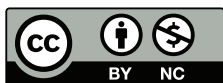


National Initiatives in Learning and Teaching in Europe

A report from the European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching (EFFECT) project

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Acknowledgements

As a follow-up to some of the results of the Trends 2018 survey,¹ this report is based on a series of semi-structured interviews on national learning and teaching initiatives, with experts from 28 European higher education systems, conducted from November 2017 to August 2018, as part of the Erasmus+ co-funded EFFECT (European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching) project (2015-2019).²

We are particularly grateful to all the experts (see Annex 1) from universities and ministries for their contributions. Without their input, this study would not have been possible.

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1 <https://eua.eu/resources/publications/757:trends-2018-learning-and-teaching-in-the-european-higher-education-area.html>

2 Coordinated by the European University Association (EUA), the project aims at assessing the potential of a European level structure for the enhancement of higher education learning and teaching. Among others, the EFFECT consortium released in November 2017, the ten European Principles for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching.

Key results

The study maps and analyses major policies and initiatives through which public authorities in the following 28 European higher education systems support the enhancement of learning and teaching: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom (England). Although not part of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), Israel was included in the study.

Four (14%) of the 28 higher education systems have a dedicated national strategy or framework for learning and teaching: Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Norway.

Another 15 (54%) systems have a strategy for learning and teaching, as part of their overall strategy for higher education or as part of other national strategy documents: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Israel, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom (England).

Expert opinions from countries with no dedicated national strategy for learning and teaching were quite divided over the question on whether a national strategy would be beneficial – with a slight majority in favour.

In seven systems (25%), teaching enhancement is regulated at the national level: Denmark, France, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Norway.

In all systems, organisers of teaching enhancement are commonly individual higher education institutions, through their centres for learning and teaching and/or faculties of education. Joint, inter-university initiatives for teacher training remain rare, as well as national initiatives.

In 20 systems (71%), teaching enhancement does not count at all, or counts very little for career promotion. The main reason, according to the experts interviewed, is that criteria for academic progression are still overwhelmingly focused on research output. However, participation in pedagogical training may still be considered as an additional aspect in career promotion, which in turn renders salary raises. But other direct financial incentives are not common.

Over half of the systems covered in the study (15) have a national teaching prize that is awarded either to individual teachers or, less commonly, to teams. These prizes are reported to have a positive impact, but overall to weigh much less and have a lower visibility and impact than research awards.

EU project funding has a strong impact. It supports European and international exchange and cooperation on learning and teaching enhancement with many tangible outcomes: teacher training courses, learning and teaching centres, summer academies, international exchanges and compendia of good practices, to name but a few.

According to an overwhelming majority of the experts interviewed, the main obstacle for the enhancement of learning and teaching remains the fact that research is valued more than teaching, both in terms of recruitment and career promotion.

Introduction

Over the past years, with the increased demand for higher education, and growing participation and diversification of student cohorts, including international students, the enhancement of learning and teaching practices has become a priority not only for higher education institutions, but also for national governments, the European Union and the Bologna Process.

While there have been significant change and progress in higher education all over Europe, mainly due to the Bologna structural reforms, it is felt that the development of learning and teaching could further benefit from European-level initiatives.³ This has been underlined by the strong emphasis on learning and teaching in the recent Paris Communiqué⁴ (May 2018), committing the participating countries to develop “joint European initiatives to support and stimulate a wide range of innovative learning and teaching practices, building on existing good practice in our countries and beyond.”

It would, however, be useful to first get better knowledge and understanding of the existing national learning and teaching initiatives, for a comparative analysis of the state of the art, to identify drivers and obstacles in the respective countries, and share already existing good practices that may hold lessons learnt and potential for cooperation across Europe.

In this regard, EUA's Trends 2018 survey,⁵ carried out in 2017, brought interesting results on institutional developments, but failed to produce easily readable data on national policies and initiatives, and how they impact institutions. Additional desk research and literature review on this topic brought insufficient results, as sources, if at all existent, were published in national languages only, and if in English, were often outdated (before 2014).

Therefore, the European University Association (EUA) carried out in November 2017 a complementary study via expert interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire (see Annex 2). Usually, one expert per country provided input, through an interview, and in some cases instead of or in addition to, in writing. Following the recommendations of these experts, for some countries, other colleagues were consulted on more specific aspects.

The current study, which is based on findings from these interviews, aims to map the learning and teaching landscape in 28 higher education systems, and also to provide some insights on how teaching enhancement is organised between public authorities and higher education institutions.

There is little guarantee that terminology in the area of learning and teaching is understood everywhere in Europe in the same way. In the context of this report, we propose “teaching enhancement” for any kind of formal pedagogical staff development or training provided to teachers, in different ways and formats, such as e.g., initial teacher training and continuous professional development (CPD). The term should not be confounded with “enhancement of learning and teaching”, which can signify a wider array of measures to encourage, incentivise, support and improve learning and teaching, which could be teaching enhancement, but also other means such as working groups, consultation, teaching prizes etc.

3 Trends 2018, Trends 2015, Bologna Process Implementation Report 2018, The Changing Pedagogical Landscape 1 and 2

4 <http://www.ehea2018.paris/Data/EIFinder/s2/Communique/EHEAParis2018-Communique-final.pdf>

5 <https://eua.eu/resources/publications/757:trends-2018-learning-and-teaching-in-the-european-higher-education-area.html>

National strategies for learning and teaching

Strategies for learning and teaching

When asked about the existence of a national strategy for learning and teaching, the most common case is that learning and teaching is part of an overall strategy for higher education. Having a dedicated national strategy or framework for learning and teaching is the least widespread approach.

Only four (14%) of all systems mapped (28) have a dedicated national strategy or framework for learning and teaching: Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway.

- **Austria:** According to the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy, there is a dedicated learning and teaching policy framework in place, perceived by Universities Austria⁶ as a series of initiatives and working groups rather than an explicit strategy. The learning and teaching policy framework contains the following main initiatives:

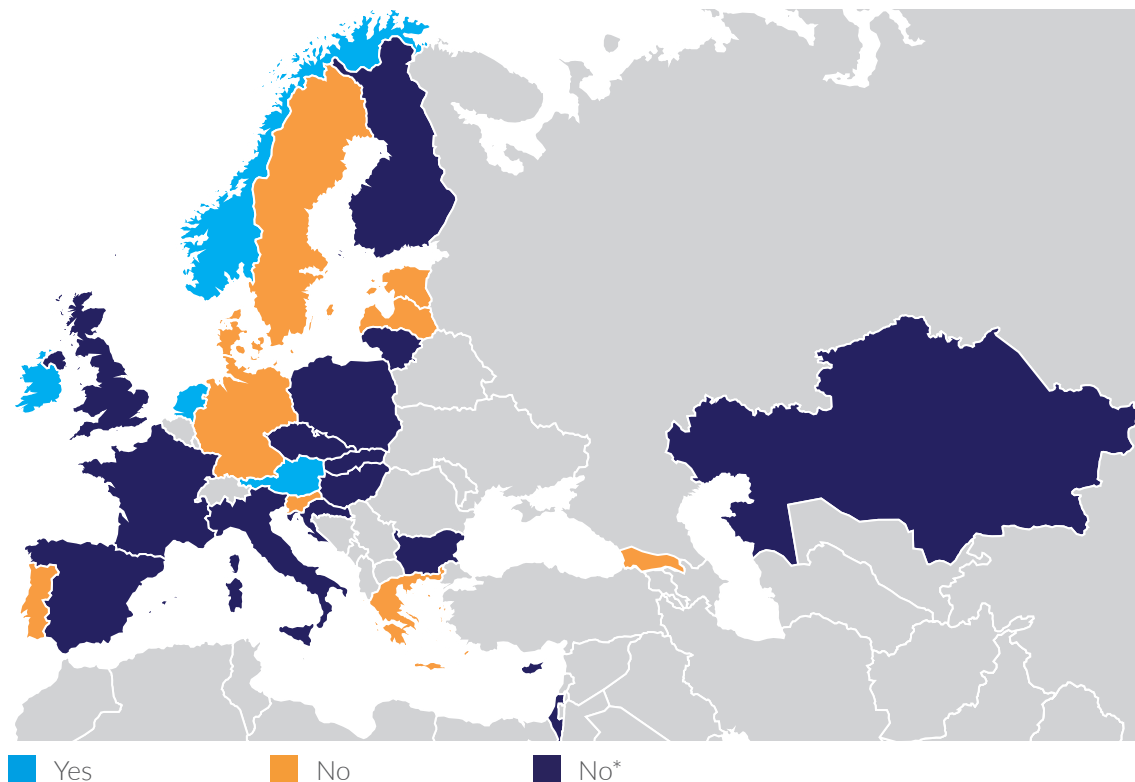
- The National Universities Development Plan, which is in place since 2016, aims at the enhancement and strengthening of the higher education system, improvement of teaching quality and of the relevant output indicators in teaching, support for early stage researchers, and an increase in internationalisation and mobility.
- Securing and developing the quality of teaching is targeted by the external audit of the quality management system, which Austrian higher

education institutions must undergo through an EQAR⁷-registered agency since 2012.

- Performance agreements between the Ministry of Education, Science and Research and individual public universities are in place since 2007. The improvement of the student-staff ratio is a core objective of university funding and the number of

students actively enrolled in university studies is a key indicator for the distribution of federal funds (from 2019 onwards). However, while additional funding has been made available for hiring staff, the student-staff ratio has not improved, and in some places even deteriorated, due to increasing student numbers over the past 10 years.

Fig.1 – Dedicated national strategies for learning and teaching



6 <https://uniko.ac.at/uniko/geschichte/index.php?lang=DE>

7 <https://www.eqar.eu/>

* but mentioned in the overall strategy for higher education or in other strategic national documents

- Although teaching enhancement is not regulated at the national level, it is partly incorporated into performance agreements: public universities commit themselves to monitor teaching quality and to support student progress. Under-performance by a university in reaching specific targets will lead to the reduction of federal funds.

- **Ireland:** In the early 2000s, Ireland created its Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), which funded collaborative projects in learning and teaching, such as the National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR). The success of SIF-funded projects triggered a consultation of the higher education sector on how to create a structure for the enhancement of learning and teaching, supported by sustainable funding. After consultation of the sector, the Higher Education Authority established in late 2012 the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.⁸ The forum supports excellence in learning and teaching across all higher education institutions and aims to enhance the quality of the learning experience for all students, in line with the key objectives of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (Hunt report).⁹

The forum manages the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund and has been pursuing the enhancement agenda in a number of ways, including the development of a Roadmap for Digital Capacity, a National Professional Development Framework for all staff who teach in higher education,¹⁰ building a strong evidence base and linking disciplinary and pedagogical networks. The development of National Learning Impact Awards by the forum helped to

endorse and share outstanding practices in learning and teaching. The existence of the forum therefore represents Ireland's commitment to the enhancement of learning and teaching.

- **The Netherlands:** The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science launched in 2015 "The Value of Knowledge, Strategic Agenda for Higher Education and Research 2015-2025".¹¹ It confirms that the current higher education system in the Netherlands is good and competitive, but proposes some goals to make it adequately "future-proof" (p.92): world-class education, accessibility, talent development, diversity and social relevance. The agenda recognises that these ambitions are all dependent on enhanced quality of education, and that teaching staff is the driving force for this process: "High-quality teaching staff are of tremendous importance to good education. The teaching staff must be placed in a position to continue to develop themselves in their subject and in their teaching skills, for example by becoming familiar with new forms of education such as digital education, and by further improving their teaching capacities, etc." (p.23). At the national level, the agenda is complemented by a 2017 position paper¹² released by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), which sets as priorities intensifying education, more and better student guidance, appropriate study facilities, and the professionalisation of teachers.
- **Norway:** In January 2017, the Ministry of Education and Research launched a white paper to the Parliament called "Quality Culture in Higher Education".¹³ The text presents the government's main

objectives and expectations towards higher education institutions, regarding the enhancement of quality of education, and national measures in this sense. The white paper invites higher education institutions to ensure that their students do not only graduate with skills that are in demand today but are adaptable towards the labour market of the future. In addition, the document stresses the systemic importance of teaching enhancement, by stating that "most importantly, teaching excellence should not depend on a few individual pedagogical enthusiasts while status and resources are rewarded primarily to the foremost researchers. Rather, educational quality must be the responsibility of the academic environment, including the academic leadership. Every teacher has the capacity to develop their pedagogical methods and inspire their students. Good teaching is a craft that can be learnt. At the same time, students must be part of a culture and academic environment that focuses on education. It is paramount that students become part of a culture of quality in which there is a common responsibility to continuously look for ways to improve. Together, in collaboration." (p.1)

In 15 (54%) systems the strategy for learning and teaching is part of the overall strategy for higher education or of other strategic national documents: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Israel, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, the United Kingdom (England).

- These strategies would usually provide a section on learning and teaching with rather generic goals, such as the improvement of quality in higher education teaching, student-centred learning, etc.

8 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/>

9 <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf>

10 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/publication/national-professional-development-framework-for-all-staff-who-teach-in-higher-education/>

11 <https://www.government.nl/documents/reports/2015/07/01/the-value-of-knowledge>

12 <http://www.vsnunl.nl/files/documents/Publications/Pamphlet%20-%20United%20for%20academic%20education.pdf>

13 <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/meld.-st.-16-20162017/id2536007/>

- In some systems, they set out long-term strategic goals, with flagship initiatives renewed annually and financial incentives attached for their implementation, such as in the Czech Republic. But they rarely contain more in-depth approaches or concrete measures, such as an action plan.
- In the United Kingdom (England), although there is no national strategy, there is a well-articulated governmental position regarding the enhancement of learning and teaching that transpires through the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF),¹⁴ in which, while optional, most universities in England participate. A panel rates institutions on the basis of their written evidence in combination with different benchmarked metrics on study continuation, student satisfaction and employment outcomes.

Nine countries (32%) have no national initiatives/strategies in learning and teaching: Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden.

Of the 24 systems without a dedicated (standalone) learning and teaching strategy, 13 experts shared their views on whether such a strategy would be necessary and/or beneficial. For eight systems (Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal and Slovenia) it was confirmed to be useful:

- **Croatia:** A national strategy could further align the national higher education landscape with the priorities of the Bologna Process in terms of learning and teaching, and also promote parity of esteem between teaching and research.
- **Estonia:** It would be helpful to have a loose national strategy for learning and teaching, which is not too prescriptive.

- **Finland:** A well-articulated strategy would be needed to give a clear signal of the desired long-term development.
- **Greece:** A national higher education strategy, and also a specific strategy for learning and teaching, would be much needed to raise awareness for some of the issues that higher education institutions face, and to address them in a more systematic fashion.
- **Latvia:** It would help address structural issues in terms of learning and teaching (e.g. academic staff development plans, attraction of new and foreign teachers, underfunding, competences-based curriculum etc.) in a consistent and systematic matter, as opposed to sporadic measures currently in place.
- **Lithuania:** A dedicated strategy for learning and teaching would be beneficial, but relevant targets for learning and teaching could also be integrated in other already existing documents at the national level.
- **Portugal:** Financial incentives provided through a national strategy for learning and teaching would encourage higher education institutions in Portugal to implement activities with real impact on the learning and teaching practice, in the short term.
- **Slovenia:** It could provide incentives for enhancing learning and teaching, in particular financial ones, and enable a shared and inclusive definition for learning and teaching enhancement, with a deeper understanding of innovative teaching, beyond the mere introduction of e-learning.

For five systems (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Slovakia and United Kingdom/England) a national strategy was found not to be necessary:

- **Bulgaria:** Instead of a national strategy, concrete measures and indicators for teaching enhancement were preferred.
- **Czech Republic and Slovakia:** There were concerns about institutional autonomy, if a national strategy for learning and teaching were to be established.
- **Denmark:** A national strategy would create further barriers to innovation, as the system has already detailed regulations, for instance, in terms of examination and grading.
- **The United Kingdom (England):** The higher education sector in England is sufficiently mature, so a dedicated national strategy would not deliver much more than the higher education institutions are already doing.

Quality assurance

Several interviewees mentioned the impact that quality assurance developments have had on enhancing learning and teaching in their institutional and national contexts. This is not surprising as Trends 2010 and Trends 2015 already found that quality assurance (QA) had been the most important change driver in the past two decades, with internal quality assurance processes under continuous development. The results of the Trends 2015 survey showed that an increasing number of higher education institutions have institutional QA policies and processes that support institutional planning and improvement. This is also the result of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2005), which were translated into national legislation and have been serving as the main reference framework for QA agencies and higher education institutions alike.

¹⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658490/Teaching_Excellence_and_Student_Outcomes_Framework_Specification.pdf

The link between QA and learning and teaching developments has grown stronger through the launch of the ESG 2015, which include a new and specific standard on student-centred learning. As a result, higher education institutions are expected to ensure through their internal QA that institutional policies and processes on learning and teaching are student-centred.

Moreover, the ESG 2015 have put an even stronger emphasis on the role of institutions in taking responsibility for assuring and developing the quality of their education. The idea is for each higher education institution to develop a comprehensive and fit-for-purpose internal QA system, so that it can periodically review its own programmes. In an increasing number of countries, this is done without involvement from an external QA agency, which was mentioned by several interviewees:

- The amendment to the Czech Higher Education Act, effective from September 2016, brought fundamental changes to the system of higher education accreditation and quality assurance. All higher education institutions have to establish their own quality assurance systems and only those higher education institutions that demonstrate that they can guarantee the quality of their educational offer, can receive institutional accreditation, i.e. authorisation to manage and develop their degree programmes independently. Czech higher education institutions that want to achieve this status need to enhance their internal quality assurance policies that would also pay attention to the development of learning and teaching processes.

- The Georgian Ministry of Higher Education adopted new standards and criteria for institutional accreditation in May 2017, which aim to be in line with the ESG 2015 and which require higher education institutions to have in place an institutional policy on teaching enhancement and teacher training.
- In Denmark, following the Accreditation Act in 2013, higher education institutions have been transitioning from programme accreditation to institutional accreditation.¹⁵ The latter implies an assessment of the institution's overall quality assurance system.

National and European-level cooperation in learning and teaching

Trends 2018 results confirm that student and staff exchanges, as well as collaboration with other universities and participation in projects and initiatives, are a major means and catalyst for learning and teaching in general, and development of teaching staff in particular.

In Trends 2018, over half of respondents indicated that they cooperate on teaching enhancement through participation in national initiatives. Interviews with the national experts showed that publicly-funded initiatives in learning and teaching (excluding EU-funded national initiatives) exist in 17 (61%) of the 28 countries. They can take quite different shapes, and can associate teaching enhancement with other, complementary measures aiming to enhance learning and teaching, as the following examples show:

- **Austria:** Launched in 2014, the national project *Atlas der guten Lehre*¹⁶ is an online platform that

showcases good practices in teaching from various Austrian higher education institutions. Each good practice mentions also a contact person, so that this “catalogue of good teaching” becomes an interactive tool for exchange and collaboration. The platform is continuously updated, with new examples being added. Teaching prizes have a long history in Austria, as some individual universities started offering them 15 years ago.

- **Finland:** Founded in 1994, the Peda-forum has become a network of expertise in university pedagogy and academic development. Its main objectives have been the enhancement of quality of university teaching, sharing pedagogical expertise and improving the cooperation between the universities, units, teachers and students. It is sector-owned and driven, though initially, the Ministry of Education provided funding to support its coordination. The forum organises annual national conferences for academic developers called the Peda-forum Days, and also workshops for academic developers. The forum has contact persons at all universities in Finland, and enables discussions, formal and informal benchmarking, and collaboration—for instance, some of its members collaborate on the development of pedagogical training for Finnish universities.
- **France:** Following the 2014 Bertrand report “Supporting the educational transformation in higher education”,¹⁷ a new service was created under the Ministry in charge: the *Mission de la Pédagogie et du Numérique pour l'Enseignement Supérieur* or MiPNES (Mission for Pedagogy and Digitalisation in Higher Education). Since 2016, it organises national days of pedagogical innovation in higher education, a national

¹⁵ <https://www.eqar.eu/kb/country-information/country/?id=47>

¹⁶ <http://www.gutelehre.at/das-projekt/>

¹⁷ https://cache.media.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/file/Actus/90/1/Rapport_pedagogie_C_Bertrand_2_352901.pdf

teaching prize and a call for projects for pedagogical and digital transformation. In addition to excellence initiatives targeting learning and teaching such as IDEFI,¹⁸ the new law “*Orientation et réussite des étudiants*” (“Guidance and student success”, February 2018) reforms the admissions process for entering higher education in France (for example, through more transparency in the algorithm used for distributing applicants to French higher education institutions).

- **Germany:** One important reason why Germany has no national strategy for learning and teaching is its federal structure which assigns the main responsibility for learning and teaching to the 16 states (Länder). Nevertheless, the federal government supports a number of nation-wide initiatives to enhance the quality of learning and teaching. For instance, the Nexus project was launched in 2010 by the German Rectors’ Conference with the funding support of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). In a first phase (2010-2014), it has been supporting higher education institutions in the implementation of Bologna Process reforms, among others on curriculum development for the implementation of Bachelor and Master programmes and for quality enhancement in learning and teaching. It enables the dissemination of good practice through case studies that are systematically collected in a database and provide a basis for dialogue within and between higher education institutions. In the phase 2014-2020, the focus of Nexus has been on three main challenges shared by many German universities:¹⁹
 - improving access and entry into higher education;

- enhancement of all forms of mobility during studies;
- transition to employment.

In addition to the Nexus project, the *Hochschulpakt 2020*, a federal and regional cooperation and funding scheme aims to increase the number of study places in Germany between 2010-2020. Another national initiative is the *Qualitätspakt Lehre* (2011-2020), a federal and regional cooperation to enhance the quality of teaching in higher education, the overall study conditions and CPD opportunities for academic teaching staff.

- **Kazakhstan:** In Kazakhstan, a national programme called *BOLASHAK* (“Future”), offers training on pedagogies at universities abroad to Kazakh higher education teachers. The teacher training programmes funded through *BOLASHAK* consist of a mixture of seminars, workshops, observations, study visits and teamwork led by experienced teacher trainers.
- **The Netherlands:** SURF,²⁰ the collaborative ICT organisation for Dutch education and research, offers students, lecturers, and scientists access to the best possible internet and ICT facilities. In 2017, SURF together with the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) drew up the Acceleration Agenda for Innovation in Education,²¹ which has been expanded into a four-year Acceleration Plan for Educational Innovation with ICT.

- **Slovakia:** In 2016, the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports started to work on “Learning Slovakia”, a comprehensive vision for education in Slovakia. The document was approved in June 2018 and it covers primary, secondary and tertiary education. In terms of the latter, the reform proposes a new system of quality assurance in line with the ESG, which would grant Slovak higher education institutions more flexibility in the design of their study programmes. Moreover, it aims to replace the current Accreditation Commission with an Accreditation Agency, that would demonstrate that it operates in line with the ESG.²² Special support is provided for designing curricula for professional Bachelor programmes in collaboration with employers.²³
- **Spain:** The Catalan government has launched in January 2018 the initiative *Margalida Comas i Camps*.²⁴ Endorsed by the Catalan Council of Universities, the main objectives of this initiative are the enhancement of teaching methods, better recognition of teaching and the establishment of programmes for systematically training junior teachers.

18 <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid58270/www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid58270/initiatives-d-excellence-en-formations-innovantes-investir-pour-l-avenir-des-etudiants.html>

19 <https://www.hrk-nexus.de/projekt-nexus/aufgaben-und-ziele/>

20 <https://www.surf.nl/en>

21 <https://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/en/2017/acceleration-innovation-2017-en.pdf>

22 <https://rio.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/library/national-programme-education-development-%E2%80%9Clearning-slovakia%E2%80%9D>

23 http://www.amcham.sk/publications/connection-magazine/issues/2017-03/272667_learning-slovakia-the-future-of-slovak-education

24 The initiative was named after a professor from the University of Barcelona, who in the 1930s was a reference for pedagogical innovation: http://premsa.gencat.cat/pres_fsvp/docs/2017/07/26/13/34/99881642-f79e-4f3e-bfab-9ac3f3af46b8.pdf

But in at least six more countries,²⁵ projects funded by Erasmus+ (mainly KA3) and the European Social Fund have been launched, usually in collaboration with the higher education sector and public authorities and with the aim of establishing national initiatives for learning and teaching development:

Bulgaria Teaching Innovation Tools in Higher Education

The project (2016-2018, Erasmus+ KA3) focusses on two objectives of the Yerevan Communiqué: (1) raising quality and relevance of learning and teaching, and (2) promoting better employability for higher education graduates during their active work life.

The core project activities include:

- a needs assessment for raising the teaching qualifications of Bulgarian academic staff;
- the development of a compendium of good practices;
- workshops for the enhancement of teaching skills and for the modernisation of curricula.

The project is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science of Bulgaria (MES), in cooperation with the Human Resources Development Centre (HRDC- the Erasmus+ National Agency of Bulgaria) and a team of five national Bologna experts.

Croatia EDUCA-T

The project “Emphasis on developing and upgrading of competences for academic teaching” (EDUCA-T, 2016-2018, Erasmus+ KA3) is implemented by the Ministry of Science and Education to improve the quality of learning and teaching in higher education, by:

- developing a national competences framework for teachers in higher education;
- creating a curriculum framework for the enhancement of teaching competences as a basis for the continuing professional development of academic staff;
- raising awareness for the importance of quality teaching in higher education.

Czech Republic Impuls II

The Erasmus+ National Authority and the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports implemented Impuls II (2016-2018), an Erasmus+ funded pilot to:

- create centres for learning and teaching at three Czech universities (Faculty of Medicine, Masaryk University; Faculty of Education, Palacky University Olomouc; and Faculty of Arts, Charles University);
- underpin bottom-down initiatives and enhance quality of educational activities of Czech higher education institutions through the centres’ support for pedagogical skills of the academic staff;
- train selected staff of the participating institutions to become mentors of pedagogical competences for their fellow academics, and to share knowledge and skills with all other interested higher education institutions in the Czech Republic;
- provide expert support for the implementation of the internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions and of the new accreditation system in the Czech Republic.

Estonia The PRIMUS programme

The PRIMUS programme (2008-2015), financed by the European Social Fund aimed to support the quality of education provided by higher education institutions in Estonia. The project addressed the development of high-quality teaching competences of academic staff, through the creation of two centres for learning and teaching (also known as centres for professional development) at the University of Tartu and at the University of Tallinn, which in turn provided pedagogical courses for academic staff – from teaching skills to communication and supervision competences.

The programme played a major role in the enhancement of learning and teaching in Estonia, as it provided an incentive for universities in Estonia to collaborate more among each other and internationally, as it facilitated conferences and summer academies for teaching enhancement in Estonia and abroad.

25 The examples below should not be regarded as exhaustive. For instance, also in Slovenia, in June 2018, a public call for innovative and flexible learning and teaching methods in higher education was released, aiming at a national-level project, funded by the European Social Fund, and involving multiple Slovenian higher education institutions. http://www.mizs.gov.si/si/javni_objave_in_razpisi/okroznice/arhiv_okroznic/okroznice_razpisi_in_javna_narocila/javni_razpisi/?tx_t3javnirazpis_pi1%5Bshow_single%5D=1627

Lithuania **Development of student-centred learning, teaching and assessment within the Bologna Learning Network**

Under the European Social Fund-financed project “ECTS for the National Level: Harmonization of the Credit and LOs Based Study Programme Design and Implementation” (2009-2012), a national system of study credits has been established and methodologies for the development of competences in specific study fields developed.

Under the project “The Structure of Study Cycle and Study Field Descriptors” (2009-2014, European Social Fund), descriptors for 53 fields of study were created, which provided a basis for defining learning outcomes and learning and teaching methods.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education and Science, together with the Education Exchanges Support Foundation (the Erasmus+ National Agency of Lithuania) has been implementing several Erasmus+ (KA3 – Support to policy reform) projects in the recent years that underpinned mobility and internationalisation and developed institutional capacities for student-centred learning. The most recently completed Erasmus+ funded initiative “Development of student-centred learning, teaching and assessment within Bologna Learning Network (LOAF)” (2016-2018) developed recommendations for teachers and students on aligning student-centred learning, teaching and assessment at the level of study programmes, subjects and modules.

Poland **POWER**

The Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development” (POWER, 2014-2020) is funded from the European Social Fund and provides funding for improving “the quality, effectiveness, and openness of higher education as an instrument for building a knowledge-based economy”. The 3.4 POWER “Management in higher education institutions” national initiative aims to support organisational changes at Polish higher education institutions and to improve the pedagogical competences of academic teaching staff.

National teaching prizes in higher education

Over half (54%) of the higher education systems have a national teaching prize for individuals or, less common, teams. Such prizes are usually organised by national authorities, but in some cases also by university networks, national students’ unions and foundations.

Interviewees from systems with a national teaching prize felt that the prizes have some impact, but would still weigh less, and have a lower visibility and impact than research awards. In systems without teaching prizes, they were often regarded as inappropriate for higher education, and superfluous due to other approaches, such as for instance, the creation of pedagogical academies in Sweden.

Table 1 – National teaching prizes in higher education

Systems with a national teaching prize	Systems without a national teaching prize
Austria	Bulgaria
Estonia	Croatia
France	Cyprus
Germany	Czech Republic
Greece	Denmark
Ireland	Finland
Israel	Georgia
Kazakhstan	Hungary
Latvia	Italy
The Netherlands	Lithuania
Norway	Portugal
Poland	Spain
Slovenia	Sweden
Slovakia	
UK (England)	

However, also in systems with no national teaching prize, some individual higher education institutions and even faculties and departments organise their own prizes. A recent mapping study on teaching prizes conducted under the EFFECT project showed that teaching prizes are to motivate academic staff for high-quality teaching, encourage innovation in learning and teaching, and to generally improve the institutional recognition and awareness for learning and teaching enhancement. However, the study found a significant gap between the importance allocated to these objectives and the proven impact of the prizes in achieving them.²⁶

26 See Efimenko, E., Roman, A., Pinto, M., Remião, F., Teixeira, P. (2018), Enhancement and Recognition of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: The Impact of Teaching and Excellence Prizes, *Journal of the European Higher Education Area*, 2018, No.2, p. 103, <https://eua.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?id=1259>

Teaching enhancement

Organisation of teaching enhancement courses

The Trends 2018 survey showed that voluntary teaching enhancement is quite common (77%), but compulsory courses (37%) are less common, and the share of compulsory courses has not increased since 2015.

The interviews confirmed that teaching enhancement courses are usually organised by individual higher education institutions, in most cases often through their centres for learning and teaching and/or faculties of education. Joint interinstitutional initiatives for teacher training exist, but still as an exception:

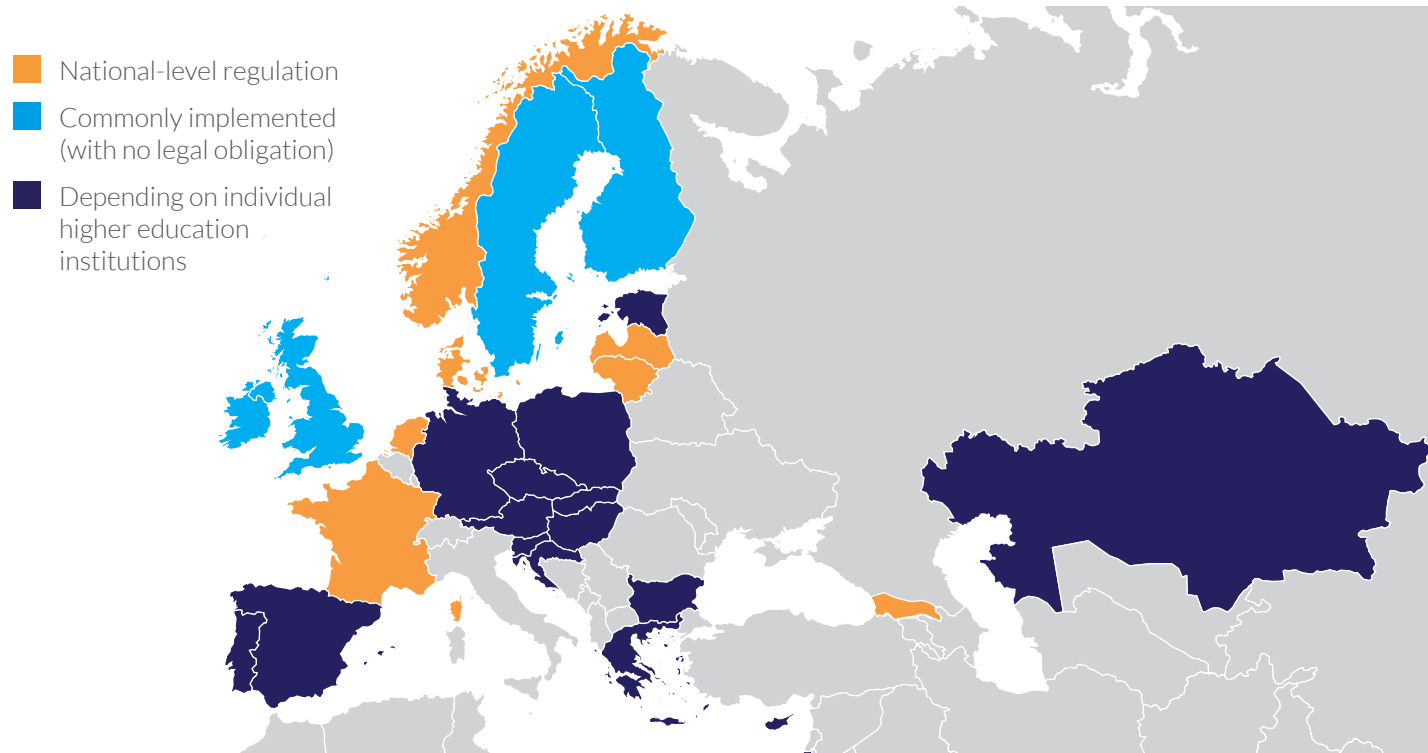
- For example, in the Netherlands, the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Centre for Education and Learning,²⁷ serves Leiden University, Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University Rotterdam as an interuniversity and interdisciplinary research centre and innovation and training platform on learning and teaching.
- UNorte.Pt²⁸ is a strategic partnership between the three public universities of Northern Portugal (U Porto, U Minho and UTAD), considered as a pioneer initiative for the implementation of an efficient regional strategy. Among others, the three universities work together on learning and teaching and share best practices in teaching enhancement.

As confirmed also by Trends 2018 data, only very few higher education institutions rely on the service of external, for-profit organisations to conduct teacher training.

National-level regulation on teaching enhancement

Teaching enhancement is regulated in seven (25%) of the 28 systems; in another four systems, it is commonly used without being a national requirement, whereas 17 systems rely mainly on measures at individual universities.

Fig.2 – Regulation of teaching enhancement



27 <http://www.educationandlearning.nl/about-us>

28 <https://www.utad.pt/en/university/formalisation-of-the-unorte-pt-consortium/>

In Denmark, France, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Norway (from 2018), teaching enhancement is a legal requirement:

- **Through a comprehensive policy on staff development**

- **Norway:** Based on the January 2017 white paper “Quality Culture in Higher Education” and the results from a hearing held in June 2018, the Norwegian Ministry of Education released a new education act in September 2018. Under this act, higher education institutions have to ensure as from September 2019 that new teaching staff acquire within one or two years the necessary teaching competences – if they do not possess them through prior education and work experience. In addition, the Ministry now requires documentation of continued work for teaching improvement from academic staff who would like to move from associate to full professorship. It should be noted that Norway has one of the longest traditions of pedagogical training for higher education teaching staff, previously based on an approach established by the sector itself. Reportedly, the Ministry of Education had not intended to make teacher training obligatory and prescribe its duration. But at last, it did so, and as of September 2018, a minimum of 200 hours pedagogical training per year are compulsory for all teaching staff.

- **Obligatory training courses for entry level-teaching staff**

- **Denmark:** Teacher training is not required for senior and tenured professors. However, to become associate professors, assistant professors must undertake teacher training courses.
- **France:** As of September 2018, pedagogical training is mandatory for all new assistant professors. Duration and modalities of training are not prescribed by decree, and higher education

institutions can develop training programmes according to their own educational policy. During this mandatory training, the teaching load of assistant professors is one-sixth lower. To assist with the implementation of pedagogical training, in November 2017, the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research has set up a MOOC called “*Se former pour enseigner dans le supérieur*” (Train to teach in higher education).²⁹ Support services from several French higher education institutions contributed to the design and animation of this MOOC. It targets individual teachers, but also higher education institutions that have not yet created their own pedagogical support services.

- **Obligation to offer teachers professional development opportunities**

- **Lithuania:** Since 1 January 2017, higher education institutions are required to offer teachers professional development opportunities, for general and teaching competences. It is then up to the teachers to decide whether they attend such CPD measures.

- **Obligation for academic staff to undertake teaching enhancement**

- **Latvia:** Due to a ministerial decree from 2014 on the required academic and professional qualifications of teachers, academic teaching staff have to undergo 160 academic hours of professional development, in order to get re-elected to their positions (in Latvia, academic appointments are confined to six years). Professional development may include international mobility and participation in suitable conferences and seminars. Individual universities address this requirement differently, depending on their internal quality culture. Commonly, training attendance is more thoroughly checked only at the point of re-election of academic teaching staff.

- **As part of the accreditation requirements**

- **Georgia:** Based on a ministerial decree from May 2017, to receive their institutional accreditation, higher education institutions need to have an institutional policy on teaching enhancement and teacher training. It is up to the individual higher education institution to decide on the specificities of these measures.

- **Through associations of universities**

- **The Netherlands:** Dutch universities within the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) created a certificate of quality for lecturers, namely the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ, or *Basis Kwalificatie Onderwijs, BKO*), which certifies the didactic competences of lecturers in higher education. This started in 2008, when the universities agreed on the features and content of the teaching qualifications, in order to mutually recognise them, and enable employment without further testing. The UTQ is a mark of quality and functions as a reference frame for didactic skills needed in higher education. It is now compulsory for all lecturers, university lecturers, senior university lecturers and professors, and it is recognised by all Dutch universities. It standardises both the competencies to be acquired, and their assessment. At the same time, it leaves scope for each university to put their own spin on the UTQ programme for optimal alignment with their institutional profile and the needs of their programmes and lecturers. The UTQ track generally begins with an interview of the applying academic teaching staff, conducted by the faculty’s UTQ contact person. Based on one’s teaching experience, it is then decided which learning outcomes the applicant needs to develop further. The applicant has then two years to complete the UTQ track. A personal portfolio serves as evidence that the applicant meets the expected learning

29 <https://www.fun-mooc.fr/courses/course-v1:enseignementsup+131001+session01/about>

outcomes, including student evaluations, the supervisor's assessment, self-reflection teaching skills development, advice from a colleague-mentor (as part of training programmes).³⁰ Faculties can set additional portfolio requirements. Once completed, the portfolio is assessed by a committee, and provided that all learning outcomes are met, the UTQ certificate is issued and signed by the dean of the faculty and by the vice-rector.

- **Norway:** In 1988, the National Council of Universities (NCU),³¹ an advisory body "owned" by the universities themselves put in place a policy whereby all newly appointed lecturers had to enrol for training to achieve "basic pedagogical competence", the equivalent of 3-4 weeks full-time study, or about 100 hours. In 2015, national guidelines were adopted by Universities Norway (UHR),³² which extend the recommended number of hours for training in basic pedagogical competences from 100 to 150-200 hours. In line with these recommendations, each university has been responsible for organising and implementing its own teaching enhancement programmes. For instance, starting in autumn 2017, the University of Oslo has increased teacher training from 100 to 150 hours. 120 hours are reserved for the introductory module, whereas the remaining 30 hours are divided between 1-2 elective modules. The programme includes tenured and temporary academic staff, including PhD and postdoc students.

• As part of doctoral studies

- In many, but not all higher education systems and institutions, the doctoral degree is the most common requirement for an academic position, which also comprises teaching responsibilities. But only in 11 of the 49 EHEA systems (Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine) doctoral candidates have to acquire formal teacher training (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018: Bologna Process Implementation Report 2018, pp.85-86). The actual requirements can be very different: it may comprise teaching practice, pedagogical development or a combination of both. Moreover, exposure to teaching and teacher training may not be compulsory for all doctoral candidates, due to exceptions (e.g. for candidates who do not participate in doctoral programmes) and sluggish implementation. In Slovakia, for example, by law, full-time PhD candidates have to teach on average four hours every week, but in 2015-2016, this applied only to 56% of them.³³
- **Norway:** Doctoral candidates are considered staff and have to undergo obligatory teacher training.
- **Poland:** A PhD programme must include a module of at least five ECTS on teaching skills. In addition, PhD candidates are required to complete a certain number of teaching hours or at least to assist a professor in teaching.
- **Hungary:** In the spring of 2016, the National Network of Doctoral Students proposed including a pedagogy module in the curricula of doctoral studies. However, the Hungarian Rectors' Conference issued a position paper opposing this initiative.

Systems commonly implementing teaching enhancement (without legal requirements)

In some countries, teaching enhancement, while not legally required, has become very common, such as in Finland, Ireland, Sweden and United Kingdom (England):

- **Finland:** While teachers at all levels of education from kindergarten to polytechnics are legally required to undergo pedagogical training, university teachers are not. However, in the 2000s, pedagogic courses became an established practice at universities, and today they are offered commonly with an equivalent of 60 ECTS. Participation is still voluntary, although there have been discussions about compulsory teacher training. The University of Jyväskylä, University of Oulu, Åbo Akademi University and Tampere University of Technology have made it compulsory for new teachers during the first two years after recruitment, unless they can prove that they have already undergone training.
- **Ireland:** There is no country-level regulation for teaching enhancement. However, all higher education institutions are mapping their professional frameworks against the "National Professional Development Framework for All Staff Who Teach in Higher Education"³⁴ released by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The framework aims to "empower staff to create, discover and engage in meaningful personal and professional development in a variety of ways, as well as to encourage staff to engage in peer dialogue and support in their professional development activities" and allows the institutions to adapt approaches to their specific needs and context. The National Forum is assisting higher education

30 <https://www.staff.universiteitiden.nl/human-resources/mobility-and-career-guidance/teacher-professionalisation/university-teaching-qualification>

31 The National Council of Universities used to be the National Rectors' Conference in Norway until 1999. After 1999, Universities Norway (UHR) took up the role of the National Rectors' Conference.

32 <https://www.uhr.no/en/about-uhr/>

33 Eurydice, 2017, p. 35.

34 <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/publication/national-professional-development-framework-for-all-staff-who-teach-in-higher-education/>

institutions in engaging with the framework, through a wide range of professional development opportunities, earning participants open access badges. The framework comprises different types of professional development opportunities, some with, some without accreditation. As a result, some higher education institutions require new staff to have a teaching qualification, or to obtain one during the first two years of their contract; others, while offering CPD, have not made it compulsory.

- **Sweden:** Between 2002-2011, Sweden had mandatory teaching enhancement courses, which due to the 2011 autonomy reform, ceased to be compulsory. However, the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) issued recommendations³⁵ on the learning outcomes required for teaching at the higher education level. Most universities adopted and implemented these recommendations in a non-uniform fashion, with mandatory courses of 5-10 weeks.
- **United Kingdom (England):** Although there is no formal requirement, the English government shows a keen interest in incentivising enhancement of student outcomes through market information to aid student choices. Based on data gathered and published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), third parties established league tables, comprising among others the proportion of staff with teaching qualifications per institution. Participation in accredited teaching enhancement measures usually makes part of the narrative evidence that the institutions submit when participating in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). Many higher education institutions have set targets to get close to 100% of their staff with certified teaching qualifications, including achievement of Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowships. In particular, early career academics and

new appointees are required at most higher education institutions in England to undergo in-house initial teacher training, and increasingly HEA Fellowship appears as a recruitment requirement in job descriptions.

Advance HE (formerly the Higher Education Academy, HEA) designs and accredits discipline-neutral programmes, and the recognition awarded is professional, not academic. Academic staff attending institutional CPD programmes and initial training programmes accredited by Advance HE, become Advance HE Fellows. While not the only one, the fellowship programme has become the most common scheme for training and recognition of teaching skills in England. It is based on the “UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education” (UKPSF, 2011),³⁶ developed by HEA, and consulted with and owned by the higher education sector. Advance HE/HEA still acts as its guardian. The UKPSF provides guidance to higher education institutions to develop their own adapted teacher training programmes. As a result, teacher training programmes can meet specific institutional needs, but also be included in, and referenced to, the UKPSF for validation, which creates a “common currency” for the entire higher education system. However, also in England, higher education institutions remain the main organisers of CPD and initial teacher training.

Systems where teaching enhancement depends on individual higher education institutions

In 17 (61%) higher education systems, there are neither national regulations, nor pressure from the sector regarding teaching enhancement: in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Poland, Portugal,

Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain. In these countries, enhancing the quality of teaching is usually addressed by individual higher education institutions through a combination of different measures, such as pedagogical training for teaching staff, assessment of teaching performance (e.g. student feedback, use of learning outcomes) or measures to improve the learning environment. In Austria, teaching enhancement is also partly addressed through its inclusion in performance agreements between the Federal Ministry and individual public universities.

In such systems, there are examples of individual higher education institutions that made teacher training obligatory for all, or parts of their staff, especially for those who are entry-level. Other institutions offer teaching enhancement opportunities for their staff, but on a voluntary basis.

- **Estonia:** The University of Tartu offers voluntary teacher training courses for its staff, through its Centre for Professional Development and the Institute for Education. The institute’s main areas of research focus on the professional development of teachers, educational technology and digital literacy, as well as educational management. The Centre for Professional Development was established in the framework of the EU-funded PRIMUS programme in Estonia and it employs several academic developers that design and coordinate courses aimed at supporting the professional development of teachers from all disciplinary areas at the University of Tartu.
- **Germany:** Individual universities design and implement initial teacher training and CPD programmes for their staff. There is also a national initiative called *Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung* (2015-2023), which has as its main objective the sustainable development of teacher training and CPD measures.

35 https://lnu.se/contentassets/9341a15dc5c64ec3a3614c7486cc3e70/rek-2016-1-on-general-learning-outcomes-for-teaching-qualifications_dnr-024-16.pdf

36 https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/uk_professional_standards_framework.pdf

- **Poland:** As part of the EU-funded national POWER program, the Jagiellonian University launched the project “Ars docendi – development of teaching staff of the Jagiellonian University” (2017-2019). Three hundred teachers from all faculties undergo a needs- and self-assessment followed by an at least one-semester training programme.
- **Portugal:** The Instituto Superior Técnico from the University of Lisbon, requires new staff to attend an induction week on learning and teaching matters, and the University of Porto is offering pedagogical trainings and other teaching enhancement-related measures that have involved about a third of the teachers in the past three years.
- **Spain:** As it is the case in most higher education institutions in Spain, the Pompeu Fabra University offers voluntary programmes for teachers to enhance their pedagogical skills through its Center for Learning Innovation and Knowledge (CLIK). This center now plans to turn the voluntary programme into a Master in Higher Education. At other Spanish institutions the prospect to earn a degree has resulted in a slightly higher participation in the programme (e.g. at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya).

Teaching enhancement and career progression

Only in nine (32%) of the 28 of the systems mapped, participation in teaching enhancement courses is considered for career progression:

- **Austria:** As part of the performance agreements, higher education institutions consider didactic competences in the appointment procedure for professors.

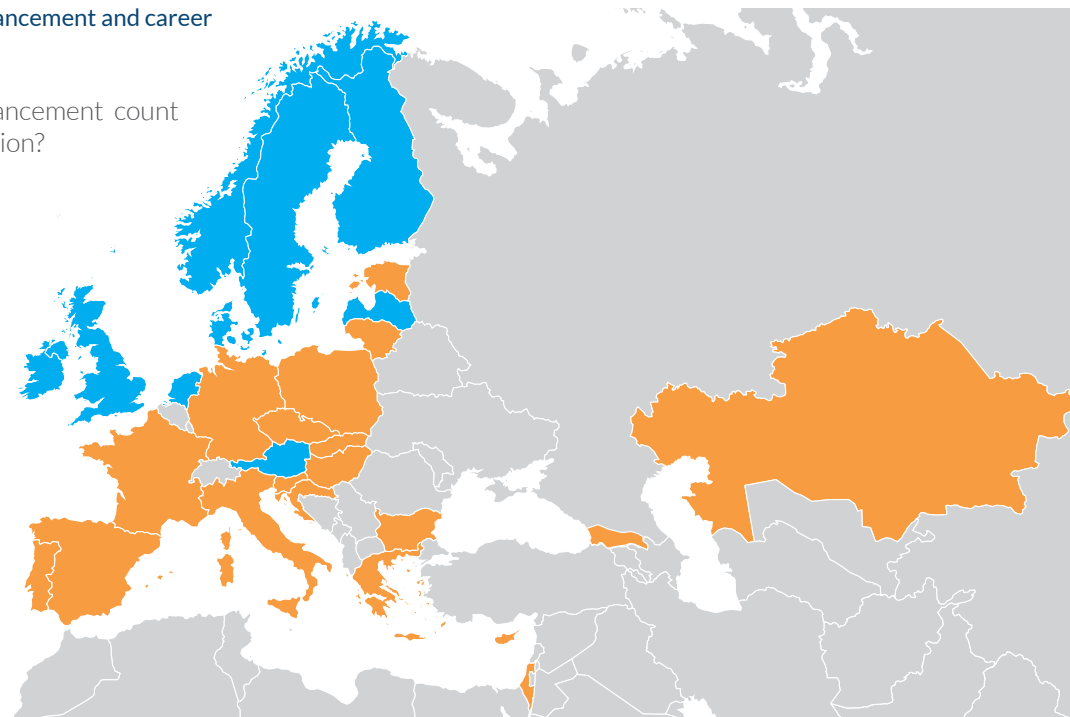
37 <https://www.staff.universiteitleiden.nl/human-resources/mobility-and-career-guidance/teacher-professionalisation/university-teaching-qualification/science?cf=service-units&cd=administration-and-central-services>

- **Denmark:** Teacher training counts for career development of junior academic teaching staff, e.g. assistant professors must undergo teacher training courses before they can become associate professors.
- **Finland:** Under the personal performance evaluation system for teaching and research staff in Finland, pedagogical merit is one of the three main criteria, alongside merits in research, engagement in the university community and society. It considers the candidate’s teaching skills, but also the active participation in the development of learning and teaching, contribution to networks related to teaching, receipt of awards and distinctions related to teaching, etc.
- **Ireland:** Professional development in teaching is a key component for career development, even though research output is often given priority in promotion. However, recently teaching enhancement has received more attention than in the past.
- **Latvia:** Teaching enhancement courses count for career progression, but they do not make a major difference. Participation in teaching enhancement measures is especially examined at the moment of re-election of an academic teaching staff.
- **The Netherlands:** Permanent contracts, promotion to a higher position, and any appointment of 0.5 FTE or more as a lecturer, university lecturer, senior university lecturer or as a professor for one year or longer, require a UTQ. Newly appointed staff have two years to complete the UTQ track.³⁷

Fig.3 – Teaching enhancement and career progression

Does teaching enhancement count for career progression?

- Yes
- No, very little



- **Norway:** The 2017 white paper states that “the Government requires the higher education institutions to develop pedagogical merit systems to encourage more teaching initiatives and to reward important development work. Merit systems should promote education quality by remunerating academic employees according to documented results. One of the goals of this white paper is to raise the status of educational activity and place greater value on teaching competence than it currently enjoys, not just at the appointment stage but from a career perspective.”

Moreover, as of September 2018, basic pedagogical competences corresponding to a minimum of 200 hours of courses are obligatory for appointment of all academic positions. The new regulation also sets expectations and demands for teaching enhancement when applying for career promotion and makes it a requirement for all higher education institutions to establish, individually or in partnership with others, and within two years, merit systems that value the development of good teaching.

- **Sweden:** Universities would usually follow the recommendations of their sector organisation – the SUHF. Teachers can apply with their pedagogical portfolios to pedagogical academies organised by individual higher education institutions, a system which has existed for about 15 years. Pedagogical academies award certificates of teaching excellence to the participants, who then become role models for their fellow colleagues. Although research output still seems to count more for career development, there is a tendency to consider pedagogical portfolios in applications for academic positions and for career promotion.
- **United Kingdom (England):** Depending on the institution, teaching enhancement may count for career progression, but usually only along with

other academic and research activity, as positions in general combine teaching and research tasks. But staff appointed for teaching only positions would be assessed on teaching enhancement for career progression. In general, teaching enhancement is supported and paid for by the university. Some higher education institutions make teacher training a requirement for a permanent contract.

In the remaining 19 systems, participation in teaching enhancement courses has no or insignificant impact on career promotion, which, according to the interviews, would depend mainly on research output. In systems where participation in teaching enhancement is required for career progression, this might then earn a salary raise. But generally, financial incentives or rewards for academic teaching staff participating in teaching enhancement are not common at all.

Financial incentives for CPD

Finland	Academic staff, by participating in teaching enhancement, could qualify for career promotion, which may earn a salary increase. In addition, on a case by case basis, individual teachers may be given a financial reward for time and work invested in pedagogical achievements, and in combination with a high teaching load.
Kazakhstan	Every three years, academic teaching staff are encouraged to take part in at least one teacher training course, which counts for a salary increase.
Norway	As a result of recent reforms, higher education institutions would have to establish a merit system, which is currently explored under different pilots. Some higher education institutions award individual staff a one-time bonus of NOK 30 000 (approximately 3 200 EUR), others reward the institute or department. The teacher unions have requested that rewards be given under sector-wide rules, and as part of the institutions’ remuneration policies.
Spain	Professors can apply periodically for the recognition of their teaching experience, which would then lead to a small salary increase.
United Kingdom (England)	There is no financial reward for participation, but career progression may lead to salary increases.

Obstacles and enablers for enhancing learning and teaching

The experts were also asked about the obstacles and enablers for enhancing learning and teaching in their countries. While these obviously differ for the individual countries, some were found to be shared among several or even most systems.

Obstacles

Governmental funding for learning and teaching initiatives remains limited so that institutions either rely entirely on competitive international funding opportunities (such as Erasmus+ projects) or on their own funds – which limits the sustainability and very likely the quality of the initiatives. Not surprisingly, the Trends 2018 report confirmed that the lack of funding is seen across Europe as the biggest obstacle for the development of learning and teaching.³⁸

However, the main obstacle for the enhancement of learning and teaching, remains, according to an overwhelming majority of the experts interviewed, the fact that **research is valued more than teaching**, both in terms of recruitment and career promotion. In Trends 2015, 54% of respondents stated that research plays a more important role than teaching in the careers of young academics; in Trends 2018, the fact that teaching, unlike research, does not get sufficient academic recognition, and would count for career advancement, was identified as the second biggest obstacle for the enhancement of learning and teaching – only topped by lack of funding. The interviews confirmed the disparity of esteem between research and teaching as a structural

barrier in academia, reinforced by priorities set by parts of the institutional leadership, funding streams and national and international rankings mostly based on research publications. This is not only an evident discrepancy in the prestige that research and teaching earn, but it also weakens the link between the two. Research results often do not feed into teaching and the contribution of teaching to research usually gets ignored. The two appear as competitors, rather than as interconnected activities.

In some higher education systems, **low salaries** are another obstacle. In Lithuania, for instance, they impact the attractiveness of academic career for young talents, in particular in regard to teaching. The Lithuanian expert mentions: “Within higher education, teaching as an activity is further downplayed by assigned prestige and primary focus on research, research results and attracting industry contracts being very prominent performance indicators to measure individual and institutional success. This negatively affects the prestige of teaching path as opposed to researcher’s path. It is also related to the salary structure of academic staff”.

Respondents also pointed to **low levels of pedagogical skills** of the academic teaching staff as one of the obstacles for the development of learning and teaching. Teachers should not only know their disciplines, but must also possess professional pedagogical skills and knowledge, for example, teaching strategies, classroom management and students’ approaches to learning. This should be taught in a systematic way by higher education institutions to their academic teaching staff. However, in most of the systems the incentivisation for teaching enhancement remains very limited, resulting in low participation. This is coupled, in some countries, with high teaching loads, especially for young academics.

Enablers

The range of enablers for the enhancement of learning and teaching identified by the experts covers a broad spectrum, from earmarked funding for learning and teaching initiatives, national regulations for teaching enhancement, institutional leadership prioritising investment in learning and teaching, to technological change and internationalisation, to name but a few. **European-wide initiatives**, through EU-funded projects in learning and teaching or through the Bologna Process, are also mentioned as important enablers for the improvement of learning and teaching, at both national and institutional levels.

38 Trends 2018, p. 30.

Several of the respondents mentioned fora for **exchange both within higher education institutions and at national and European levels**. This is also confirmed by the success of events organised on learning and teaching matters. The first European Learning & Teaching Forum in 2017 aimed to provide an opportunity for institutional representatives, policy makers and academic staff to meet and discuss developments in learning and teaching at European universities – it gathered around 300 participants.³⁹

Some respondents mentioned **negative demographic trends** as a driver for the enhancement of learning and teaching in their countries: universities strive to become attractive and learner-centred, due to increased competition of attracting students, especially in countries where the core funding model is based on student numbers.

Moreover, as **student cohorts are becoming more heterogeneous**, their educational needs are also more diverse.⁴⁰ Students with caring responsibilities and in part-time employment require a more flexible provision.

Respondents acknowledged that progress in learning and teaching cannot be realised without **improving staff development approaches**. In most of the systems mapped, experts mentioned that it is still difficult to ensure participation of all, but especially of senior staff.

For an overview regarding the obstacles and enablers for the enhancement of learning and teaching for each country, please see the overview table, at the end of this study (Annex 3).

³⁹ <https://eua.eu/events/24-2019-european-learning-teaching-forum.html>

⁴⁰ <http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications-homepage-list/eua-s-learning-and-teaching-initiative---report-from-the-thematic-peer-groups-in-2017>

Conclusions and ways forward

The study is provisional, as it does not provide sufficient information on the individual systems, which are also likely to continue to change under ongoing reforms and in adaptation to changing needs. But it provides some comparative data and information about the ways in which public authorities and national initiatives contribute to learning and teaching, which is important for the ongoing policy discussions. There have been calls for means to compare the learning and teaching achievement of universities and to compare achieved learning outcomes and student success. Recently, even a teaching ranking has been commenced.

But little interest has been paid to the frameworks and conditions under which institutions were to achieve these results, and the important role of public authorities. The Bologna Process Implementation Reports and the Trends Reports provide some data, which the present study is now complementing. But it is a starting point for a deeper reflection on the role of public authorities and national initiatives.

The study confirms four points for further investigation and action:

- **Funding** is required, not only for teaching, but for the development and continuation of more sustainable systematic institutional approaches for learning and teaching, allowing the higher education institutions to develop structures and policies for innovation and enhancement.
- **Collaboration**, in particular at European levels, could help to review and transform approaches and structures that are taken as a given, but may no longer be fit for purpose.
- **Teaching enhancement** is explored practically everywhere, and there is likely a trend to enhance it, and provide it in a more systematic way. As some systems are ahead, there is a good opportunity here for exchange and mutual learning.
- **Recognition of teaching** as part of the academic career is confirmed to be a challenge in all systems, and this calls for a reflection on how the academic profession is defined and assessed, also in view to the wide range of tasks that academics perform beyond teaching and research.

These points have been addressed, to some extent in the 2018 Paris Communiqué.⁴¹ It is hoped therefore that they will be followed up in due course. As higher education institutions confirm cross-border exchange and cooperation as catalysts for enhancing learning and teaching, there is clearly an opportunity for intergovernmental exchange, in the Bologna Process and in the EU context.

41 <http://www.ehea2018.paris/Data/EIFinder/s2/Communique/EHEAParis2018-Communique-final.pdf>



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Annex 1: List of countries and experts interviewed

Austria

Andrea Geisler, Head of Department, Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy
Alexander Kohler, Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy

Bulgaria

Ivana Radonova, State Expert, Higher Education Directorate, Ministry of Education and Science

Croatia

Marko Turk, Assistant Professor, University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Education

Cyprus

Charalambos Vrasidas, Executive Director, CARDET and Professor of Learning Innovations & Policy, University of Nicosia

Czech Republic

Vera Stastna, Head of Department of Analyses and Strategies, Charles University, Prague

Denmark

Jakob Ravn, Head of Teaching & Learning, Copenhagen Business School

England

Alison Robinson Canham, Consultant, Higher Education Academy (HEA)/ Advance HE, United Kingdom

Estonia

Mari Karm, Senior Specialist for Academic Development, Centre for Professional Development, University of Tartu

Finland

Tommi Haapaniemi, Senior Coordinator, Educational Services, University of Eastern Finland

France

Philippe Lalle, Advisor for Pedagogy, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation

Georgia

Irine Darchia, Higher Education Reform Expert and Associate Professor in Classics, Tbilisi State University

Germany

Mechthild Dreyer, Former Vice-President for Learning & Teaching, Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz

Greece

Sokratis K. Katsikas, Center for Cyber & Information Security, Norwegian University of Science & Technology (NTNU)

Hungary

Istvan Vilmos Kovacs, Director, Directorate of International Relations and Innovation, Corvinus University of Budapest

Ireland

Terry Maguire, Director, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, Ireland

Israel

Sibylle Heilbrunn, Dean, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Kinneret Academic College Sea of Galilee

Italy

Maria Sticchi Damiani, Bologna Expert

Kazakhstan

Nelly Asmatullayeva, Chair of the Kazakh Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) team, Darkhan Akhmed-Zaki, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

Latvia

Agnese Rusakova, Expert, Latvian Rectors' Council

Lithuania

Giedrius Viliūnas, Vice Minister, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

The Netherlands

Henk Dekker, Professor Emeritus of Political socialization and integration, Leiden University and former Director Centre for Education and Learning (CEL)

Norway

Stine Grønvold, Pro-Rector for Education, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences

Poland

Andrzej Krasniewski, Secretary-General, Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP)

Portugal

Fernando Remião, former Pro-rector for Educational Innovation and Sport, University of Porto

Slovakia

Stefan Porubsky, Dean, Faculty of Education, Matej Bel University

Slovenia

Vanja Perovsek, Office for Quality Assurance, Analyses and Reporting, University of Ljubljana

Spain

Manel Jimenez Morales, Academic Director of the Center for Learning Innovation and Knowledge (CLIK), Pompeu Fabra University

Sweden

Åsa Lindberg-Sand, Associate Professor at the Division for Higher Education Development, Lund University

Annex 2: Semi-structured interview questionnaire

1. Could you tell us about your national or regional strategy/ framework for Learning and Teaching in higher education?

[If there is one]

- a. What is this strategy trying to achieve? What are the goals for setting up this strategy at the national/regional level?
- b. What does this national strategy imply/ focus on? (e.g. to develop an institutional learning and teaching strategy, to meet quantitative goals/benchmarks for learning and teaching, to reform curricula, to revise teaching methods, to introduce or increase teaching enhancement etc.)
- c. Does it provide:
 - Financial incentives,
 - Other types of support such as networking activities, rewards etc.)?
- d. How has it impacted on the higher education sector and on the higher education institutions? What is your opinion on this?

[If there is none]

- a. Do you believe that one such national strategy is needed? Why?
- b. Are there plans to create/implement such a strategy? If so, could you say for when it is planned, and what would be the broad lines and focus of this strategy?

2. Do you have, or did you recently have (in the past 5 years) a national initiative aiming to enhance learning and teaching in the higher education sector? If so, could you briefly tell us more about this initiative, and give your view on its impact and consequences?

3. Is there any country-level regulation regarding teaching enhancement (training or professional development for teachers in higher education)?

- a. Are there any rules or obligations for teachers to undergo teaching enhancement for career advancement? If so, could you briefly explain how it works and what these obligations are?
- b. Is teaching enhancement seen in your country as something to train entry-level teaching staff, as continued professional development, or both?

4. In your country, who typically organises teaching enhancement courses/support and continuous professional development (CPD) measures? Higher education institutions, other operators outside institutions, a combination of both?

- a. If other operators than higher education institutions offer that: what are these operators?
 - National, regional level government organisations
 - University networks
 - Network of teachers
 - For-profit organisations

5. In conclusion: what would you see as drivers/ enablers and obstacles for improving learning and teaching in your country?

6. Do you have a teaching prize at the national level? If yes, could you tell us more about it, and tell us your opinion on its impact?

Annex 3: Overview table

Higher education system	Dedicated (standalone) national strategy for learning and teaching	Country-level regulation on teaching enhancement	Teaching enhancement counts for career progression	National teaching prize in higher education	Drivers & enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Austria	■	●	■	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making sure learning and teaching becomes an issue seriously addressed in higher education 	
Bulgaria	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU-funded projects - Financial incentives for academic teaching staff - National teaching enhancement initiatives that could be replicated by higher education institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low level of pedagogical skills of the academic teaching staff - Teaching as profession is not esteemed - As teacher training is not obligatory and it is not financially rewarded, teachers do not attend it
Croatia	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutional leadership from the Ministry of Science and Education and the National Rectors' Council - EU-funded projects in learning and teaching such as EDUCA-T 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current National Rectors' Council requirements for career promotion that do not include any mandatory teacher training - University leadership who are not interested in learning and teaching - The precarious financial situation of higher education institutions in Croatia
Cyprus	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global competition to attract students - Technological change - Internationalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic culture where research is valued more than teaching - Rankings mostly based on publications, which count more for career advancement than teaching portfolios - Institutional leadership who does not promote a parity of esteem between teaching and research
Czech Republic	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new institutional accreditation requirements as they demand a functional internal QA system, within which the enhancement of learning and teaching must be considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research is valued more than teaching, both in terms of recruitment and career promotion - University rankings mostly based on publications - Weak nexus between research and teaching
Denmark	●	■	■	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher education institutions themselves - Interdisciplinarity - Internationalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research is valued more than teaching, especially in terms of career promotion - Detailed national regulation that stalls innovation, for instance in terms of examination and grading. It is hard for academic teaching staff to implement a diversified assessment portfolio, while continuous assessment is very bureaucratic

■ = available, in place
 ● = not available, not in place

Higher education system	Dedicated (standalone) national strategy for learning and teaching	Country-level regulation on teaching enhancement	Teaching enhancement counts for career progression	National teaching prize in higher education	Drivers & enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Estonia	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic cultural change through the EU-funded PRIMUS programme, as it raised awareness about the importance of learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research is valued more than teaching, especially in terms of career promotion - Low incentivisation of teacher training
Finland	●	●	■	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students - The core funding model (which depends on student retention and graduate numbers, which forces higher education institutions to enhance their learning and teaching practices for attracting students, able to graduate on time with a good quality of education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The institutional mindset where teaching is looked at as a competitive activity to the research mission
France	●	■	●	■		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The growing number of students (which is not leaving much time for teachers to change their practice and think about new ways of teaching) - Research is valued more than teaching, both in terms of recruitment and career promotion
Georgia	●	■	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New accreditation standards (May 2017), which aim to be in compliance with the ESG 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of sufficient funding for learning and teaching - Resistance from academic staff to attend CPD courses - Ageing of academic teaching staff
Germany	●	●	●	■		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The biggest obstacle would be the fact that research is valued more than teaching
Greece	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Bologna Process was such a driver, but not anymore - EU-funded programmes and projects that value teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The underlying philosophy that research matters more than teaching
Hungary	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The difficulties shown by everyday practice in higher education - High drop-out rates - Financing schemes with a focus on learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research is valued over teaching - Overcharged schedules of academic teaching staff - Student feedback that needs to be further improved, while higher education institutions need to become more willing to use it - Introducing measures that do not serve the purpose; e.g.: a talk in the plenary on how to teach, rather than CPD embedded in the daily activities of the academic teaching staff
Ireland	■	●	■	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning and teaching within disciplines - Enabling student success is everybody's business - Learning and teaching in a digital world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting the senior management buy in - Lack of parity between research and teaching - Developing measurements and indicators to assess learning and teaching

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Higher education system	Dedicated (standalone) national strategy for learning and teaching	Country-level regulation on teaching enhancement	Teaching enhancement counts for career progression	National teaching prize in higher education	Drivers & enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Israel	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competition among higher education institutions for student recruitment (coupled with lower demographics) - New student generations that challenge the old ways of learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient funding - Lack of parity between research and teaching - High teaching loads especially for young academic teaching staff - Massification of higher education
Italy	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion of learning and teaching into higher education institutions' institutional strategies - Involvement of many teachers into learning and teaching initiatives - Peer learning activities - Financial incentives 	
Kazakhstan	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The society itself and the demographic growth - The demand for foreign languages (that led to the trilingual policy set as objective in the national education strategy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Old methods of teaching that still persist
Latvia	●	■	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-election of academic teaching staff through open competitions every 6 years - EU funds and projects for learning and teaching - Institutional autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competitive environment as all academic appointments are confined to 6 years - Research is valued more than teaching - Lack of inclusive and systematic discussions on the quality of teaching; each course is looked at as the business of only those who participate in it directly, leaving the overall (institutional) result not much cared for.
Lithuania	●	■	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New procedures and criteria for institutional and programme evaluation are currently developed which comprise greater attention towards measuring teaching and achieved learning outcomes - The National quality assurance agency (SKVC) and the national Erasmus+ Agency's projects that address student-centred learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low level of salaries in higher education - Assigned prestige and primary focus on research - Teaching workload is very high and demanding, while lacking institutional support mechanisms for carrying it out
The Netherlands	■	■	■	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational leadership 	
Norway	■	■	■	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White paper: "Quality Culture in Higher Education" (2017) - New acts and regulations - Fora for exchange within and among higher education institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The quality-enhancing work in the classroom is still dependent on the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers - Teaching enhancement courses that remain voluntary - The myth that some teachers do not want others to discuss/intervene in their work/classroom.

■ = available, in place
● = not available, not in place

Higher education system	Dedicated (standalone) national strategy for learning and teaching	Country-level regulation on teaching enhancement	Teaching enhancement counts for career progression	National teaching prize in higher education	Drivers & enablers for enhancing learning and teaching	Obstacles for enhancing learning and teaching
Poland	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal regulations - Financial incentives for the enhancement of learning and teaching - Projects for the enhancement of learning and teaching supported by EU funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of parity of esteem between research and teaching (both in terms of recruitment and career promotion)
Portugal	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governmental strategy that foresees real investment in learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scarce financial resources
Slovakia	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slovak higher education institutions striving to become more attractive study environments for students; - Students asking for new teaching methods; - EU-funded projects and programmes as they invite internal cooperation and peer learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of a national strategy for higher education
Slovenia	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It would be helpful to introduce systematic teaching enhancement courses for entry- level teaching staff - Financial incentives for CPD - Incentivise institutional support for changes in learning and teaching - Draft a strategy (national & institutional) containing priorities for learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly fragmented academic area, which makes collaboration hard - Lack of understanding and motivation for introducing new learning and teaching approaches - Insufficient funding - Lack of didactical and IT support/skills - High workload for the teachers, which leads to a lack of time for teacher training - Overregulated project budgets
Spain	●	●	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The pace of change set by the universities as the new student generations are asking for new approaches in learning and teaching - Innovation in higher education - Internationalisation - Internal university incentives - Accreditation processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of parity between research and teaching, both in terms of recruitment and career promotion
Sweden	●	●	■	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debate on learning and teaching between SWEDNET, SUHF and the national authorities - A new QA framework, which is now being drafted - Digital innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The academic culture which values teaching so much lower than research - Scarce financial resources for teaching
United Kingdom (England)	●	●	●	■	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student fees & students as customers who pressure the higher education system to become better - League tables - The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student fees & students as customers, given that student satisfaction is not synonymous with student learning and quality of education - Certain metrics (e.g.: graduate earnings are flawed proxies for teaching quality) - Reduced investment in learning and teaching

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 ● = not available, not in place



The European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching (EFFECT, 2015-2019) project aims at facilitating European collaboration on teaching enhancement, identifying and developing innovative practices, supporting higher education institutions in developing strategic approaches, and assessing the feasibility of a sustainable structure for the enhancement of learning and teaching at the European level.

The project consortium is led by the European University Association, and brings together experts, dedicated networks, organisations, national rectors' conferences and institutions from different parts of Europe.

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More information: <http://bit.ly/EFFECTproject>

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