

Autonomy and Governance – a European Perspective

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Introduction

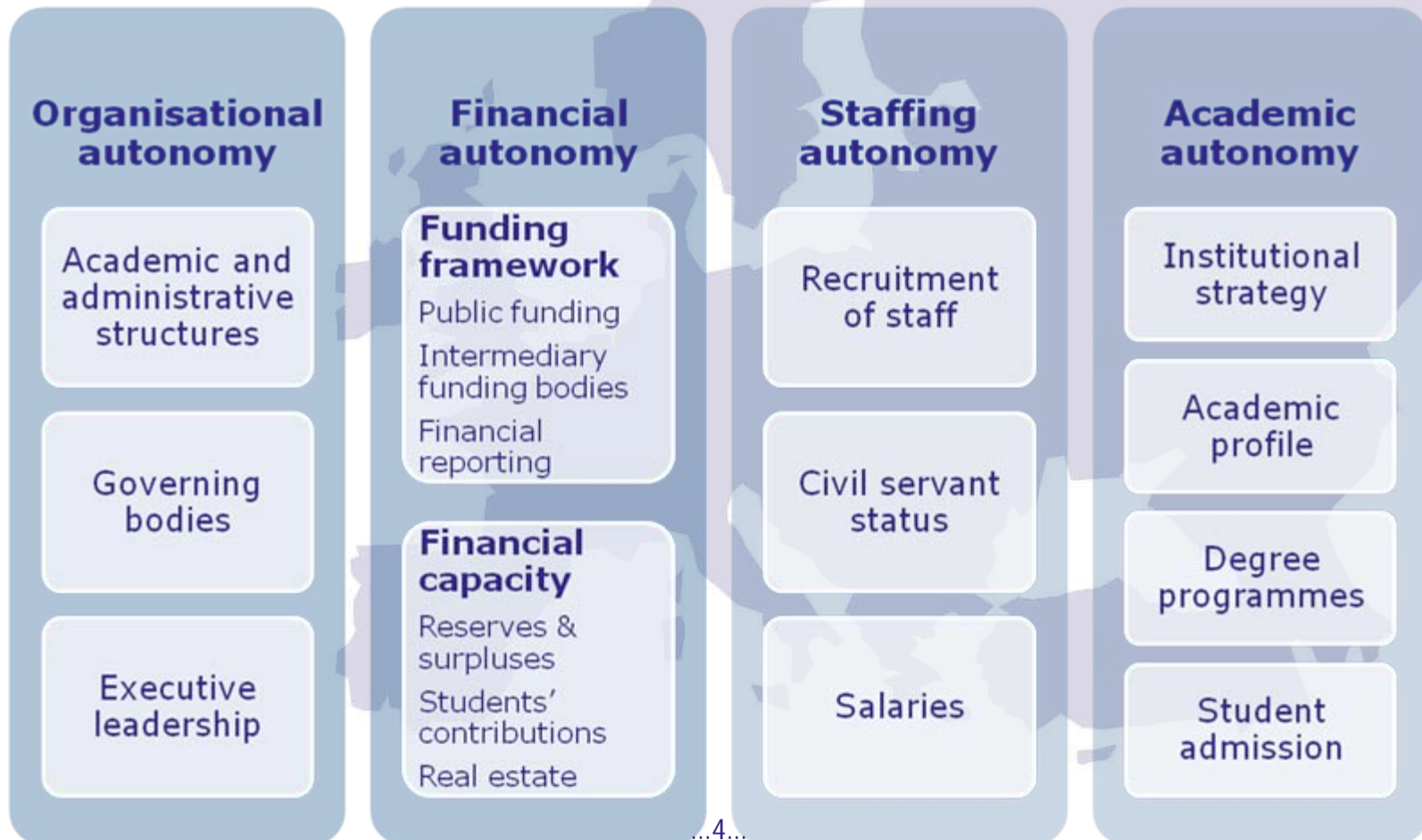
- Aligning governance and strategy with outcomes and deliverables – why?
 - Rising costs of Education and Research
 - Higher Expectations
 - Globalisation and Competition
 - Massification
 - Economic crisis

- Accountability, Efficiency and Effectiveness

Diversity and communalities

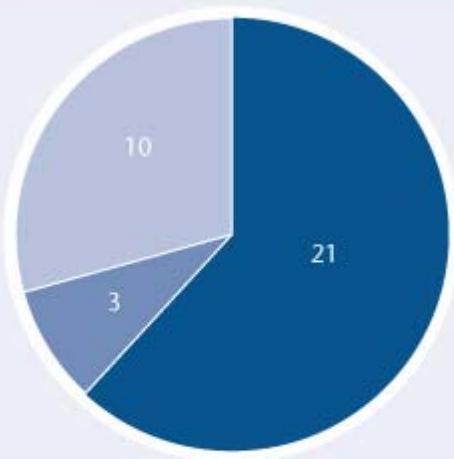
- Finding the right balance between autonomy and accountability
 - ✓ The principle is clear but the practice difficult
- Different models across Europe but common elements
 - ✓ Inclusion of external stakeholders in governing bodies
 - ✓ Sound and transparent financial management – Full Costing
 - ✓ Appropriate quality assurance mechanisms
- Diverse funding models
 - ✓ Increase of competitive funding
 - ✓ Increase of output related and performance indicators

Four dimensions of autonomy



1. Academic structures

Determining academic structures



- Universities may freely decide: AT, BE nl, BE fr, HR, CZ, DK, EE, FI, GR, HU, IS, IE, IT, LV, LT, MT, NO, PL, SK, SI, UK
- Faculties listed in the law: CY, LU, TR
- Guidelines in the law: BG, FR, DE, NL, PT, RO, RS, ES, SE, CH

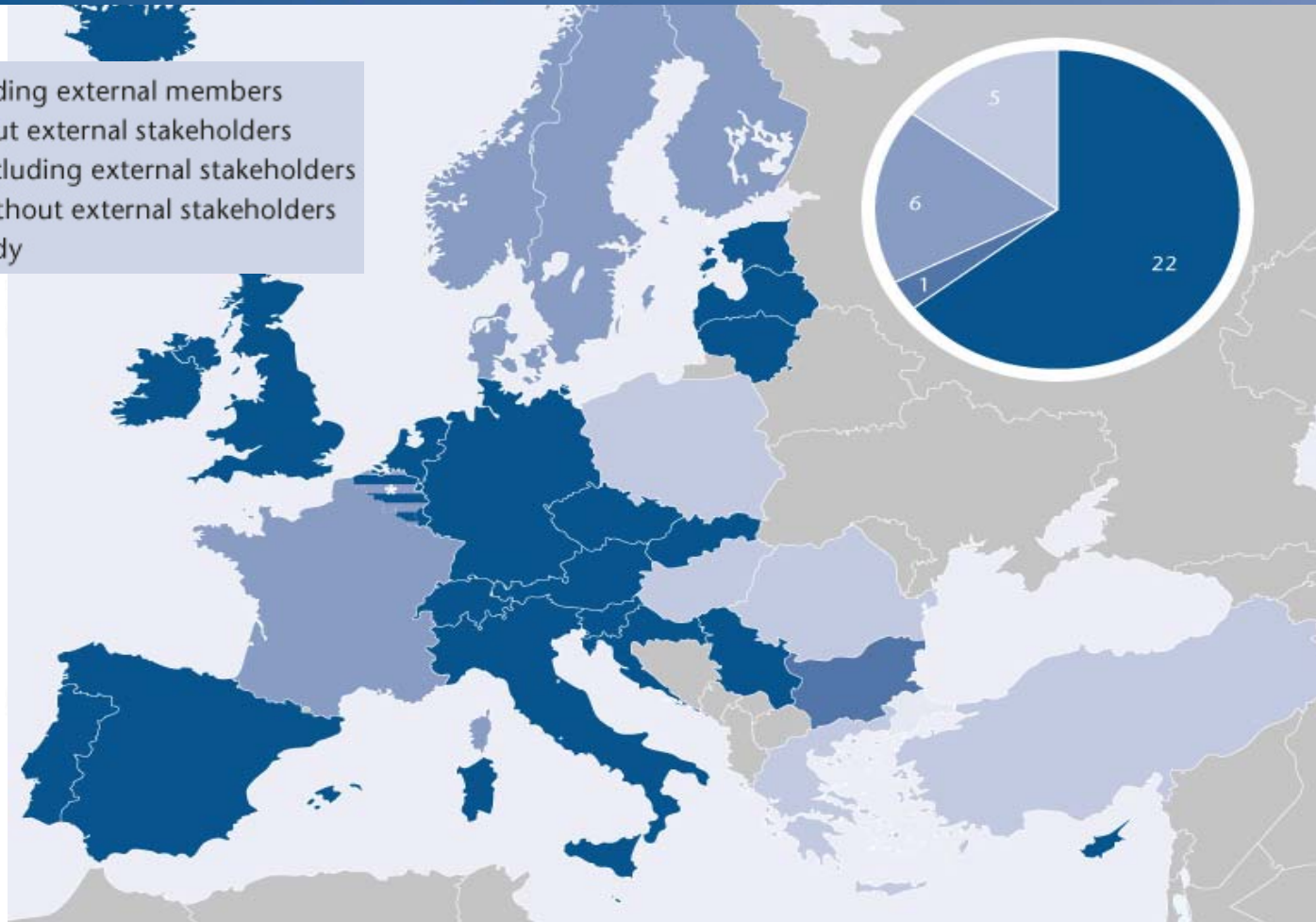
Universities are essentially free to determine their internal academic structures in 2/3 of the countries.

For the remaining third, the law may list possible faculties or provide guidelines; faculties may also be strongly autonomous.

2. Governance structures

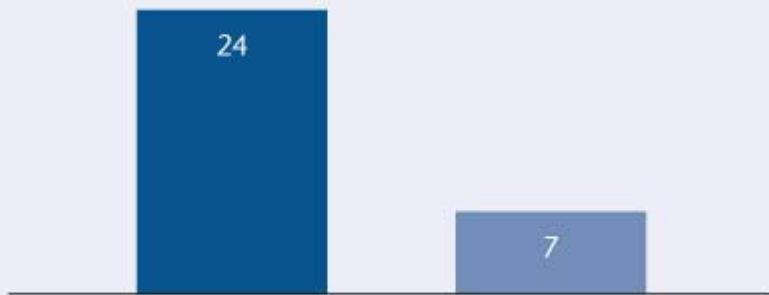
External members in governing bodies

- Dual governance structures including external members
- Dual governance structures without external stakeholders
- Unitary governance structures including external stakeholders
- Unitary governance structures without external stakeholders
- Countries not included in the study



3. Selection of rector

Regulatory frameworks on rector's qualifications



- Rector's qualifications stipulated in the law: AT, BE fr, BG, HR, CY, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, GR, HU, IT, LU, LV, LT, NO, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES, SE, TR
- Rectors' qualifications not stipulated in the law: CZ, IE, MT, NL, SI, CH, UK
(missing information for Flanders and Serbia; in Iceland the situation varies.)

Provisions regarding the rector's required qualifications are often defined by law.

The rector is widely expected to be an academic, often from the same University.

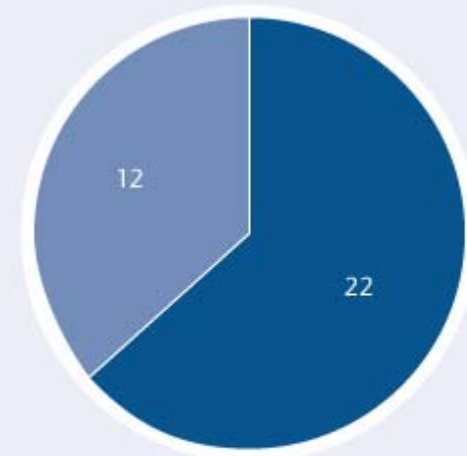
Only in 6 countries can the rector come from outside academia.

4. Financial capacity

The university's borrowing capacity may equally be curtailed by the requirement to secure the public authorities' approval.

Irish HEIs' borrowing capacity is limited.

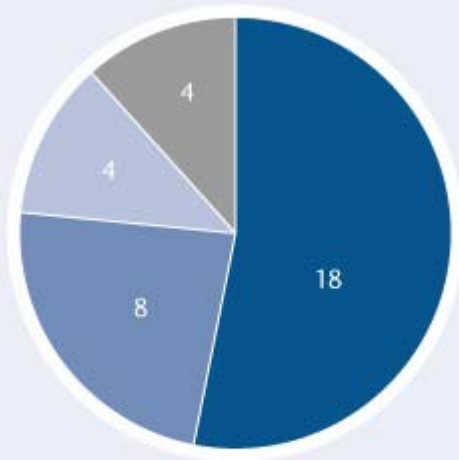
Ability to borrow money



- Universities are able to borrow money: AT, BE nl, BE fr, HR, CY, CZ, DK, EE, FR, IE, IT, LV, LU, NL, NO, PL, RO, RS, SK, ES, SE, UK
- Universities are not able to borrow money: BG, FI, DE, GR, HU, IS, LT, MT, PT, SI, CH, TR

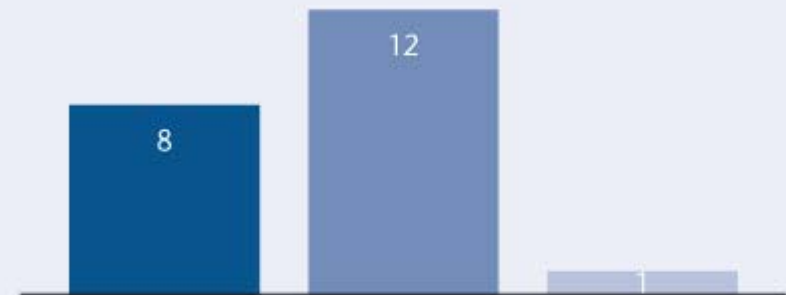
5. Ownership of property

Ownership of university buildings



- University: BE fr, HR, CY, CZ, EE, GR, IE, IT, LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SI, ES, UK
- Public authorities: BE nl, BG, DK, HU, LT, LU, RS, TR
- Public real estate companies: AT, FI, DE, SE
- Variations: FR, IS, SK, CH

Sale of university-owned real estate



- Universities may freely sell real estate they own: BE fr, CZ, EE, IT, NL, ES, CH, UK
- Sale of real estate requires permission of public authorities: HR, CY, IS, IE, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI
- Universities may not sell real estate they own: GR

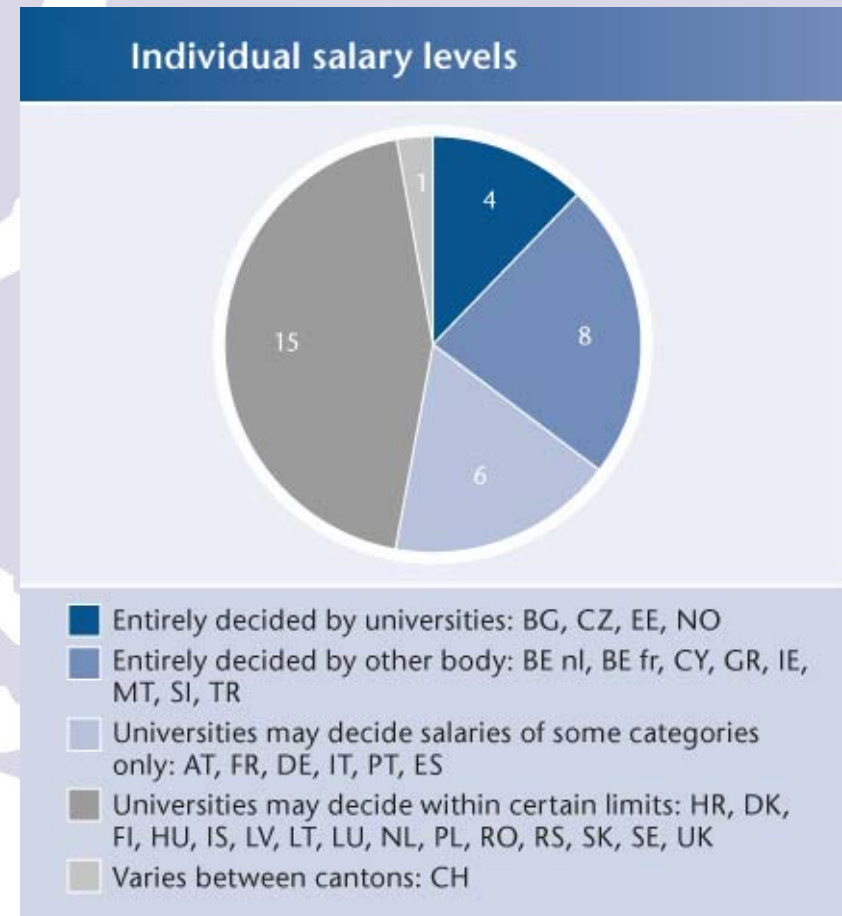
6. Salaries

Overall salary costs are mostly controlled by the universities

However, individual salary levels tend to be strongly regulated.

Universities may be able to determine the salary levels of some categories of staff, or set them within fixed salary bands defined by the state

There may be exceptions related to the recruitment of international academics.



7. Admission mechanisms

Admission mechanisms

Basic qualification granting eligibility to apply to Higher Education
(usually Secondary Education qualification) – most often set in the law

Free admission

Austria
Belgium / Flanders
Belgium / Wallonia
France
Italy
Malta
Netherlands
Spain
Switzerland

Admission based on
grades in general exam

Cyprus
Denmark
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Turkey

Admission criteria
set by universities

Bulgaria
Croatia
Czech Republic
Estonia
Finland
Iceland
Ireland
Luxembourg

Norway
Portugal
Romania
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
Sweden
England

Perceptions: main challenges

Financial issues

- Low levels of public funding
- Short-term funding contracts
- Line-item budgets
- Lack of financial capacity
- Excessive reporting procedures

Student-related issues

- Challenge of free admission
- Inability to determine / introduce students' financial contributions

Institutional capacity and relationship with authorities

- Lack of support to implement governance reforms (autonomy & accountability)
- Lack of long term vision of policy
- Inexperience with new steering mechanisms

Trends

Organisational autonomy

- Balancing the role of the external members
- CEO-type rectorship found in north western Europe, traditional “primus inter pares” more common in eastern and Mediterranean countries
- Development of dual governance structures

Staffing autonomy

- Increased flexibility in staffing issues but little ability to determine salaries
- Civil servant status still widespread

Financial autonomy

- East/West divide in autonomy regarding tuition fees as well as in use of public funding
- Limited ability to borrow and raise money
- Limited ability to own real estate
- Heavy reporting procedures

Academic autonomy

- More freedom to determine academic profiles
- Opening of academic programmes often tied to resource negotiations & accreditation processes

Concluding remarks

- Governments to provide the strategic long-term vision
- Clear rules and regulations – stability
- Smaller governing bodies to act more efficiently
- Appropriate selection mechanisms for external members
- Support for leadership development and professional development
- Sustainable funding mechanisms

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