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# **ATHENA**

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# **TOOLKIT**

## **GOVERNANCE MODELS**



**EUA**

European University Association



**Tempus**

This project has been funded with  
the support of the European Union

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# Introduction

The focus of the ATHENA project, supported by the European Union's TEMPUS programme, is to contribute to the restructuring of university governance by promoting greater university autonomy and financial sustainability in Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine.

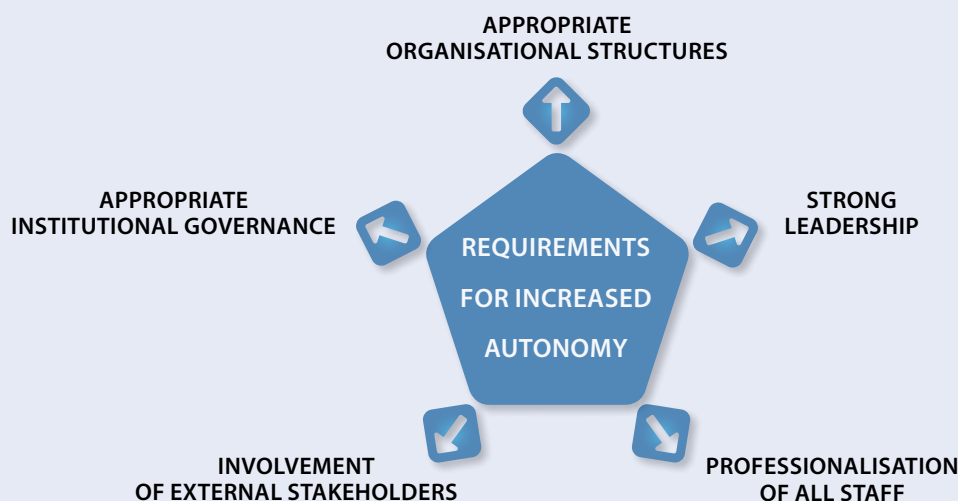
Increased autonomy and financial sustainability require robust strategic management by the university leadership. The ATHENA project therefore supports universities in the partner countries to modernise university governance structures through benchmarking and capacity-building activities.

The ATHENA project has identified the area of **leadership and governance structures** as a priority to address in the partner countries, particularly as in all three, the university sector shows clear signs of high levels of governance control. This is notably evident in the involvement of public authorities in both the selection of the executive leadership and in the governance structures, although ongoing governance reforms are now altering this picture. The recent changes in the legal framework in Moldova and Ukraine make it all the more important for stakeholders to agree on the responsibilities and reporting lines between the executive leadership and the governance structures. Implementation is an acute question in systems undergoing extensive reforms. The present toolkit seeks to offer support in the organisation of the transition phase in order to guarantee effective implementation and long-term impact.

This toolkit outlines basic elements which constitute modern executive leadership and university governance structures, allowing universities to capture the relevant skills and expertise and distribute tasks and responsibilities in a way that helps them to improve their structure, management and services.

## The toolkit provides:

- practical guidance in a user-friendly format
- good practice examples
- links to further material



# Introduction

## Trends in university governance

As far as university **leadership** is concerned in Europe, the executive head is always chosen by the institution itself. In half of the surveyed systems, the selection or election needs to be confirmed by an external authority. In most cases, though by no means all, this is a formality: in some systems, the external authority may carry considerable weight in the selection process. The length of the term is almost always specified in the law, which either indicates an exact or a maximum period.

The shift towards more corporate, **CEO-type rectors** in a number of Western European countries goes hand in hand with greater autonomy in management and the capacity of universities to design their own organisational structures. On the other hand, more traditional models still exist, in particular in Southern and Eastern Europe, in which the rector is a “primus inter pares” who is selected by and comes from the internal academic community.

In a majority of European universities, **external members** now participate in the most important decisions in the institution’s governing bodies. While this is seen as an important accountability measure, it also clearly serves other, more strategic purposes. Indeed, external members in university governing bodies are frequently selected to foster links with industry and other sectors. In systems where decision-making bodies did not previously include external members, this development is discussed rather controversially, particularly if some of these members are selected by the government. This is often seen as a way for governments to gain greater influence over internal decision-making processes, thus reducing institutional autonomy.

In most Northern European countries, universities are able to select their external members freely, although in some of these systems, an external authority formally appoints the external members who were put forward by the university. In a majority of systems, the government still partly or completely controls the appointment of external members. Although there is a noticeable shift towards smaller and more effective governing bodies, very large governing bodies still exist in several systems, particularly in the Mediterranean countries. Dual governance structures – with some type of division of power between bodies, and usually comprising a board or council and a senate – as opposed to unitary structures, are on the rise.

### Key elements

- Improving the university governance model contributes to strengthening the whole system
- Smaller governing bodies appear more oriented towards strategic decision-making
- Full involvement of external members in governing bodies reflects positively on the overall governance
- Adapting the legal status may be necessary
- Selection procedure for the university’s executive leader (appointment or election)
- Professional development of all actors

# 1. The university leadership

## 1.1 Role of the executive head

In today's European universities, the role of the executive head has evolved beyond a purely executive function, relating to the implementation of the university strategy, accountability to the university's governance structures and the supervision of daily university management. Executive leaders are responsible for the long-term vision and development of the institution, ensuring the sustainability of its different activities. They organise and manage change processes internally and maintain internal communication as well as relationships between the institution and society, business and policy makers.

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| STRATEGIC ROLE    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ LONG-TERM VISION</li><li>■ CHANGE MANAGEMENT</li><li>■ ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT</li></ul>                                                          |
| EXECUTIVE ROLE    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN</li><li>■ ACCOUNTABILITY</li><li>■ FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</li><li>■ STAFFING POLICY</li></ul> |
| COORDINATION ROLE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ OVERSEEING OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNERS (BUSINESS, SOCIETY, POLICY MAKERS)</li><li>■ INTERNAL COMMUNICATION</li></ul>                        |



***How is the role of the executive head of the institution defined in the law and in the university statutes?***

***Does the executive head have the means to fulfil these tasks?***

# 1. The university leadership

## 1.2 Selection of the executive head

The selection procedures for the rector vary from country to country in Europe. The procedures fall into four basic categories, as follows:

- **Elected** by a specific electoral body, which is usually large, representing (directly or indirectly) the different groups of the university community (academic staff, other staff, students), whose votes may be weighted.
- **Elected** by the governing body, which is democratically elected within the university community (usually the senate, i.e. the body deciding on academic issues).
- **Appointed** by the council/board of the university (i.e. the governing body deciding on strategic issues).
- **Appointed** through a two-step process in which both the senate and the council/board are involved.

In about half of the systems, the selection of the rector may have to be validated by an external authority such as the minister for higher education or the head of state or government. However, this validation may just constitute a formality. The selection procedure does not need to be validated by an external authority in other cases.

# 1. The university leadership

## 1.3 How are the executive heads selected in Europe? Examples

| SYSTEM         | ELECTION BODY/BODIES           |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         | VALIDATION BY PUBLIC AUTHORITY |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                | LARGE UNIVERSITY ELECTION BODY | SENATE-TYPE GOVERNING BODY | COUNCIL/ BOARD-TYPE GOVERNING BODY | PROCEDURE INCLUDING BOTH TYPES OF GOVERNING BODIES | VARIES ACROSS UNIVERSITIES/ SUB-SYSTEMS |                                |
| AUSTRIA        |                                |                            |                                    | X                                                  |                                         |                                |
| CYPRUS         | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| CZECH REPUBLIC |                                | X                          |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| DENMARK        |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| ESTONIA        | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| FINLAND        | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| FRANCE         |                                | X                          |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| GERMANY        |                                |                            |                                    |                                                    | X                                       |                                |
| GREECE         | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| HUNGARY        |                                | X                          |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| ICELAND        |                                |                            |                                    |                                                    | X                                       | X                              |
| IRELAND        |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| ITALY          | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| LATVIA         | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| LITHUANIA      |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| LUXEMBOURG     |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| MALTA          |                                | X                          |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| NETHERLANDS    |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| NORWAY         |                                |                            |                                    |                                                    | X                                       |                                |
| POLAND         | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| PORTUGAL       | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| ROMANIA        |                                | X                          |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| SERBIA         |                                |                            |                                    | X                                                  |                                         |                                |
| SLOVAKIA       |                                | X                          |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| SLOVENIA       | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| SPAIN          | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         |                                |
| SWEDEN         |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| SWITZERLAND    |                                |                            |                                    | X                                                  |                                         | X                              |
| TURKEY         | X                              |                            |                                    |                                                    |                                         | X                              |
| UNITED KINGDOM |                                |                            | X                                  |                                                    |                                         |                                |

# 1. The university leadership

## 1.4 Support schemes for university leaders

In some European countries, the sector has pooled resources to invest in leadership development training and support. National Rectors' Conferences, as representatives of the sector, may launch such initiatives. This may also take different shapes; in the examples below, the training is taken up directly by the Rectors' Conference, by a group of universities or through a structure set up for that particular purpose at national level.

### United Kingdom: Leadership Foundation

- Established by UUK and GuildHE, the bodies representing universities and higher education colleges in the UK
- Mission: development and improvement of the management and leadership skills of existing and future leaders of higher education
- Activities: range of development programmes targeted at different levels of higher education leadership positions, including programmes focusing on "future leaders", on women in academic and managerial positions, as well as on the specific needs of small institutions; events; research on institutional leadership; consulting
- Board composed of university leaders as well as high-level company executives
- Permanent expert staff
- Financially supported by the four higher education funding bodies of the UK
- Funding also through membership fees (membership is open to all higher education institutions, related organisations and agencies) and event-related fees
- Website: <http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/>

### Norway: Rectors' Conference

- The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR) has developed university leadership programmes since 2003 and have run such programmes on a yearly basis for deans and also some programmes for directors and rectors.
- Mission of the "Deans school": Development and improvement of the management and leadership skills of existing deans. Each session has two aims: To transfer knowledge about higher education politics and strategies and how the sector works on an overall level, and secondly, in supervised groups to work with the participants own roles on an individual basis.
- Mission of the rectors seminar (mainly aimed at new rectors): To transfer knowledge about higher education politics and strategies and how the sector works on an overall level, as well as networking.
- Website: [http://www.uhr.no/om\\_uhr/about\\_uhr\\_1](http://www.uhr.no/om_uhr/about_uhr_1)

# 1. The university leadership

## 1.4 Support schemes for university leaders

### **International: U4 Academic Leadership programme**

- Strategic partnership between the universities of Ghent (Belgium), Göttingen (Germany), Groningen (Netherlands), and Uppsala (Sweden)
- Academic leadership programme targeted at top-level executives from partner universities (from academia and from administration)
- Programme designed and managed by the four partner institutions
- Goals: improve leadership skills and reinforce cooperation among the partner institutions at the strategic level through a leadership network
- International benchmarking possibilities (covering four different countries)
- Website: <http://www.u4network.eu/?q=node/41>

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.1 Structures

There are two main types of governance structures: dual and unitary. In a majority of systems in Europe, universities have a dual structure comprising a board or council, which is usually limited in size, and a senate. Although the terminology varies considerably, the senate is often a wider and more representative body, which includes the academic community and, to some extent, other categories of university staff. Competencies are clearly divided between the board/council and the senate.

The scope and division of responsibilities between governing bodies may vary considerably between higher education systems. In a dual structure, the board/council is often responsible for long-term strategic decisions, such as statutes, strategic plans, selection of the rector and vice-rectors and budget allocation. The senate is entrusted with academic issues, such as curricula, degrees and staff promotions, and consists mainly of internal members of the university community. In some cases, the senate includes only professors. More typically, however, it comprises representatives of all categories of academic and administrative staff as well as students.

In other countries, universities have a unitary governing system, in which there is only one main decision-making body. This organ, which is responsible for all major decisions, may be known as the senate, the council or by another name.

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.2 Composition of governing bodies: examples

|    | TYPE OF GOVERNING BODY | RESPONSIBILITIES                                                                                     | SIZE       | COMPOSITION                    |                                |                                |                                                                   | SELECTION PROCESS FOR EXTERNAL MEMBERS                                                                                                                |
|----|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                        |                                                                                                      |            | ACADEMIC STAFF                 | NON-ACADEMIC STAFF             | STUDENTS                       | SHARE OF EXTERNAL MEMBERS                                         |                                                                                                                                                       |
| DK | Board-type             | Strategic and budget issues                                                                          | 9 to 15    | Yes                            | Yes                            | Yes (at least 2)               | Majority (at least 5)                                             | By previous board or via special body of university stakeholders                                                                                      |
|    | Senate-type            | Academic affairs (consultative)                                                                      | Variable   | Majority                       | Yes                            | Yes                            | None                                                              |                                                                                                                                                       |
| FI | Board-type             | Strategic oversight, management of assets, adoption of university internal rules, election of rector | 9 to 14    | Yes (<50% of internal members) | Yes (<50% of internal members) | Yes (<50% of internal members) | At least 40%, chair and vice-chair elected among external members | All members are elected by the collegiate body; criteria: wide range of expertise in the sciences or arts in the field of operation of the university |
|    | Senate-type            | Keep board accountable; approve budget                                                               | Maximum 50 | Yes (<50% of members)          | Yes (<50% of members)          | Yes (<50% of members)          | None                                                              |                                                                                                                                                       |
| SE | Board-type             | Main decision-making body                                                                            | About 12   | Yes (3)                        | –                              | Yes (3)                        | Equivalent to the number of internal members                      | Appointed by government on the rector's proposal                                                                                                      |
| AT | Board-type             | Supervisory body; approves budget; strategic oversight                                               | 5, 7 or 9  | No                             | No                             | No                             | 100%                                                              | Mixed appointment (part by federal government and part by university senate, remaining members appointed by selected members)                         |
|    | Senate-type            | Academic issues and recruitment                                                                      | 18 (or 26) | 9 (or 13) full professors      | 1                              | 4 (or 6)                       | None                                                              |                                                                                                                                                       |

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.2 Composition of governing bodies: examples

|    | TYPE OF GOVERNING BODY | RESPONSIBILITIES                                                                                          | SIZE                                     | COMPOSITION         |                    |          |                           | SELECTION PROCESS FOR EXTERNAL MEMBERS                                                                                                                                                          |
|----|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                        |                                                                                                           |                                          | ACADEMIC STAFF      | NON-ACADEMIC STAFF | STUDENTS | SHARE OF EXTERNAL MEMBERS |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| UK | Board-type             | Varies across universities                                                                                | Typically under 25                       | Yes                 |                    | Yes      | Majority                  | Appointment by nominations committee                                                                                                                                                            |
|    | Senate-type            |                                                                                                           | Typically larger                         | Yes                 |                    | Yes      |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| NL | Board-type             | Executive board                                                                                           | 3 (president, vice-president and rector) | No                  | No                 | No       | Vice-president            | All 3 appointed by supervisory board                                                                                                                                                            |
|    | Board-type             | Supervisory board strategy, appointment of executive board and supervision of compliance with regulations | Typically 8 to 12                        | No                  | No                 | No       | 100%                      | Selected by the Ministry                                                                                                                                                                        |
| CH | Board-type             | Main executive organ: financial issues, strategic planning, reporting and staffing procedures             | Variable                                 | No                  | No                 | No       | 100%                      | The senate can put forward candidates for membership, but these can never be university staff. The ultimate decision concerning membership of the board is always taken at the political level. |
|    | Senate-type            | Consultative; confirms the executive head                                                                 | From 25 to 200                           | Yes (largest share) | Yes                | Yes      | No                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.3 External members in governing bodies

The inclusion of external members in university governing bodies is meant to allow the university to:

- Benefit from specific sets of expertise (finances, management, etc.)
- Better reach out to society and partners
- Take into account external perspectives free from internal conflicts of interest



## 2. Governing bodies

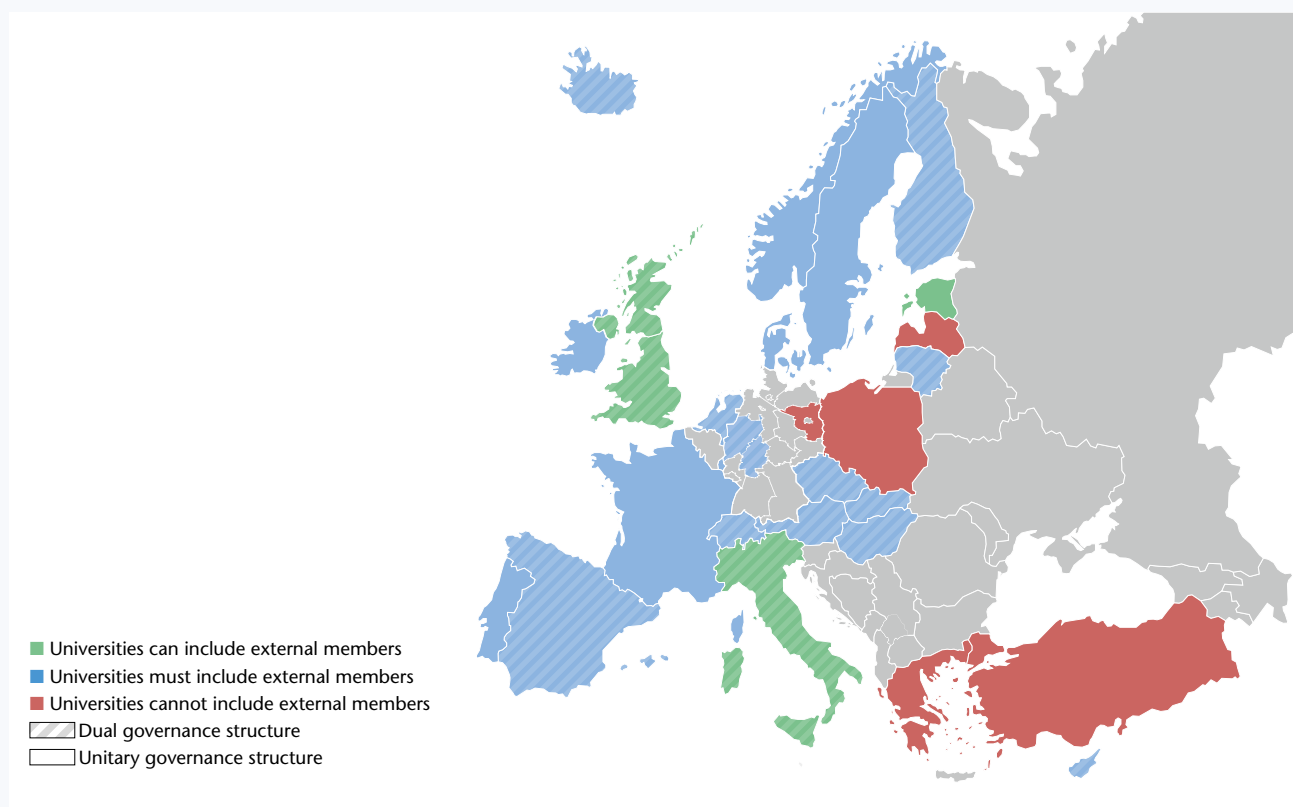
### 2.4 The involvement of external members in European universities

The inclusion and appointment of non-university members is an important aspect of a university's governing structure. If an institution is able to include external members, the selection can be carried out by the university itself and/or by an external authority.

The ability to decide on the inclusion of external members in university governing bodies is fairly rare. In most countries, universities are required to include them. Institutions are generally free to establish their own senate, which does not however include external members.

External members of governing bodies are usually fully integrated in the decision-making process. There are only some restrictions in this respect: in France, for instance, external members cannot participate in the election of the rector. In dual systems, external members are typically included in the board-/council-type body. Ireland is the only country with unitary governance systems (with a senate-type governing organ) where the inclusion of external members is mandatory.

**Map 1 - Structure of governing bodies and inclusion of external members**



Source: Estermann, T., Nokkala, T. and Steinel, M. 2011, *University Autonomy in Europe II: The Scorecard* (Brussels, European University Association).

Only in Estonia, Italy and the United Kingdom are universities free to decide whether or not they wish to include external members. Estonian universities have a unitary governance system in which they may include external members.

In Brandenburg (Germany), Greece, Latvia, Poland and Turkey, universities are not allowed to include external members in their governing bodies.

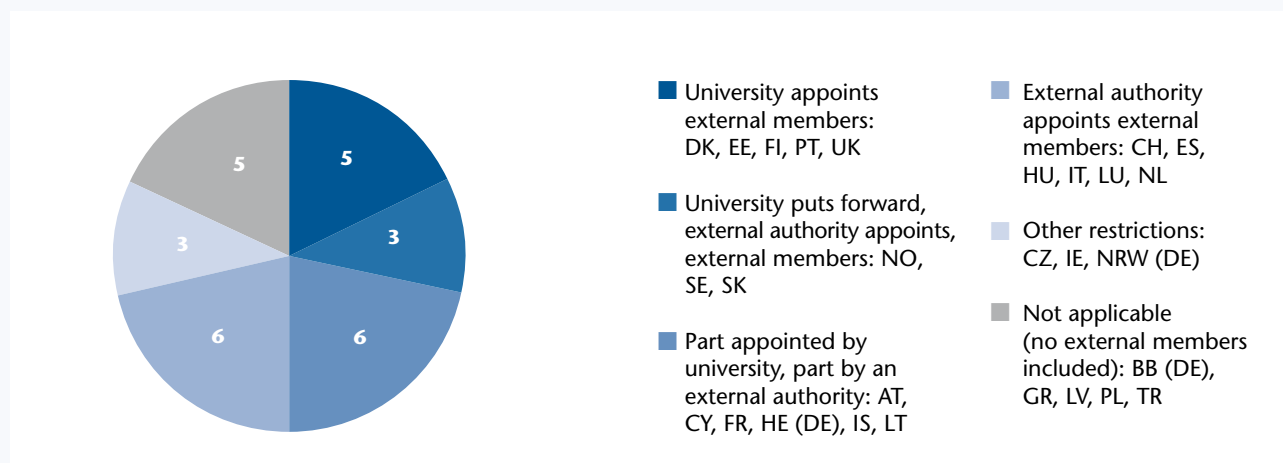
## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.5 Models of selection of external members

The appointment of external members follows four main models:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Universities are free to appoint the external members of their governing bodies.                                                                                                                                                                                      | Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Portugal and the UK                                                              |
| External members are put forward by the institution, but appointed by an external authority.                                                                                                                                                                          | Norway, Slovakia and Sweden                                                                                 |
| Some of the members are appointed by the university, some by an external authority.<br><i>Variation: External members are appointed by a special selection committee, which comprises representatives of the university, the board itself and the state ministry.</i> | Austria, Cyprus, France, Hessen (Germany), Iceland and Lithuania<br><i>North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany)</i> |
| An external authority decides on the appointment of external members.<br><i>Variation: External members are appointed by the minister after consultation with the rector.</i>                                                                                         | Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland<br><i>Czech Republic</i>                 |

#### Selection of external members in governing bodies



Source: Estermann, T., Nokkala, T. and Steinel, M., 2011, *University Autonomy in Europe II: The Scorecard*, (Brussels, European University Association).

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.5 Models of selection of external members

#### How to design the selection process?

The selection process should include the following elements:

- Transparency and clarity
- The development of clear profiles
- The right mix of profiles
- Internal communication about profiles
- External communication about roles and university

#### It is important to note that:

- Mixed selection models, including both the university and public authorities, may be a mechanism facilitating transition during governance reforms.
- The proportion of external members in the governing bodies varies widely across systems and can vary across universities in systems where this is not a matter regulated externally.
- The adequate composition of the group of external members (profiles) may vary according to the academic profile of the institution.
- Public authority representatives, when included, should not be in a position to veto decisions by the governing bodies.



***To which extent should the selection process be described in the system-level regulations?***

***What are the elements that may be best addressed in the university statutes?***

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.5 Models of selection of external members

#### What type of external members?

The selection process should include the following elements:

- Alumni
- Arts & culture sector representatives
- Company executives
- Foundation executives
- High-level staff/board members of other higher education institutions
- Local/regional/national public authorities representatives
- Non-governmental organisation representatives

... from the region, country but also in some cases from abroad.

#### 1. In unitary governance structures

| Type of external members   | Alumni | Arts & culture | Business | Foundation | Academia | Public authorities | NGOs |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|--------------------|------|
| Number of external members |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| Out of which:              |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| ■ local/regional           |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| ■ national                 |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| ■ foreign                  |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |

#### 2. In dual governance structures

|                            | Type of governing body | Alumni | Arts & culture | Business | Foundation | Academia | Public authorities | NGOs |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|--------------------|------|
| Number of external members | Board-type             |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
|                            | Senate-type            |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| Out of which:              |                        |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| ■ local/regional           |                        |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| ■ national                 |                        |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |
| ■ foreign                  |                        |        |                |          |            |          |                    |      |



***Which profiles fit and complement best the needs and characteristics of your institution?***

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.5 Models of selection of external members

#### Which competences/assets?

- **Knowledge of university system:** may be a prerequisite or developed after selection (member induction); necessary to understand the specificities of the sector and avoid the risk of transfer of practices not adapted to higher education.
- **Networking** (regional/national/international): in order to build bridges towards other sectors of society and strengthen the potential for partnerships.
- **Strategic, team-working and communication competences:** to support the strategic orientation of the work of the governing bodies; it is also important that the external members can fully contribute to internal and external communication and also enhance the visibility and attractiveness of the institution.
- **Availability:** it is important to estimate the type of commitment expected from external members and clearly communicate it to candidates.
- **Independence:** it should be clarified if the external members are selected to represent a particular constituency or for their own capacities and experience; conflicts of interest should be avoided.
- **Specific skills** as requested: the institution may wish to include external members that have expertise in financial or economic fields to enhance financial accountability and sustainability of the institution, or other skills that correspond to the academic profile of the institution.

#### Competence grid template

| Criteria                                    | Requested? | Priority level assigned (A, B, C) | Fulfilled by candidate? (A, B, C) |
|---------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Availability                                |            |                                   |                                   |
| Independence                                |            |                                   |                                   |
| Knowledge of university system              |            |                                   |                                   |
| Knowledge of the socio-economic environment |            |                                   |                                   |
| Strategic oversight                         |            |                                   |                                   |
| Exploitable network                         |            |                                   |                                   |
| Communication skills                        |            |                                   |                                   |
| Economic/financial literacy                 |            |                                   |                                   |
| ...                                         |            |                                   |                                   |



*Which criteria are the most important to select the external members in the governing bodies of your institution?*

## 2. Governing bodies

### 2.5 Models of selection of external members

#### **How to prepare external members for their responsibilities?**

Introduction to their role, competences, expectations, university and higher education system via:

- Institutional handbooks
- Specific events
- Regular dialogue
- Administrative support within the university
- Group of external members to be organised at national level
- System-wide guides, including:
  - Information for members of governing bodies on overall regulatory framework for higher education institutions – provisions regarding (among others):
    - legal status
    - governance
    - quality assurance
    - research
    - funding
    - staffing
    - health and safety
  - Information on regulatory bodies
  - Description of the role of university governing bodies and interaction with other entities
  - Description of responsibilities of the members of the governing bodies
  - Codes of conduct
  - Rules of procedure

### 3 How to change a governance model? Recommendations

This section highlights the essential steps to prepare and carry out the transition towards a new governance model. However, beyond this step-by-step process, it is necessary to consider that legal change must be accompanied by cultural adaptation, and that therefore a continued dialogue and structured communication between involved stakeholders is paramount.

There is no single model to follow; depending on the characteristics of the system, it may be useful to set up a specific transition model which will ease the change process. This may mean that members of the governing bodies may be selected differently than in the actual reform plan, to ensure that in the transition phase all relevant stakeholders are represented adequately. This may be particularly relevant in systems transitioning towards less or no involvement of public authorities in the governing bodies of universities.



| PLANNING                                                                                                           | NOTES |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Dialogue between public authorities and university sector                                                          |       |
| Benchmarking – current trends in university governance in Europe                                                   |       |
| Modelling – choice of governance model (see details on the next page)                                              |       |
| Drafting                                                                                                           |       |
| Discussion                                                                                                         |       |
| Law/regulation                                                                                                     |       |
| TRANSITION & IMPLEMENTATION                                                                                        |       |
| Adapting university statutes                                                                                       |       |
| Setting up an internal communication strategy to inform all university constituencies (all staff groups, students) |       |
| Identifying adequate candidates for governing bodies                                                               |       |
| Proceed to first nominations/elections                                                                             |       |
| Convene inaugural meetings of the governing bodies                                                                 |       |
| Provide training to new members of governing bodies, in particular external ones (induction)                       |       |
| MONITORING & EVALUATION                                                                                            |       |
| Set up consultation/feedback channels                                                                              |       |
| Carry out adaptations (possibility to revise statutes)                                                             |       |
| Undertake an external international evaluation                                                                     |       |

### 3 How to change a governance model? Recommendations

#### Modelling – choice of governance model

| GOVERNANCE ELEMENTS              | MODALITIES                                                                                                                                                   | PROVISION(S)<br>SET IN |                      |                        | NOTES |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------|
|                                  |                                                                                                                                                              | LAW                    | GUIDELINES<br>IN LAW | UNIVERSITY<br>STATUTES |       |
| Number of governing bodies       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unitary/dual structure</li> </ul>                                                                                     |                        |                      |                        |       |
| Distribution of responsibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic overview, finances, staff, academic and student affairs</li> </ul>                                          |                        |                      |                        |       |
| Reporting lines                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Checks &amp; balances</li> </ul>                                                                                      |                        |                      |                        |       |
| Size of governing bodies         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many members for each governing body?</li> </ul>                                                                  |                        |                      |                        |       |
| Composition of governing bodies  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent capacity or representative?</li> <li>Which constituencies should be represented in which body?</li> </ul> |                        |                      |                        |       |
| Selection modalities             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election/ appointment</li> <li>By whom?</li> </ul>                                                                    |                        |                      |                        |       |
| Selection criteria               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competences, gender balance ...</li> </ul>                                                                            |                        |                      |                        |       |

## 4 Examples of recent reform processes in Europe

The drive towards an enhanced institutional ability to decide on university affairs continues, fostered by some major legislative changes in the past few years. The following examples reflect a trend towards more managerial universities with smaller decision-making bodies, into which external stakeholders have been integrated.

In **Portugal**, university autonomy features in the Constitutional law adopted in 1976. The regulatory framework in place between the end of the 1980s and 2007 imposed governance models composed of the “university assembly”, senate, and rector. Both the assembly and the senate were large bodies, composed almost exclusively of internal constituencies (academic and non-academic staff, students). The higher education law which was passed in 2007 has improved public universities’ autonomy in many respects. If they fulfil certain criteria – for example, at least half of their funding is external – public universities can apply for the legal status of foundations. So far, this opportunity has been taken up by three universities. By adopting this status, universities gain greater flexibility, in particular in deciding on their governance structures and financial affairs. The 2007 law also gives more freedom to universities (which do not have the foundation status) to decide on their governance structures. The law stipulates that universities shall set up a general council and a management council, along with the rector, while the decision to have a senate is left to the institutions themselves. The law also reinforces the presence of external members in governing bodies.

In **Finland**, the legal status of universities changed in January 2010. Universities are now corporations under public law. Two universities have acquired the status of foundations under private law. At the same time, the governing structure of the universities has changed from a unitary to a dual system. External members were previously limited to one or two in the institutional senate. Now, at least 40% of the membership of the board of a public university must be external. Members are elected by the university senate, which may also decide to include a majority of external members in the board. The board’s chair and vice-chair are elected from among the external members.

In **Lithuania**, there has been a similar shift. The status of the governing bodies has changed with the passing of a new law in spring 2009. Previously, the main decision-making body was the senate, while the council played a supervisory role. Now the senate, which mainly comprises internal members, decides on academic issues and acts as a preparatory body for the council. The council is the main executive organ. It comprises nine or eleven members, of which four or five are put forward by the ministry. The university and the ministry also jointly decide on an additional – usually external – council member.

## Further resources:

### ■ EUA Reports and material:

University Autonomy in Europe II: The Scorecard

[http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications/University\\_Autonomy\\_in\\_Europe\\_II\\_-\\_The\\_Scorecard.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications/University_Autonomy_in_Europe_II_-_The_Scorecard.sflb.ashx)

University Autonomy online tool

<http://www.university-autonomy.eu/>

ATHENA Training Seminar: Governance and Autonomy Reforms

<http://www.athena-tempus.eu/project/material>

## **EUA project team** **Governance, Funding and Public Policy Development Unit**

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The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of universities and national rectors' conferences in 47 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Thanks to its interaction with a range of other European and international organisations EUA ensures that the independent voice of European universities is heard wherever decisions are being taken that will impact on their activities.

The Association provides a unique expertise in higher education and research as well as a forum for exchange of ideas and good practice among universities. The results of EUA's work are made available to members and stakeholders through conferences, seminars, website and publications.

