Organisational
- Selection procedure/criteria for rector
- Dismissal/term of office of rector
- Inclusion/selection of external members in governing bodies
- Deciding on academic structures
- Creating legal entities

Financial
- Length/type of public funding
- Keeping a surplus
- Borrowing money
- Owning buildings
- Charging tuition fees for national/EU students
- Charging tuition fees for non-EU students

Staffing
- Staff recruitment procedures
- Staff salaries
- Staff dismissals
- Staff promotions

Academic
- Deciding on overall student numbers
- Selecting students
- Introducing/terminating programmes
- Choosing language of instruction
- Selecting QA mechanisms/providers
- Designing content of programmes
Admission criteria at Bachelor level
Universities are exclusively responsible for admission in less than 1/3 of the systems
Admission criteria at Master level
Greater autonomy for universities in student selection

- Universities can set admission criteria
- Admission criteria are co-regulated between universities and an external authority
- Admission criteria are entirely regulated by an external authority
Introduction of new degree programmes:
Several systems are engaged in a transition towards institutional accreditation

- Universities can open degree programmes without accreditation
  AT, CH, IE, LU, NO, PL, SE, UK
- All new degree programmes/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be introduced
  BE-FL, BE-FR, HU, IT, LT, PT, RS, SI, SK
- Other restrictions
  EE, BB (DE), HE (DE), NRW (DE), DK, FI, IS, LV
External quality assurance:

- 2/3 rely on national agency for main accreditation process
- No choice on external QA mechanisms in general
- 2/3 have some form of institutional evaluation, but often in combination with programme/study field evaluation

Can universities select the quality assurance agency?

- Yes, freely according to their needs (including agencies from other countries)
- Universities cannot choose the quality assurance agency

Preview 2022 data (36 systems)
• Academic autonomy - Trends

- Different models to determine overall student numbers; pressures on free admission
- Accreditation systems are in transition in a series of countries
- Greater number of positive developments in comparison to the other autonomy dimensions
- Universities in Europe still have little freedom in choosing QA mechanisms or providers
Academic Autonomy Scores

Clusters
- High (81% to 100% scores)
- Medium high (61% to 80% scores)
- Medium low (41% to 60% scores)
- Low (0 to 40% scores)
THANK YOU

Enora.pruvot@eua.eu
@EnoraPruvot