

# University Autonomy in Europe

## The state of play and the Scorecard

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European University Association**

# Structure

- I. Project structure and methodology
- II. The state of university autonomy in Europe:  
data – trends – scorecards
  - Organisational autonomy
  - Financial autonomy
  - Staffing autonomy
  - Academic autonomy
- III. Future activities

## Project milestones

**SELECTION OF  
PROJECT  
STEERING  
COMMITTEE &  
EXPERTS**

• OCT 2009

**DEVELOPMENT  
OF  
INDICATORS &  
RESTRICTIONS**

• OCT 2009–  
APR 2010

**DESIGN &  
TESTING OF  
AUTONOMY  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

• APR 2010–  
JULY 2010

**DATA  
COLLECTION,  
VALIDATION &  
ANALYSIS**

• AUG 2010–  
SEPT 2011

**DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE  
AUTONOMY  
SCORECARDS**

• MAY 2010–  
SEPT 2011

# Challenges

## ■ Institutional autonomy

- is a complex concept that consists of various interconnected elements
- is contingent on the diverse cultural, political, legal and historical backgrounds of Europe's HE systems
- cannot be measured objectively
- There are diverse systems, even within countries – **CH, D,E**
- There is not just one model – context is very important

## ■ The Autonomy Scorecard

- had to take into account constantly changing legislative frameworks and at times contradictory policy developments
- had to simplify complex situations

## Organisational

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

## Financial

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

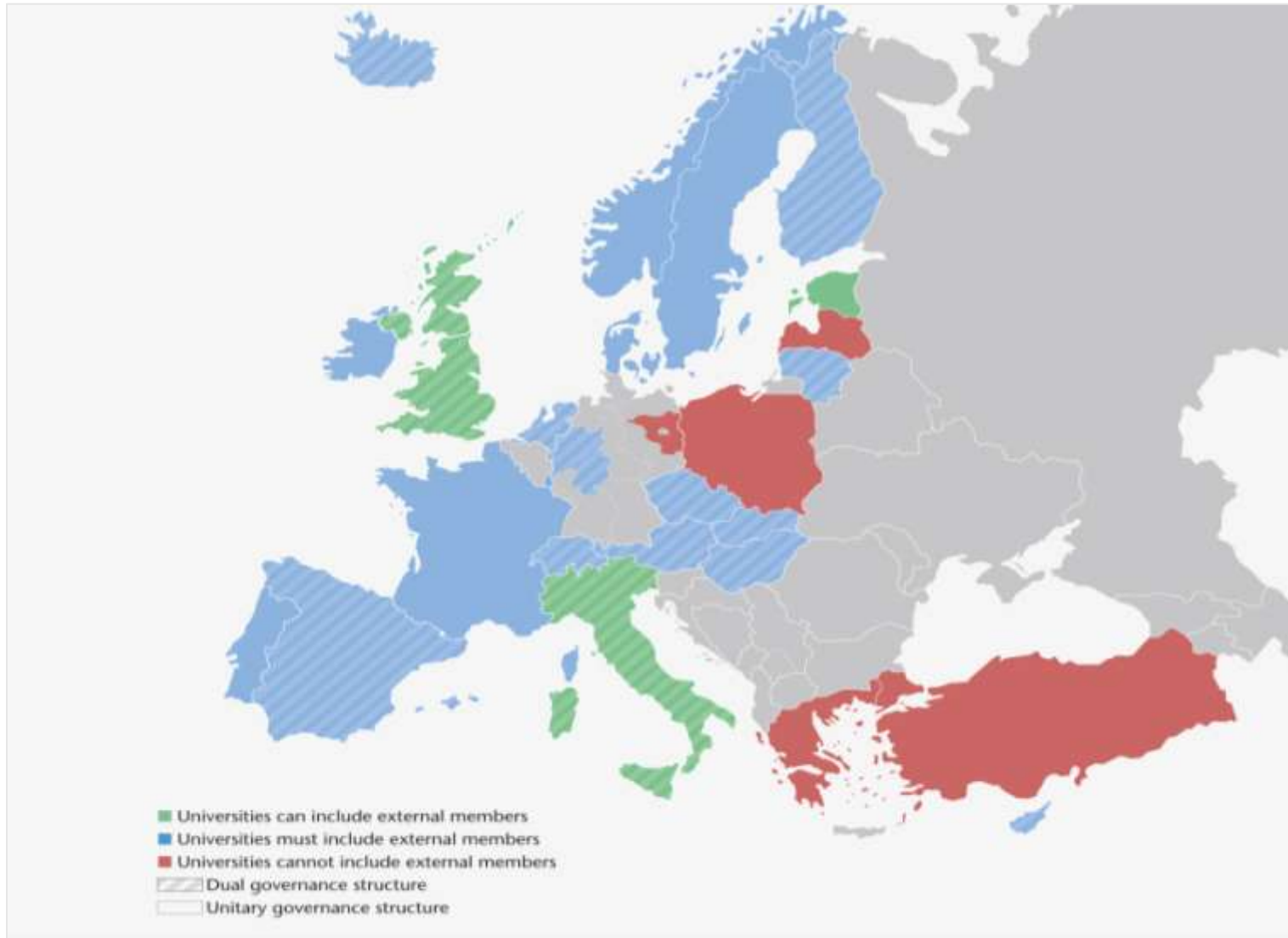
## Staffing

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

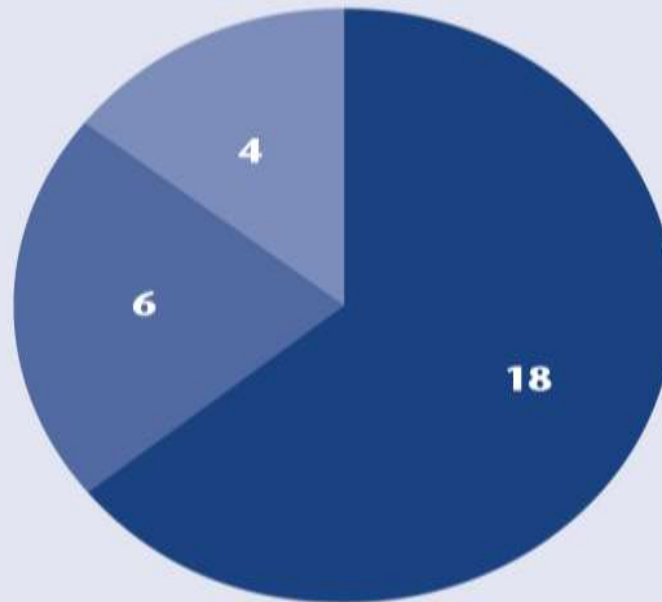
## Academic

- Deciding on overall student numbers
- Selecting students
- Introducing/ terminating programmes
- Choosing language of instruction
- Selecting QA mechanisms/ providers
- Designing content of programmes

# Governing structures



## Creation of legal entities



■ Universities can create profit and not-for-profit legal entities: AT, BB (DE), CZ, EE, ES, FI, FR, HE (DE), HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, NO, NRW (DE), UK

■ Universities can only create not-for-profit legal entities: CH, CY, GR, PT, SK, TR

■ Other restrictions: DK, IS, PL, SE

## Organisational autonomy - trends

- ✓ **External members** are now included in university governing bodies in a majority of systems, though external authorities often remain involved in their selection.
- ✓ Universities in nearly all systems are free to create **legal entities** and decide on **academic structures**.
- ✓ **Rectors** are always chosen by the universities, although external authorities often have to confirm the appointment.

Discussion for **CH**

- More independence in choosing external members
- External validation of executive head necessary?

# Methodology of the Autonomy Scorecard

- The **scoring** system
  - is based on deductions → restrictions on institutional autonomy are assigned a deduction value based on how restrictive a particular regulation is seen to be;
  - produces percentage scores for each indicator;
  - calculates the score for one autonomy dimension as an average of the scores for all indicators making up that dimension.

# Organisational autonomy - the scorecard

1	United Kingdom	100%
2	Denmark	94%
3	Finland	93%
4	Estonia	87%
5	North Rhine-Westphalia	84%
6	Ireland	81%
7	Portugal	80%
8	Austria	78%
	Hesse	78%
	Norway	78%
11	Lithuania	75%
12	The Netherlands	69%
13	Poland	67%
14	Latvia	61%

15	Brandenburg	60%
16	France	59%
	Hungary	59%
18	Italy	56%
19	Spain	55%
	Sweden	55%
	Switzerland	55%
22	Czech Republic	54%
23	Cyprus	50%
24	Iceland	49%
25	Slovakia	45%
26	Greece	43%
27	Turkey	33%
28	Luxembourg	31%

## Organisational

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

## Financial

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

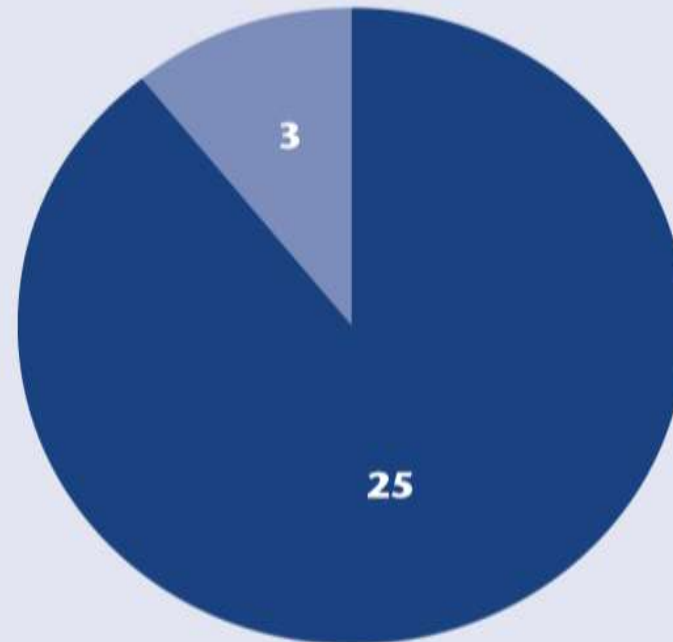
## Staffing

- Staff recruitment procedures
- Staff salaries
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## Academic

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## Type of public funding



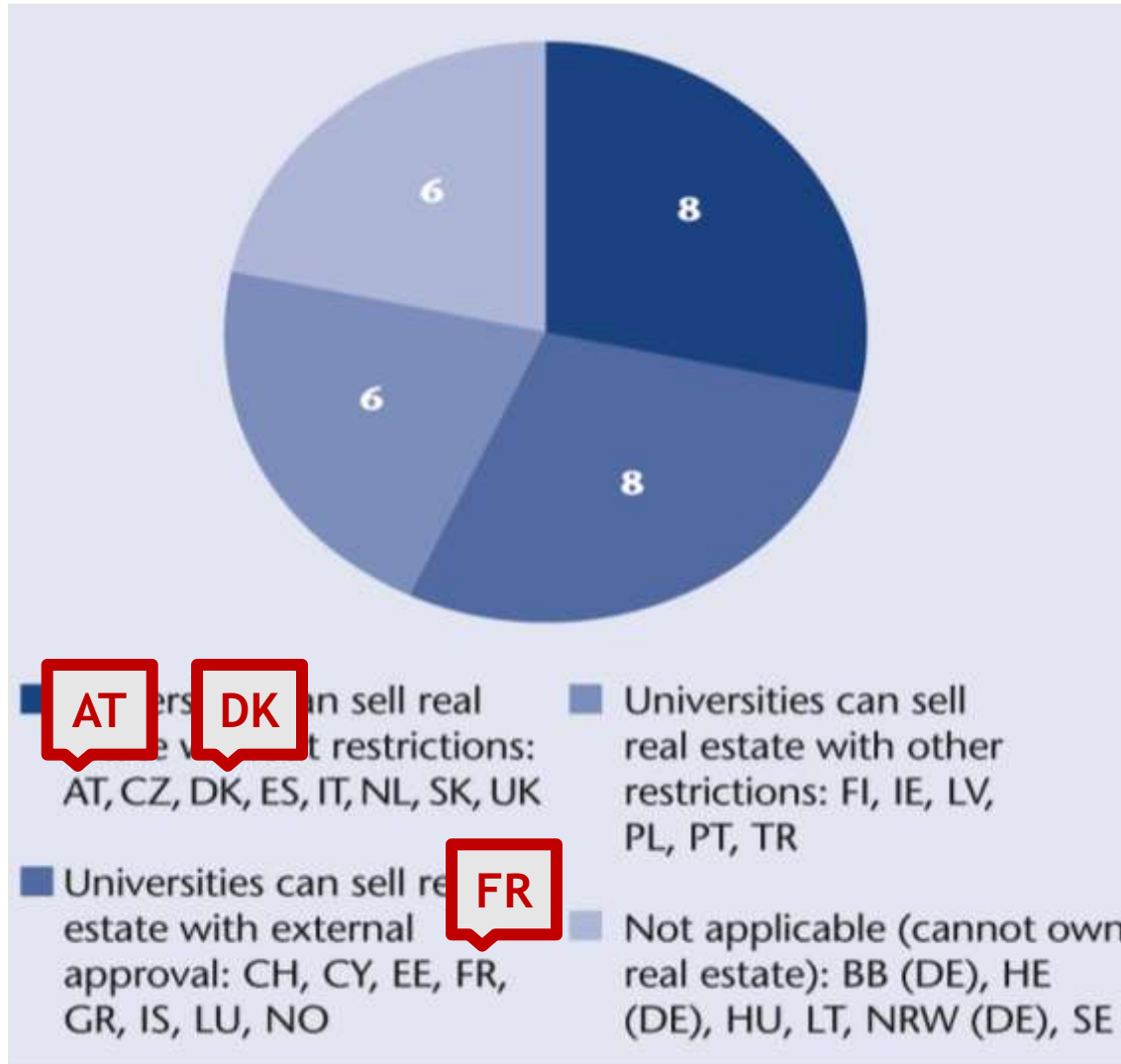
■ Block grant: AT, BB (DE), CH, CZ, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HE (DE), HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, NO, NRW (DE), PL, PT, SE, SK, UK

■ Line-item budget: CY, GR, TR

## Restrictions on allocation of block grants

- ❑ **Block grant is split into broad categories and there are no or limited possibilities for moving funds between these**
- ❑ **Internal allocation possibilities for block grant are limited by law**
- ❑ **Other restrictions, such as earmarking of a certain percentage or the setting of target agreements**

# Ownership of buildings



**AT**

**DK**

**FR**

## Comparison

<i><b>Indicator</b></i>	<i><b>CH</b></i>	<i><b>North Rhine-Westphalia</b></i>	<i><b>AT</b></i>
Public funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1-year funding cycle</li> <li>➤ Free allocation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1-year funding cycle</li> <li>➤ Free allocation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 3-year funding cycle</li> <li>➤ Free allocation, but 2% set aside</li> </ul>
Keeping surplus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, without restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, without restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, without restrictions</li> </ul>
Borrowing money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, up to a certain %</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, without restrictions</li> </ul>
Owning buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, but sale with external approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, and sale without restrictions</li> </ul>
Tuition fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, but level set in cooperation with external authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Abolished in 2011</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, but level set by external authority</li> </ul>

## Comparison

<i><b>Indicator</b></i>	<i><b>CH</b></i>	<i><b>Brandenburg</b></i>	<i><b>FR</b></i>
Public funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1-year funding cycle</li> <li>➤ Free allocation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2-year funding cycle</li> <li>➤ Free allocation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1-year funding cycle</li> <li>➤ Block grant split into broad categories</li> </ul>
Keeping surplus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, without restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Determined by external authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, without restrictions</li> </ul>
Borrowing money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, up to a certain %</li> <li>➤ From a specific bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, but with external approval</li> </ul>
Owning buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, but sale with external approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Yes, but sale with external approval</li> </ul>
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## Financial autonomy - trends

- ✓ Universities generally receive their public funding as a **block grant**, although its allocation may be restricted.
- ✓ **Surpluses can be kept** and **money borrowed** in a majority of systems, but in practice, various limitations still apply.
- ✓ Universities in most systems are able to **own their buildings**, but often require external permission to sell them.
- ✓ The situation is complex, but universities tend to be more free to set **tuition fees** for MA and non-EU students.

Discussion for **CH**

- Longer funding periods
- Ability to borrow money
- Complete ownership of buildings

# Financial autonomy - the scorecard

1	Luxembourg	91%
2	Estonia	90%
3	United Kingdom	89%
4	Latvia	80%
5	The Netherlands	77%
6	Hungary	71%
7	Italy	70%
	Portugal	70%
	Slovakia	70%
10	Denmark	69%
11	Ireland	66%
12	Switzerland	65%

13	Austria	59%
14	North Rhine-Westphalia	58%
15	Finland	56%
	Sweden	56%
17	Spain	55%
18	Poland	54%
19	Lithuania	51%
20	Norway	48%
21	Czech Republic	46%
22	France	45%
	Turkey	45%
24	Brandenburg	44%
25	Iceland	43%
26	Greece	36%
27	Hesse	35%
28	Cyprus	23%

## Organisational

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## Financial

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## Staffing

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

## Academic

- Deciding on overall student numbers
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- Choosing language of instruction
- Selecting QA mechanisms/ providers
- Designing content of programmes

## Staffing autonomy - the scorecard

1	Estonia	100%
2	United Kingdom	96%
3	Czech Republic	95%
	Sweden	95%
	Switzerland	95%
6	Finland	92%
	Latvia	92%
8	Luxembourg	87%
9	Denmark	86%
10	Lithuania	83%
11	Ireland	82%

12	Poland	80%
13	Austria	73%
	The Netherlands	73%
15	Iceland	68%
16	Norway	67%
17	Hungary	66%
18	Portugal	62%
19	Hesse	61%
	North Rhine-Westphalia	61%

21	Turkey	60%
22	Brandenburg	55%
23	Slovakia	54%
24	Italy	49%
25	Cyprus	48%
	Spain	48%
27	France	43%
28	Greece	14%

## Organisational

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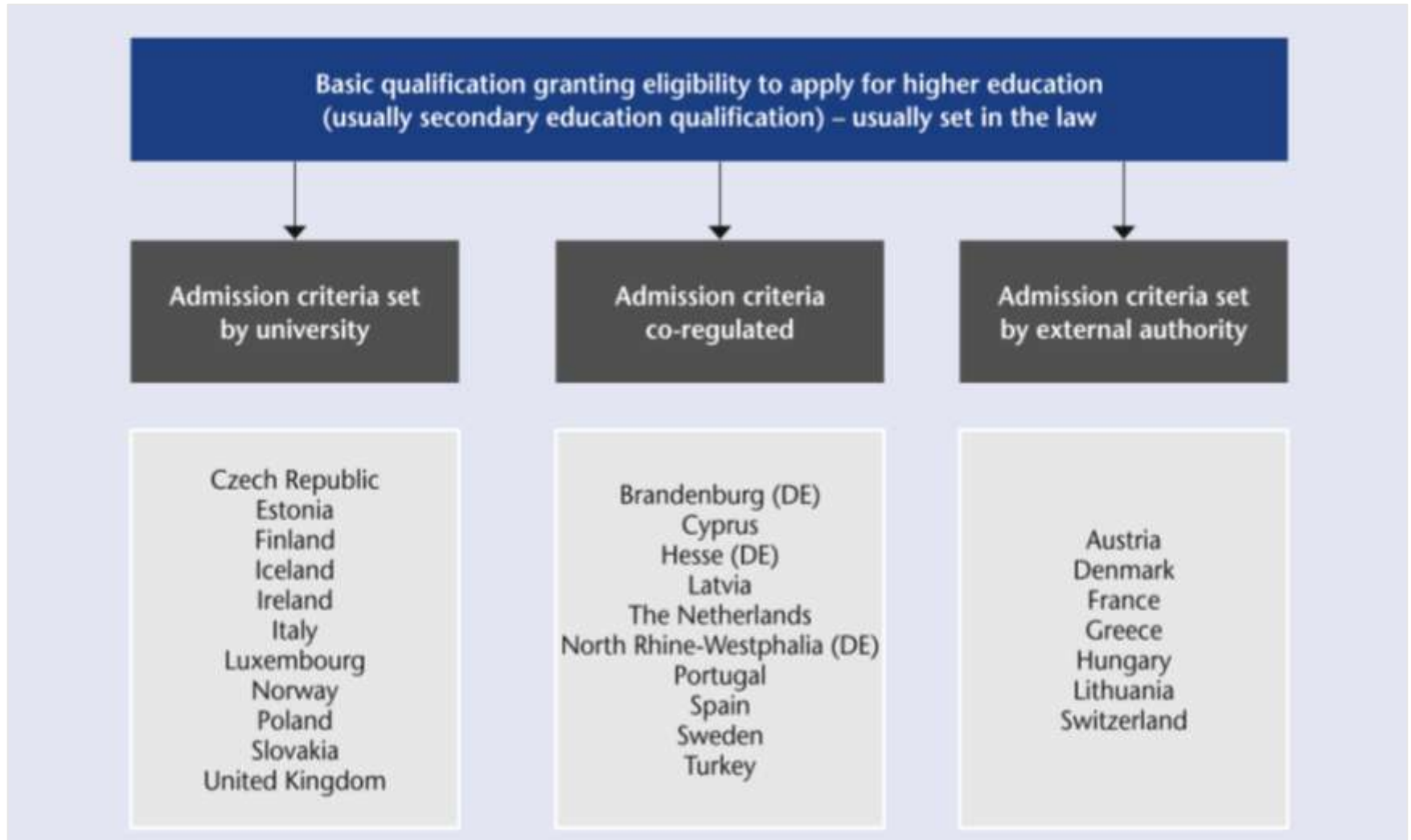
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# Admission mechanisms



# Quality assurance mechanisms



## Trends

- ✓ **Overall student numbers** are limited in nearly all systems.
- ✓ Universities in Europe still have little freedom in choosing **QA mechanisms**.
- ✓ **Accreditation** is still compulsory for BA/MA programmes in a majority of systems.
- ✓ The **language of instruction** can be chosen freely in approx. 2/3 of all systems.

Discussion for **CH**

- Greater freedom in setting admission criteria and selecting students

## Academic autonomy - the scorecard

1	Ireland	100%
2	Norway	97%
3	United Kingdom	94%
4	Estonia	92%
5	Finland	90%
6	Iceland	89%
7	Cyprus	77%
8	Luxembourg	74%
9	Austria	72%
	Switzerland	72%
11	Hesse	69%
	North Rhine-Westphalia	69%
13	Brandenburg	67%
14	Sweden	66%
15	Poland	63%

16	Italy	57%
	Spain	57%
18	Denmark	56%
	Slovakia	56%
20	Latvia	55%
21	Portugal	54%
22	Czech Republic	52%
23	The Netherlands	48%
24	Hungary	47%
25	Turkey	46%
26	Lithuania	42%
27	Greece	40%
28	France	37%

## Future activities

- Launch of an **online “autonomy tool”** to present the project results in an interactive way – **7 February 2012**
- **National dissemination events** in cooperation with the national rectors’ conferences – **from 2012**
- Provision of **expertise and consulting services** on autonomy and governance reforms, particularly in countries where higher education reforms are ongoing – **from 2012**
  - Benchmarking of different national frameworks
  - Analyses of individual country “performances”



## University Autonomy in Europe



Learn about the importance of university autonomy and its considerable benefits.

Select one of the countries on the right to start.



## Financial

Financial autonomy refers to a university's ability to freely decide on its internal financial affairs. The ability to manage its funds independently enables an institution to set and realise its strategic aims.

Since European universities receive an important proportion of their funds from the state, the **form in which this public funding is provided**, the **extent to which it may be freely allocated** to different budget lines and the **length of the funding cycle** are important aspects of financial autonomy.

→ continue reading

▼ Length of public funding cycle

▶ More than one year



## Switzerland

19th in Organisational

10th in Financial

3rd in Staffing

8th in Academic

## Switzerland

Swiss universities have a particularly autonomy over staffing policies. They are in the "medium high" group of higher education systems for financial and academic issues. Institutions are less autonomous with regard to organisational issues. The situation varies considerably between Switzerland's

**Thank you for your attention.**

For further information, please contact  
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