

Εθνική Αρχή Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης

Hellenic Authority for Higher Education

annual report

on the Quality of Higher Education

SUMMARY REPORT

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HELLENIC AUTHORITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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Preface

It is with great pleasure that I present for the third consecutive year the annual report on the quality of higher education and the achievements of HAHE for 2022. As always, this is an important moment to review and assess the advances of our Universities towards continuous improvement. In 2022, we faced significant challenges, but we managed to turn them into opportunities for growth.

HAHE's annual report reflects the efforts and successes of all stakeholders in higher education and highlights the progress achieved in specific areas, the innovations implemented, the issues of concern and the areas that need further attention and improvement.

The multi-dimensional, resource- and time-intensive accreditation process for all actors involved – HAHE, experts, and Institutions– continued unhindered, as 60 accreditations of Undergraduate Study Programmes (USPs) were carried out. Ten of those were operating USPs, one was a Foreign Language Study Programme, and 49 were new USPs originating mainly from mergers or the absorption of former TEI Departments into Universities. The accreditation reports reveal improvements for the majority of HEIs, as a result of their compliance to the quality standards of HAHE, a trend that is also reflected in the majority of comments of our panel experts.

One of the most noteworthy points for 2022 was the introduction of student participation in the five-member External Evaluation and Accreditation Panels (EEAPs), which all included one student from HAHE's Student Registry, in accordance with the European and international standards. In this way, our students, who form the core of the academic community, become familiar with the quality assurance processes, participate equally in them, and have the opportunity to express their views. Therefore, this report also addresses the student community, highlighting its role in shaping the academic and professional landscape.

At the same time, the Authority's interaction with other external parties and society remained a high priority for 2022. Our partnerships with the academic community, the various units of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and other public bodies and ministries, as well as with representatives of chambers and professional associations, played a key role towards our efforts to foster an integrated and

quality environment for student-centered learning in every HEI in Greece.

In the context of its advisory role and under the provisions of Article 16 of Law 4653/2020, HAHE submitted for the first time to the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, in early 2022, the proposal for the allocation of the annual government funding to HEIs. The allocation algorithm was based on an extensive set of need-based quantitative and performance-based qualitative criteria. Later in the same year, HAHE collected the data and applied the algorithm for a second time to calculate the allocation of the 2023 budget. Early findings from this exercise show that the institutions started to embrace the performance and achievement - based culture and selected the qualitative indicators that best fit their profile. It is also particularly encouraging that there are noticeable improvements in individual indicators from one year to another. Thus, the overall objective of this funding model, namely, to encourage and reward the strategic choices of each institution that lead to better results and an improvement in its overall image, has gradually begun to materialize.

The annual process of collecting, analysing and presenting a wide range of data on the operation and performance of HEIs contributes to enhanced transparency in the allocation of resources to public universities and increases their accountability to society. The data used in each case are summarized and published in the annexes of the respective HAHE's recommendations to the Ministry of Education. All the recommendations are available on HAHE's website.

Furthermore, during 2022, and in the context of its responsibility to track Greek HEIs graduates, HAHE participated in the EUROGRADUATE 2022 survey through questionnaires aimed to investigate the career path of graduates from two academic years, namely 2016-17 and 2020-21. Being the national reference point for this European project, HAHE coordinated the national effort and distributed the common questionnaire of this survey with the help of the Career Offices of Greek HEIs.

Current issues of Higher Education that were selected and highlighted in the 2022 report include:

a) the fundamental values underlying the operation of universities in EHEA (i.e. academic freedom, institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in the governance of higher education

- systems and public accountability for higher education) and
- b) Internationalization as a strategic objective for Universities and the characteristics of cross-border higher education.

An important milestone for Higher Education in 2022 was the passing of Law 4957/2022 "New Horizons in Higher Education Institutions: Strengthening the quality, functionality and connection of HEIs with society, and other provisions". In addition to a major revision of the legal framework for Higher Education, the new law introduces several new possibilities for Universities. Specifically, it provides for new types of undergraduate study programmes, both inter-departmental and inter-institutional, several non-traditional modes of education, the recruitment of visiting and appointed professors, the educational synergies with foreign institutions, and more. These new forms of education will require new standards and new quality assurance procedures, which HAHE has begun to develop.

HAHE is responsible for the evaluation of HEIs, but it also assesses and reports its own activities and work, in accordance with the provisions of Law 4653/20. Thus, in 2022, the process of the Authority's external evaluation, which had been activated in 2019 but was postponed for two years due to the pandemic, proceeded. The Evaluation Committee, appointed by

ENQA, carried out the three-day online inspection in early February 2022. The complex and demanding process included meetings and interviews with the internal stakeholders of the Authority (Councils, Management, staff) as well as with external stakeholders, i.e. Officials from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Rectors, Presidents of QAU and University students, EEAP experts, representatives of agencies in the field of education and research and representatives of chambers/professional bodies. The external evaluation process continued through 2022 and was successfully completed in 2023.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Supreme Council and the Evaluation and Accreditation Council, to the Director General, and to HAHE's staff for the breadth and quality of their contribution and their unyielding efforts to ensure that HAHE operates at the high standards that are expected of the national agency for quality assurance.

This annual report was prepared according to Law 4653/20 to provide transparency and accountability for the Authority's operation. It was drafted by a working group and was revised and unanimously approved by HAHE's Supreme Council. It is submitted to the Greek Parliament and to the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, in accordance with current provisions.

The President of HAHE
Professor Pericles A. Mitkas

Summary

The HAHE's Report on the Quality of Higher Education monitors the state of Higher Education at national and international level as well as the annual activity of the Authority. For this purpose, the report is structured in three (3) parts:

The first part (Part A) includes the developments in Higher Education at national level, both in terms of numbers and in terms of other institutional changes. In addition, it presents the developments at international level (with a focus on Europe), based on comparative key figures in Higher Education, emerging issues, views and new institutions.

The second part (Part B) demonstrates the Authority's actions and activities regarding the quality assurance of HEIs, issues of restructuring of the academic map and the allocation of funding based on

objective and qualitative criteria and performance indicators of HEIs.

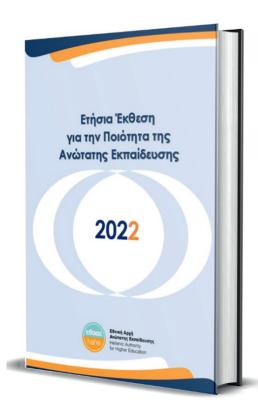
The third part (Part C) outlines the internal structure and the achievements of the Authority for 2022. Finally, the Report includes useful informative Annexes with tables that present the position of Greek HEIs in global ranking systems, the accredited study programmes (2018-2022), the experts that participated in the EEAPs and the best performers (study programmes) per scientific field.

International and national developments

– Basic figures and indicators

Emerging issues in higher education

Quality assurance in Greek HEIs – Accreditation results 2022 – Basic conclusions

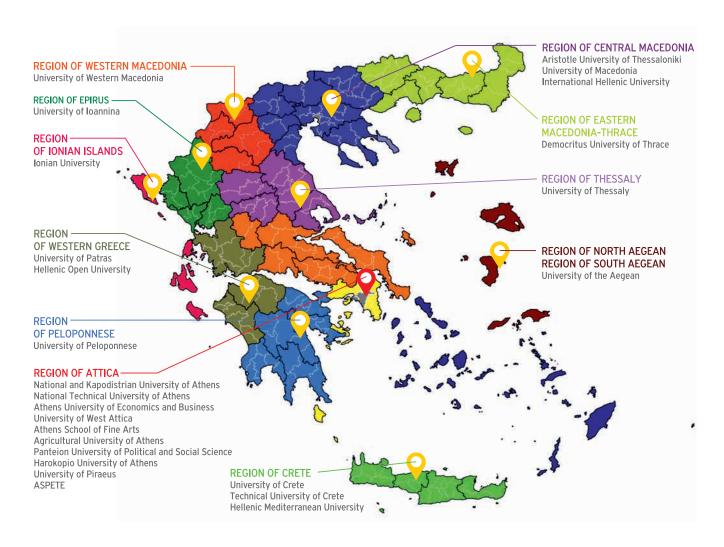


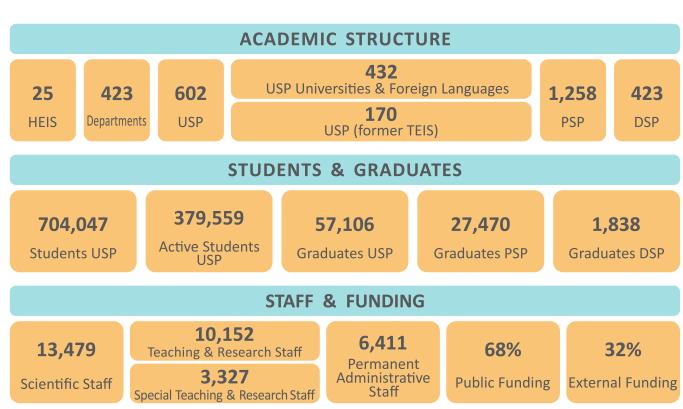
Funding based on objective and qualitative criteria and performance indicators

Internal structure and operation of HAHE

- Greek universities and global league tables
- Accreditation map (2018-2022)

The map of Greek Higher Education (2022)





Part A

Higher Education in Greece and comparative data from the international arena

The first part of the report presents **the structure of the Greek academic map**, in terms of number, geographical location and scientific field of 25 Institutions, 423 Departments and 602 Undergraduate Study Programmes. It also refers to

the structure of student population, the teaching and administrative staff, and the public and external funding per Institution. The data were drawn from HAHE's Information System, as reported by the Greek HEIs.

Significant insights may be drawn from the structure of student population in scientific fields, in which the "preference" of students at national level is documented. There are differences compared to the corresponding fields internationally. The preference for engineering studies is higher by 5% in our country (21% in Greece compared to 16% in the EU), fields in which there are positive professional prospects. In addition, humanities and arts together with social sciences are also increased by 5% compared to their relevant ones internationally (13% and 13% in Greece compared to 11.5% and 9.5% in EU), while today these fields do not show good professional prospects. Significant negative deviations are observed in health-welfare sciences (8% in Greece compared to 13.5% in EU) and in the IT sector (Greece 3.5% compared to 5% in EU), despite the great needs for health personnel in Greece and the high demand for IT professions. Finally, the positive difference that appears in sciences in Greece (9.5% in Greece compared to 7% in EU) is noteworthy, which is however interpreted as complementary to the education sector, due to the high employment of graduates in secondary education. This phenomenon is also linked to the deviation that appears in education sciences (Greece 4.5% compared to 7.5% in Europe/OECD).

It is known that in Greece the distribution of student population in scientific fields does not reflect the absolute "preference" of students, because other factors play an important role, such as the way of admission and the predefined "offer" of scientific fields through the established academic structures in Universities and Departments, as well as their geographical distribution. The question of distribution of student population in scientific fields is linked to the possibilities and employment opportunities offered by the labour market.

Greece is the country with the lowest employment rate of Higher Education graduates in Europe and, correspondingly, with the highest unemployment rate among graduates. However, the mass production of graduates in scientific disciplines that already face unemployment should stop. For this reason, the reconstruction of the academic map is an issue of paramount importance for the reformation in Higher Education.

The student population appears as one of the largest among the European countries, but also internationally, mainly due to high rates of students, who delay their graduation for many years beyond the normal period of studies. After the implementation of the Minimum Admission Threshold (2021), there is a small reduction in admissions, compared to the corresponding figures of the previous year. However, higher education degree holders in Greece are slightly fewer than in the EU and OECD average, for all age groups. Therefore, high student population numbers for Greece are not transformed into high graduate numbers due to low graduation rates. Greece needs to focus on this constantly recurring phenomenon and identify the causes in order to implement an appropriate strategy to eliminate it.

The number of teaching staff remains stable, as the number of retirements is marginally replaced by an equal number of new working positions. However, the students per teaching staff ratio, presents great variations. In some Institutions the ratio is 19:1 and in some others 77:1, as average. The national average ratio stands at 30:1 (calculated based on active undergraduate students) and 46 (calculated based on enrolled ones). The corresponding average

ratio for EU countries is 13:1. The recent implementation of the institution of "appointed teaching staff" institution, may 'correct' this ratio.

The number of **administrative staff** is also an interesting parameter of Institutions, for which large variations in ratios are observed. Comparing the ratio of students per administrative staff member, the best ratio documented in an Institution is 22:1 and the worst 122:1. In any case, the possible intensification of using technology in administrative services would reduce the impact of the low number of administrative staff.

The public funding of HEIs increased by 12.10% from the previous year and their respective external funding rose by 14.17%. A continuous increase in the funding of HEIs has been noted for fourth consecutive year since 2018.

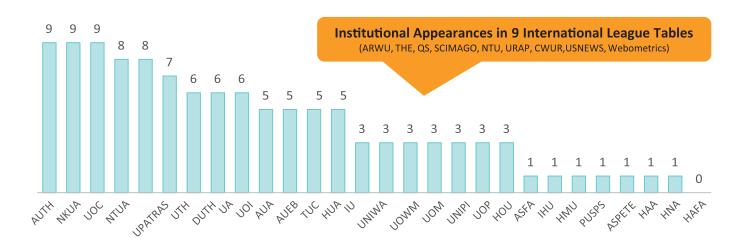
Research production in Greece appears at a relatively good level in terms of overall figures compared to European countries. According to Scimago data, it is ranked 16th in terms of scientific publications among 51 countries. However, the country's performance in terms of the publications per researcher ratio sets Greece in the 28th position among 51 countries. Furthermore, this ratio decreased by 23% from 2012 to 2021, fell to 0.15 from 0.77 in 2012 and 0.60 in 2021.

Similarly, **research funding** of European competitive programmes in Greece is at a satisfactory level compared to other European countries. In particular, the funding of HEIs compared to companies and research centers appears to be in the3rd position, even though HEIs have the biggest number of research-

ers. Accordingly, the share of Universities in the total research and development expenditure decreased from 39.94% in 2012 to 30.20% in 2021. In absolute numbers, an increase is recorded. However, if someone takes into consideration the fact that the total national expenditure during this period increased from 1,337 million euros to 2,635 million euros, it seems that this increase was distributed mainly to research institutions and companies. This means that the research production of HEIs in terms of national expenditure was lower proportionally, compared to the other institutions. Moreover, the number of research staff in HEIs in 2021, according to National Documentation Center data, remains at the levels of 2015, following a significant decline during 2016-2019.

The position of Greek HEIs in international rankings for 2022 appears to be slightly improved for only 3 or 4 HEIs out of 25. For most HEIs it appears slightly worse compared to the previous year.

Therefore, the general performance of HEIs in research ratios is not so encouraging, since the number of research staff is stable, research funding and research expenditure in HEIs, are relatively lower. This fact should motivate HEIs, the state and the institutions involved to plan and implement a specific research strategy in Higher Education.



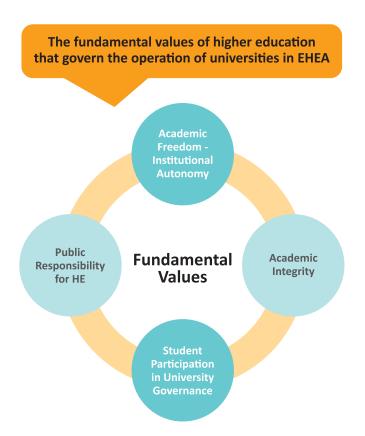
Meanwhile, in 2022, after more than twenty years since the Bologna declaration, the European institutions put up for discussion the issue of the **fundamental values** for Higher Education. In the context of the ongoing debate, the question that arises is how they are being applied today by Institutions and governments, in the new global landscape of Higher Education.

Although the fundamental values are considered prerequisites for quality in learning, teaching and research, as well as for the development of democratic societies in different countries regardless of their level of development, there are obstacles or cases of their violation. Thus, at least at European level, fundamental values are the subject of study by working groups that monitor the progress in implementing the Bologna process and developing criteria and indicators for measuring these values.

By fundamental values, we mean the four main pillars / values that apply to the countries of the European Higher Education Area: freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in institutional governance and public responsibility for higher education. According to the relevant European institutions, academic freedom must be accompanied by rigorous scientific and professional standards, respect for the rights of others, ethical conduct, and awareness of the impact of research on people and their environment.

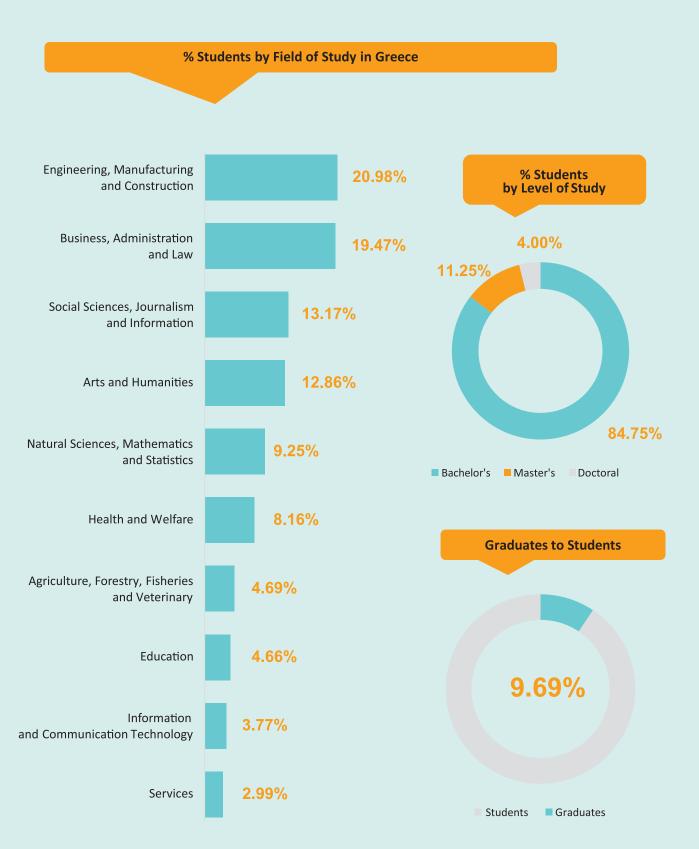
In July 2022, the new legal framework regulating the operation of HEIs (Law 4957/2022) was passed. It includes new provisions for the expansion of institutional' autonomy and the establishment of new modern units and services in the context of their internal governance, such as staff and student support centers, digital governance, strategic planning as well as for the use of the corresponding institutional tools of HEIs in their operation (e.g. internal rules of operation, institution's strategic plan).

Autonomous HEIs must be accountable - to their own communities, to public bodies and to society. Governments play a key role in promoting this idea. Academic freedom and institutional autonomy, combined with a sense of purpose and responsibility, allow HEIs, and the communities they serve, to thrive. Quality, as well as responsibility for protecting fundamental values, rests with HEIs, teaching staff and national higher education authorities (including quality assurance bodies).



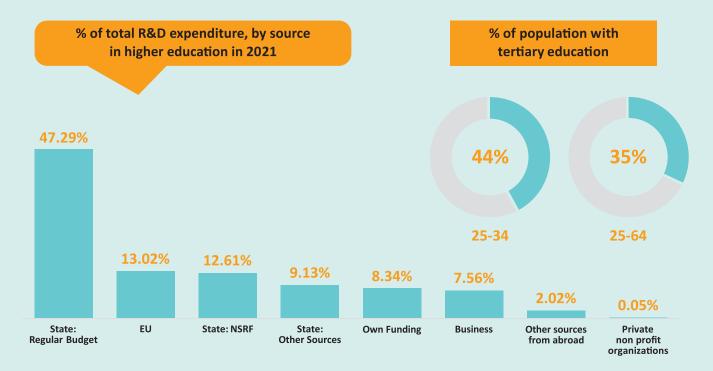
According to Freedom House, in the relevant indicator of academic freedom, in which Greece is rated with the maximum score (4/4), it is stated that there are no significant restrictions on academic freedom in Greece and there are no phenomena of political indoctrination in the educational system. Greece, in a survey carried out by the EUA, in matters of academic freedom, scores an average of 3.26 out of 4, while on institutional autonomy scores an average of 2.75 out of 4. The international network of institutions and individuals, Scholars at Risk, whose mission is to protect scientists and promote academic freedom, documents, for 2022, eight (8) incidents of violence in Greek universities.

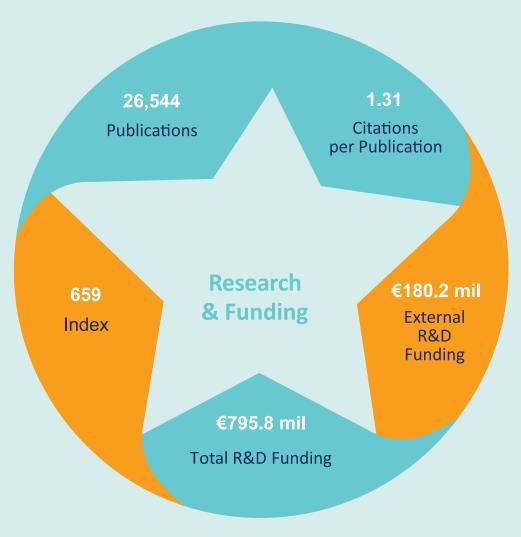
The Greek Higher Education in numbers



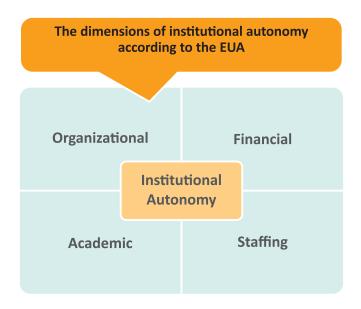


The Greek Higher Education in numbers









Exploring internationalization in higher education is a hot issue for both the Greek HEIs and those of EHEA. Internationalization is often included in the quality criteria for the evaluation of institutions. However, it should be noted that any isolated actions or an extended rhetoric on the importance of internationalization do not constitute a guarantee of success.

This is because internationalization is a systematic and ongoing process for HEIs. As such, it is expected to be embedded in the institutional vision and mission and to permeate all academic functions, primarily as a value and mentality that guides the planning and implementation of processes, the redesign of educational content and pedagogical methods as well as the cultivation of the character of future citizens of the world. Alternatively, there is internationalization at home, which includes processes enabling students to develop international understanding and intercultural skills (through study programmes and related activities in their country) and internationalization abroad, which includes respectively all forms of education provided across borders, the mobility of students and teaching staff, of study programmes, projects and institutions. Institutional culture, specific institutional characteristics and other factors may or may not facilitate an institution's internationalization. Each institution can choose the areas of internationalization such as a) academic activities, b) student/graduate competences (emphasis on personal development), c) ethos (cultivating an international mentality/global attitude), d) process (integration into all institutional functions through appropriate strategies and policies, etc).

Part B HAHE's quality assurance activities and the improvement of quality in universities

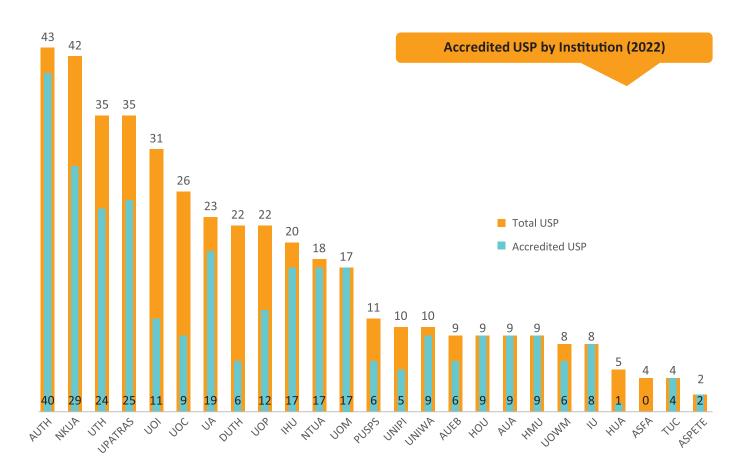
HAHE's quality assurance activities, which in 2022, included the accreditation of 10 existing USPs, one (1) Foreign Language Study Programme and 49 new operating USPs. The latter came mainly from mergers or absorption of Departments of former TEIs into new universities. Full compliance was noted in 65% of cases, satisfactory compliance in 27%, partial compliance in 6% and non-compliance was recorded in 2% of cases.

The image of the Institutions resulting from the accreditations carried out up to the end of 2022, appears in many cases improved. Institutions, in their majority,



show compliance with the principles of the standard for Undergraduate Study Programmes. The result of this effort is documented in the score they achieve. Undergraduate Study Programmes often face some weaknesses, which are common and concern the way in which they are designed, monitored and reviewed.

There are also significant shortcomings in the monitoring and management of the learning environment, as well as the adequacy and renewal of teaching staff.



The main challenges that institutions face in improving their Study Programmes continue to be:

a) Issues of planning, structure, and staffing.

The main weaknesses of programmes concern the often-outdated content of courses with many overlaps, the lack of students' encouragement to improve their performance, the isolation from social partners, the lack of extroversion and the incomplete network of partnerships, the sloppy and inadequate formulation of the study guide.

b) the learning environment still shows weaknesses in terms of the adequacy of infrastructure, aesthetics, safety, and services for students.

The most frequent weaknesses of the learning environment are related to the infrastructure that needs to be improved/expanded and maintained, the insufficient number of support staff, the lack of use of new technologies, the reduced funding, the hygiene and safety of facilities and the link to the labour market.

HAHE continues to consider relevant the need for some study programmes to be completely restructured in terms of subject and structure, and for the improvement of their viability. Many programmes have limited attractiveness to candidates, insufficient teaching staff combined with the frequent lack of relevance between the teaching staff disciplines and the courses they teach. Institutions should immediately take advantage of the possibility of employing new staff within the framework of opportunities provided by Law 4957/2022 and the relevant NSRF funding. The results of these weaknesses are the low graduation rates and the low employment rates of graduates. HEIs should use the feedback from the labour market on the qualifications of their graduates to make changes that will ensure better access to labour market for students and graduates.

Furthermore, during 2022, and in the context of its responsibility for tracking Greek HEIs graduates, HAHE participated

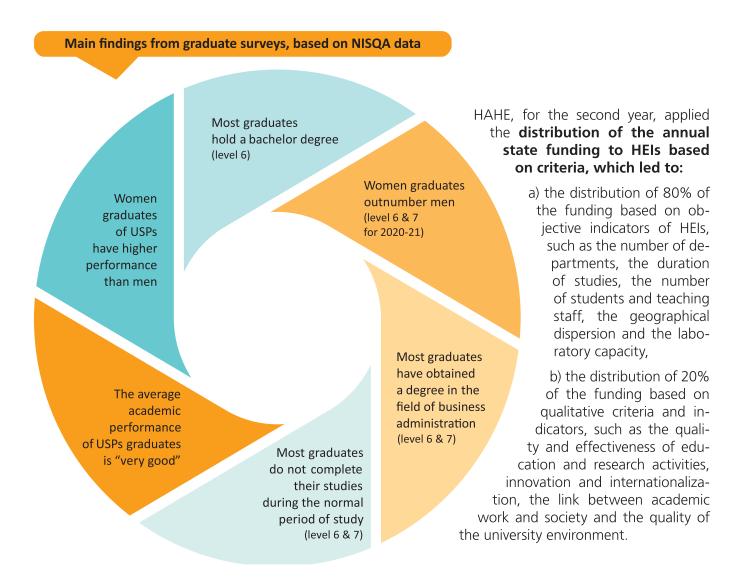
euro**graduate**.eu

The common questionnaire of the Eurograduate survey was used and HAHE (as the national reference point)

in the EUROGRADUATE 2022 survey through questionnaires aimed to investigate the career path of graduates from two academic years, namely 2016-17 and 2020-21.

coordinated the national effort with the participation of the Career Offices of Greek HEIs.

The main findings, based on HAHE's National Information System (NIQSA) data, include the following:



The first conclusions, after the two consecutive applications of the allocation algorithm of 20% of the total annual funding of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to HEIs, show that:

- 1. HEIs started to embed the culture of funding based on performance and achievements, and indeed, during the second implementation of the algorithm in 2022, HEIs made a better selection of quality indicators that fit their profile and nature.
- 2. The choice of sections and indicators and the promotion of HEIs' achievements seem to have helped them to better focus their goal-setting process.
- 3. The comparison of two years' data (achievement reports and quality indicators for 2020 and 2021) reveal improvements in individual indicators for the Institution itself, which is particularly encouraging for the course and development of HEIs and in the long term for the overall profile of higher education in Greece.

Conclusions from the application of the allocation algorithm of 20% of the total annual funding of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to HEIs

01

HEIs started to embed the culture of funding based on performance and achievements

02

Better focus of HEIs goal-setting process

03

Improvements in individual performance indicators

Part C HAHE's strategic plan and development

The third part of the report presents HAHE's internal structure and operation for 2022, as well as **its overall work in order to achieve its strategy and mission**.

In particular, HAHE promoted its strategic goals by:

- Organizing 60 accreditations of Undergraduate Study Programmes (USPs) and supporting HEIs in accreditation procedures and quality assurance activities.
- Exercizing its advisory role to the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs on issues of Higher Education (the proposal on the qualitative criteria of funding, the allocation algorithm for faculty members' positions, the requests for academic transformations (such as Department renaming/ head office transfer, academic equivalences among departments for 2022-2023, the requests for recognition of degrees as Integrated Masters, etc.).
- Publishing the reports of the external experts and the relevant accreditation decisions of HA-HE's Evaluation and Accreditation Council, as well as the proposals and recommendations of the Supreme Council to the Ministry of Education on several issues.

- Succeeding in the formation of EEAPs (External Evaluation and Accreditation Panels) with the participation of male and female students according to European standards, following the appropriate actions during 2020-2021.
- Organizing training seminars for the experts and students of HAHE's Registry.
- Managing the NSRF-funded projects.
- Continuing its staffing efforts by strengthening the internal operation procedures of the scientific and administrative service.
- Developing partnerships on Higher Education issues with relevant European and international institutions and stakeholders.
- Publicly announcing its actions at University Rectors' Synods, conferences, and events of HEIs and other agents.
- Participating in European meetings for quality assurance in Higher Education.
- Successfully being reviewed by an external evaluation panel in the context of the renewal of ENQA membership and the Authority's registration in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

Afterword

During 2022, HAHE monitored the progress and developments of Higher Education in Greece and internationally, and studied critical changes, achievements and weaknesses. It also analyzed the findings of the external evaluation of study programmes and the annual quality indicators and data of HEIs in the context of their perfor-

mance reports. From this analysis, key strategies are emerged that need to be implemented both at political level, through institutional and financial means, and at the level of Institutions through skills development and improvement of their outcomes.

Three main issues are highlighted in this report:





The need to restructure the disciplinary fields and study programmes of HEIs.



The need to implement new ways of management and governance of HEIs under a strategic perspective.



The need to implement a research strategy in Higher Education oriented towards the improvement of HEIs' capabilities and performance in research.

The issue of the structure of the scientific fields of HEIs and the distribution of student population is linked to the possibilities and employment opportunities offered by the labour market. A significant obstacle to the utilization of employment opportunities is the mass production of graduates in scientific fields that are already facing unemployment or oversaturation with the simultaneous existence of vacant working positions in other fields, as the annual employment data repeatedly show. In addition, HAHE, through its quality assurance

activities, highlights the need for a full restructuring of some study programmes and the assurance of their viability. Many programmes have limited attractiveness to candidates, insufficient teaching staff combined with the frequent lack of consistency between the academic staff disciplines and the courses they teach.

The above findings underline that the restructuring of the academic map remains a key issue for reform in Higher Education, towards renewing and modernizating scientific disciplines. It is also noted

that there is a wide scope for changes in universities. Institutions should use the feedback from employers and professional associations to upgrade the qualifications of their graduates. Moreover, they can restructure their study programmes to ensure that graduates have better access to the labour market. Under the provisions of the new legal framework (4957/2022) and related NSRF funding, universities are allowed to establish and abolish study programmes, and recruit new teaching staff.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Institutions' internal administration and governance has a critical effect on the implementation of changes in order to improve the quality of Higher Education. The need for changes in university management under a more strategic perspective remains the critical weakness, as evidenced by the evaluation of their quality assurance processes. These changes are a key prerequisite to achieve higher quality and effectiveness of their work.

The new framework law for HEIs, which was passed in 2022, provides many possibilities and opportunities for positive changes. Institutions should use the new provisions in a creative and efficient way to expand their autonomy, directly

activating the new modern units and services in the context of their internal governance, as well as to use the corresponding institutional tools (e.g. internal rules of operation, strategic plan of the institution) in the context of the implementation of strategic management.

The performance of HEIs according to research indicators in Greece is not as encouraging as the overall research performance. The population of researchers is relatively stagnant and below the 2015 threshold value, research funding and research expenditure in HEIs is relatively lower compared to research centers and companies since the share of HEIs fell from 39.94 % in 2012 to 30.20% in 2021. This fact should mobilize both HEIs and the state and the institutions involved to plan and implement a specific research strategy in Higher Education.

In general, the state and institutional efforts should be the subject of coordinated and organized activity within the framework of the national strategy for Higher Education. As an independent Authority, HAHE, will continue to exercise all the powers and possibilities provided to it by law, in the same direction, supporting the Institutions and the state to achieve high quality in Higher Education.

HAHE governance

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(01/01/2022 - 31/12/2022)

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