Survey Results
Principle 5

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Aim of the survey

Map the current status of implementation of **principles and guidelines 1, 5 and 10** by Ministries of Education across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Map the EHEA countries' interest in **participating in the peer-learning activities** targeted at implementation the principles and guidelines on social dimension

The questionnaire builds further on the 'Fostering Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education' questionnaire/survey from Eurydice

Sample

N = 20

Albania - Austria Belgium/Flemish Community - Bulgaria - Croatia Cyprus - Denmark - Estonia - France Georgia - Greece - Finland - Ireland Kazakhstan - Malta - The Netherlands Portugal - Slovenia - Sweden Switzerland
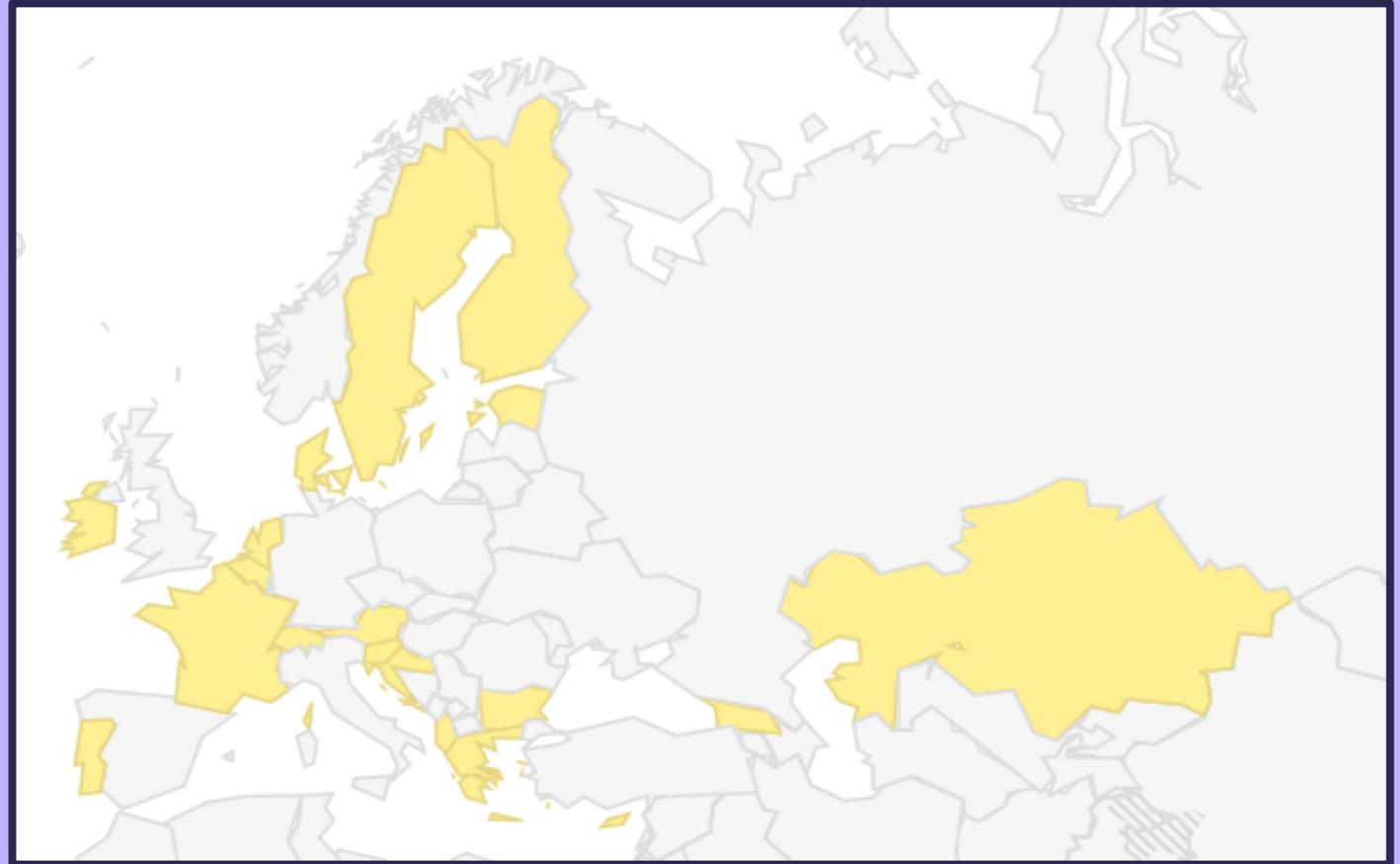
Principle 5

Public authorities should have policies that enable higher education institutions to ensure effective counselling and guidance for potential and enrolled students in order to widen their access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies. These services should be coherent across the entire education system, with special regard to transitions between different educational levels, educational institutions and into the labour market.

Guidelines

Public authorities should create conditions that enable collaboration between different public institutions that provide counselling and guidance services together with higher education institutions in order to create synergies and omit duplication of similar services. These services should uphold the principles of clarity and user-friendliness, because end users must be capable to understand them easily.

Within a diverse student body, special attention should be directed towards students with physical and psychological health challenges. These students should have access to professional support to secure their success in accessing and completing higher education studies. Special focus should be placed on prevention of psychological challenges caused by the organisation of study and students' living conditions.

Public authorities should also consider setting up ombudsperson-type institutions that will have the capacity and knowledge to mediate any conflicts, particularly related to equity issues that may arise during accessing or participating in higher education, or conflicts that hinder the completion of studies.
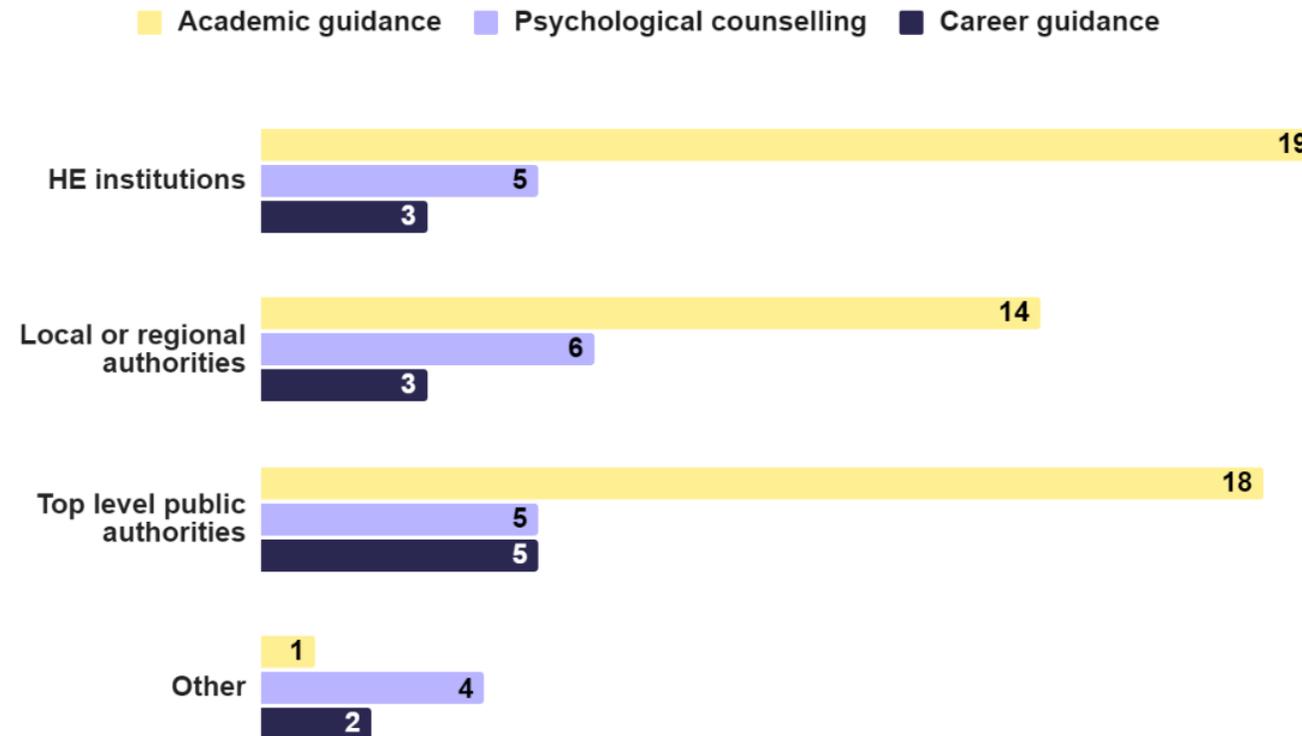
Service provision

Question: Is there a top-level legal requirement to provide the following services to higher education students? (choose all that apply) N=20
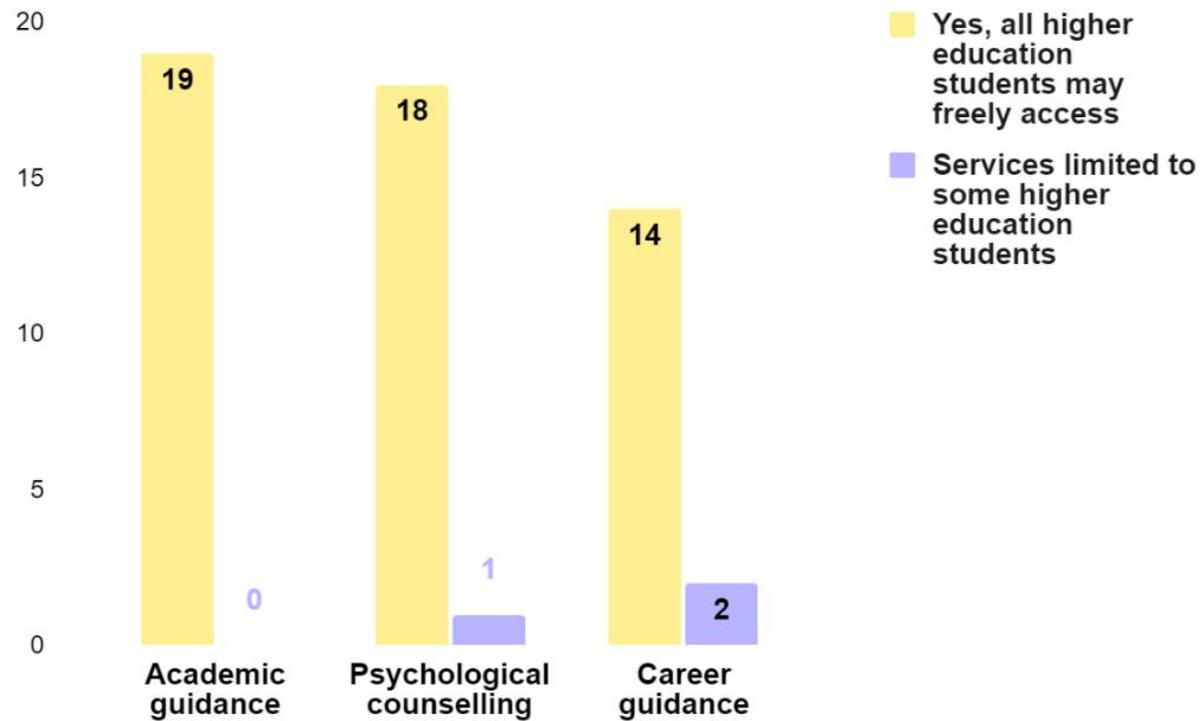
Service providers

Question: **If any of these services exist, who provides them to higher education students? (choose all that apply) N = 20**

Service access

Question: Can the services below be accessed by all higher education students? N= 19
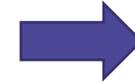
Student mental health

Although student mental health is receiving more attention, the impact of counselling is an under-researched area at European level.

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This is related to the complex range of very different guidance and counselling systems, as well as to the failure to prioritise mental well-being in general.

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Only a few countries pursue specific national strategies or frameworks for the prevention and treatment of students' mental health problems.

Based on identified needs, project partners will develop:
- **a policy report**
- **a comprehensive action framework**
- **guidelines**
- **self-assessment tools**

Specific action plan or framework

**Question: Does your country have a specific strategy, action plan or framework on student mental health?**

N=20

Data collection

Question: Do you collect and monitor data on student mental health? N=20

Promoting mental health

Question: Do you have any special national initiatives/channels to promote student mental health (specific marketing campaigns, success stories from disadvantaged students themselves, ...)? N=20

Yes — 13

No — 7
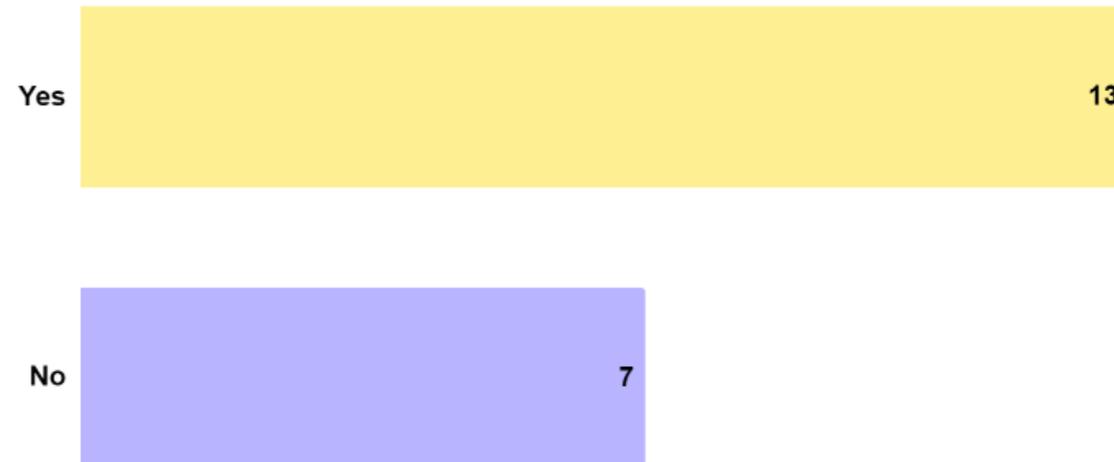
Requirement, incentives and services

Question: Are there requirements or incentives towards higher education institutions for support services and/or public grants established by the ministry of education or other departments to support student mental health? N= 20
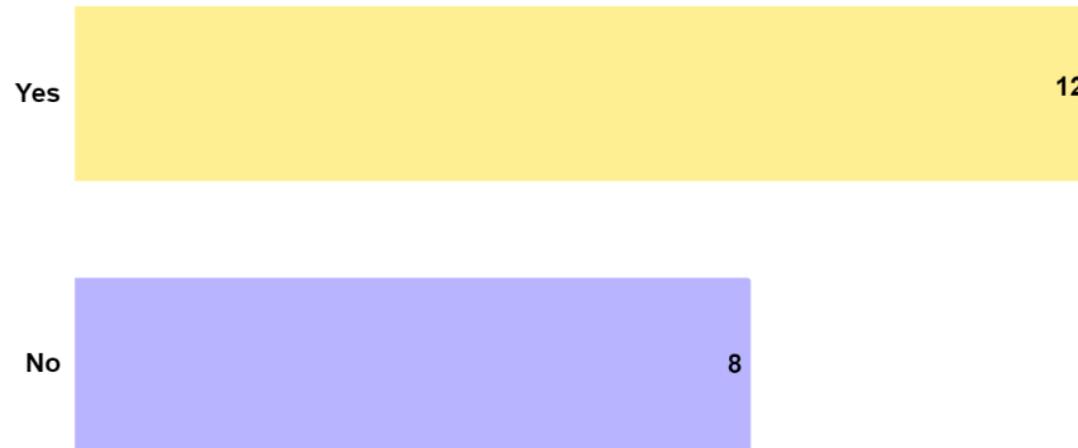
# Requirement, incentives and services

Question: Does your Government/Ministry fund or coordinate any specific initiative/body on student mental health (e.g. a National support Centre for inclusion in Higher Education)? N=20

Yes	11
No	9

Additional support pandemic

Question: Did your government provide additional support for mental health during the pandemic? N= 20
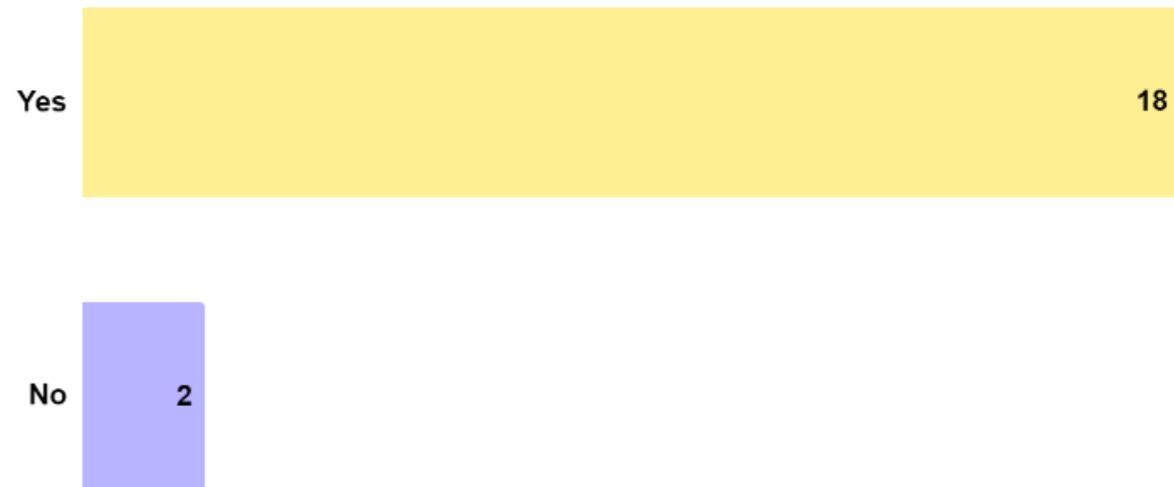
Main barriers

- Mental health is still something that's not easily detected and thus properly addressed and people/students hesitate to admit such difficulties.

- The fact that the situation varies from HEI to HEI, not all of which are at the same level in terms of resources to ensure this type of service

- Lack of updated strategy on mental health from the health responsible ministry.

- The autonomy of HEI makes it difficult to coordinate the actions and implement binding requirements.

Main barriers

- The following are identified as barriers regarding the implementation of P&G 5 and mental health: 1) Educational Institutions should monitor the use and quality of counselling services offered. Are counselling services utilised by students 2) Make counselling services more visible to students. Are students aware of free on-campus counselling services?

- Aiming at prevention requires a culture change, which is not easy at all. The biggest challenge is to get people in a different mood and way of thinking.

Best practices

- Belgium/Flemish Community: Mental health Strategy with 4 spearheads

- Sweden: The government commissioned two universities to develop a joint web page for the student's health service

- Croatia: At the local and regional level, telephone lines for crisis psychological counselling have been established to alleviate stress reactions, panic and fear, as well as psychological consequences caused by the epidemic of the disease COVID-19.

- France: The Ministry has launched an online platfrom ('Santé psy étudiant') through which students can benefit from 8 free psychologic consultations (with private psychologists, operating outside the university).

- Cyprus: The collection of data by the Department of Higher Education (DHE) regarding the number of students having a disability or special educational need or facing mental and emotional problems.

Best practices

- The Netherlands: The national network on student wellbeing

- Bulgaria aims to set up proper social dimension measures in order to meet the real needs and expectations of students with different backgrounds through the new launched Erasmus+ START project.

- Belgium/Flemish Community: Flanders has some reliable data concerning some disadvantaged groups, but is trying to enlarge its data pool in dialogue with the HEI.

- Malta: The Malta Health Students' Association

- Finland: Projects to develop low-threshold services

Proposed indicators

- The existence of a top-level legal requirement and support to provide free, accessible and timely academic and careers counselling and guidance services to potential and enrolled students in higher education.

- The existence of a top-level legal requirement to provide free, accessible and timely psychological counselling and guidance services to potential and enrolled students, as well as to staff in higher education

- Quality assurance of career, academic as well as psychological counselling and guidance services in higher education is required

- Existence of public institution(s) with a formal role in conflict resolution and in mediating conflicts related to social dimension in higher education

Aim workshop

- Strengthen mutual learning and deepen the exchange of practices and challenges between higher education authorities on principle 5 and student mental health.

- In particular this workshop will address the following points:

  - What does (international) research learn us about student mental health?

  - How is student mental health defined and prioritised in your country and your universities and university system?

  - What psychological and/or psychiatric counselling services does your country and your university system provide?

  - What barriers remain at the national and institutional level? How can these be overcome? What can be done by different actors to make universities more mental health places? Where could European cooperation and support bring added value and help to overcome these barriers?

Keynote

What does (international) research learn us about student mental health?

Ronny Bruffaerts

KU Leuven – University Psychiatric Centre – Expert PLAR-U-PAGs

Ronny Bruffaerts is full professor at the Department of Neurosciences KU Leuven and Head of the Centre for Public Health Psychiatry at University Psychiatric Centre KU Leuven (Belgium). With over 20 years of research experience in the field of mental health determinants at the level of the general and student population, he is the founder and global co-director of WHO's World Mental Health International College Student (WHM-ICS) Initiative, which is designed to generate accurate epidemiological data on student mental health worldwide. At national and international level he is an acknowledged expert involved in various task forces and advisory committees on public (student) mental health. He is involved as an academic expert in the European PLAR-U-PAGs project.

Reflection questions

THEME 1: How is student mental health defined and prioritised in your country and your universities and university system?

- Does your country or universities have a specific student mental health strategy, framework or action plan?

- Is there a top-level requirement to provide psychological counselling services for higher education students? Who is legally responsible for providing these services?

- Who is legally responsible for the quality assurance of these services? What methods are used to monitor mental health of students?

- What are the available policy levers? What are the trends in this field in your country, and how are they affecting university activities?

Reflection questions

THEME 2: What psychological and/or psychiatric counselling services does your country and your university system provide?

- What are effective (counselling) methods implemented on the country and university level? What good practice examples exist? Can the services be accessed by all higher education students? How are international students supported?

- How can we work on the prevention of students' mental health? What good practice examples exist? Which specific counselling or treatment services should universities, student unions, and care systems provide?

- What do you learn from the Flemish example and from each other, both at policy and university level?

- What are the available policy levers? What are the trends in this field in your country, and how are they affecting university activities?

Reflection questions

THEME 3: What barriers remain at the national and institutional level? How can these be overcome?

- What can be done by different actors to ensure high levels of mental health in universities?

- Where could European cooperation or coordinated action bring added value, and what would be the benefits on the micro, meso, and macro level. How would this help to overcome these barriers?