

Providing policy-makers and practitioners with resources to improve
the social dimension of the European Higher Education Area



PL4SD

peer learning for the
social dimension

Questionnaire to ministries and organisations

*responsible for higher education
in all countries of the
European Higher Education Area*

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www.pl4sd.eu



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For any queries on how to fill-in the questionnaire and any further information contact:

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Introduction: collecting data on measures for improving the social dimension

The project “**peer learning for the social dimension**” (PL4SD) focuses on collating and cataloguing measures, which have the objective of improving the social dimension of higher education. The “social dimension” entails looking at various stages of the education system and adopting measures, which can help individuals to overcome any barriers or disincentives to access, participate and complete higher education. This was most clearly defined for the Bologna Process in the London Communiqué of 2007, having first been expressed in the Prague Communiqué of 2001. The London Communiqué states:

“We share the societal aspiration that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations. We reaffirm the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. We therefore continue our efforts to provide adequate student services, create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher education, and to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.”

There is currently a major information gap on what measures are being taken to improve the social dimension at the national level, in regions and at individual higher education institutions. However, there are many measures being realised to improve the social dimension. This has been recognised by the ministers responsible for higher education, who committed to collect and share data on the social dimension of higher education and to participate in a peer-learning process. As stated in the Bucharest Communiqué from 2012:

“We encourage the use of peer learning on the social dimension and aim to monitor progress in this area”.

The PL4SD project will fill the current information gap by collecting such information in a systematic manner and presenting this in an easily accessible database (www.pl4sd.eu). This will help policy experts and practitioners to learn from other countries and other contexts.

We invite you to support the **peer learning process for the social dimension in higher education** by responding to our questionnaire.

Please provide a selection of measures from your country, which could be of interest for other higher education systems. Examples of such measures are provided on the next page.

For each measure, a separate questionnaire should be filled-in.

Each questionnaire should be filled-in by a ministry/ organisation representative or a person involved in the planning or implementation of the measure.

EXAMPLES of measures for improving the social dimension in higher education

Type of measure	Examples
Student financial support	Students from certain backgrounds are provided with scholarships to encourage them to enter higher education.
	Grants or loans to alleviate financing of study (general or targeted to lower income groups), advising and support services for students.
	Provision of affordable accommodation and meal services.
Funding incentives for institutions	Special funding available to higher education institutions, which offer special support to certain student groups.
	Formula-funding used to allocate state grant to higher education institutions includes indicator on number of non-traditional students.
Counselling and support services	Specialised counselling provided to first-generation students to ensure successful social and academic integration and to prevent drop-out.
	Office for students with disabilities established at University X.
	Student buddy system established to help students from non-traditional backgrounds in higher education (e.g. run by the student union).
Teaching and learning	Teachers receive training on inclusive teaching and student assessment methods in order to work effectively with students from diverse backgrounds.
	Curricula are adapted to include content that reflects cultural and social diversity and that students from non-traditional backgrounds can better relate to.
Information campaigns	Campaign targeting parents, who did not attend university themselves, explaining the benefits for their children.
Alternative entry routes	Prospective students without the required qualifications can enter higher education through a process of assessment and recognition of their prior learning.
Cooperation with schools	University X works with schools in underprivileged areas to raise aspirations of pupils to pursue higher education.
Data collection and research	Annual reports on access strategy and implementation required of all higher education institutions.
Other	Employers cooperate with higher education institutions to provide internship opportunities to students from special underrepresented groups during studies.

Questionnaire on measures for improving the social dimension

Respondent information

Your contact details are needed to be able to contact you in case there is need for clarification of the information reported. The data is for internal purpose only and will not be published.

Title (Ms/Mrs/Mr)	
First name	
Last name	
Name of ministry/organisation	
Department	
Function	
Email address	
Phone number	

Country:

Basic information about the measure

Please name the measure.

In national language:

In English:

Link to web page of the measure or to a further description of it:

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Contact for further information about the measure (to be published on PL4SD website):

Title (Ms/Mrs/Mr)	First name	Last name	Email address

How would you categorise the measure (multiple answers possible)?

Student target group(s) of the measure

- General student population
- By gender
- From ethnic minorities
- From lower socioeconomic backgrounds
- From migrant backgrounds
- From rural or remote regions
- International students
- Mature students
- Orphans
- Prospective students
- With children
- With disabilities
- With siblings
- Without the normally required qualifications
- Working students
- Other, please specify

Objective of the measure

- Widening access
- Retention and success
- Combining study and work
- Lifelong learning
- International mobility
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Student support
- Other, please specify

Type of measure

- Direct student financial support
- Indirect student financial support (provision of subsidised/affordable accommodation, meals, transport, etc.)
- Funding incentives for institutions
- Counselling and other specialised support services for groups of students
- Teaching and learning
- Information campaigns
- Enrolment policies
- Alternative entry routes
- Flexible learning paths
- Cooperation with schools
- Data collection and research
- Other, please specify

Description of the measure

Please describe the measure. Include the challenge the measure was intended for, the objective, and the target group(s) of the measure. *[no character limit]*

Impact of the measure

Please describe the outcome and impact of the measure. Is it regularly monitored and evaluated? *[no character limit]*

Overall assessment

Please describe the prospects of the measure in the future. What can an international public learn from the described measure? What worked well, what could be improved? Would you recommend the measure for other countries? Why / why not? *[no character limit]*

Keywords for searching the database

Please provide up to 5 keywords describing the measure, its objective and target population(s) that best enable others to search for the measure. *[no character limit]*

Other information [optional]

Please feel free to add any other information about the measure you want an international public to know about it. *[no character limit]*

**Thank you for contributing
to the project!**

The PL4SD consortium