Bologna principles & tools and their impact on sustainability development

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Bologna National Event Ukraine

6th of November 2025

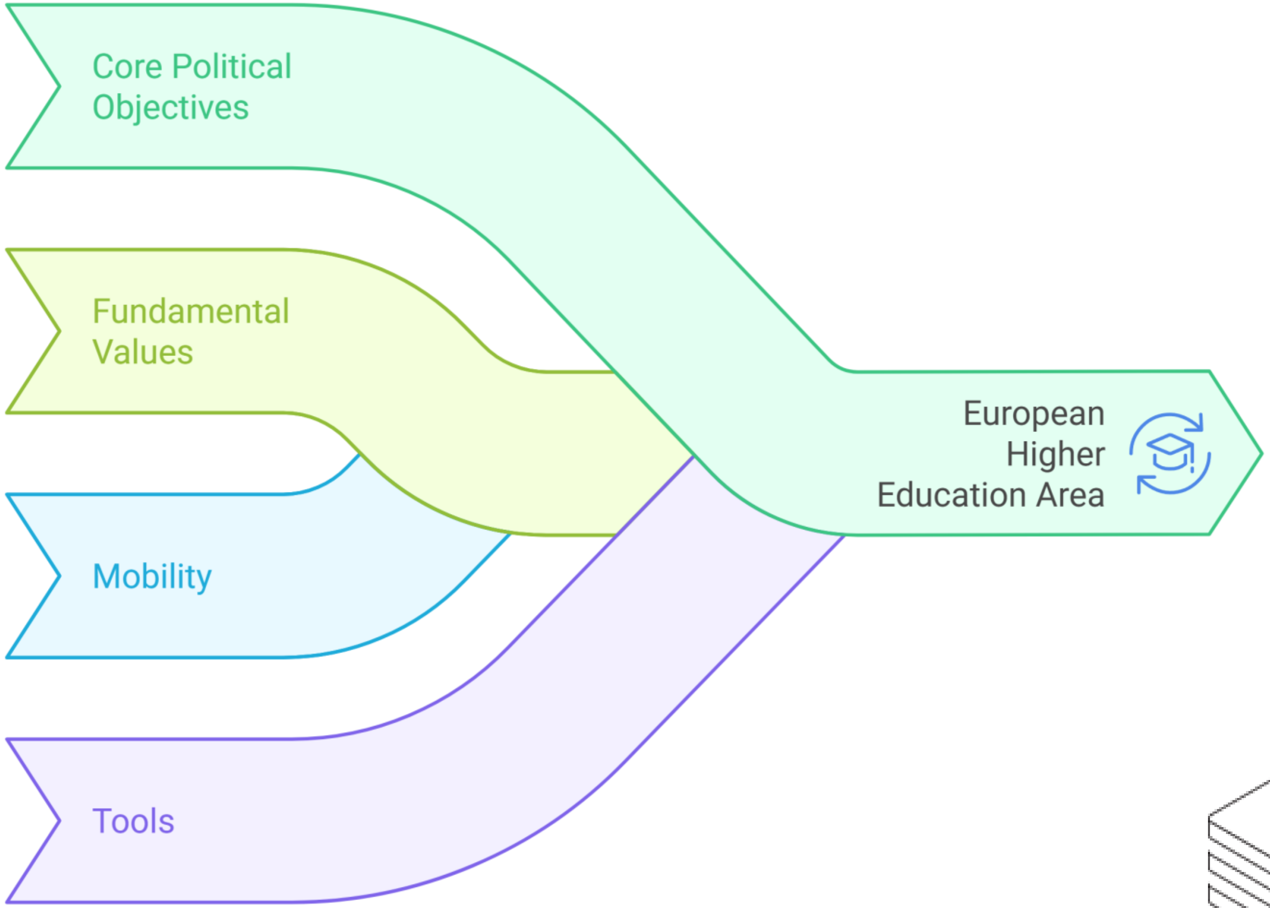
EHEA priorities

1 Inclusive, innovative, interconnected EHEA

2 Academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, student & staff participation, public responsibility for and of HE

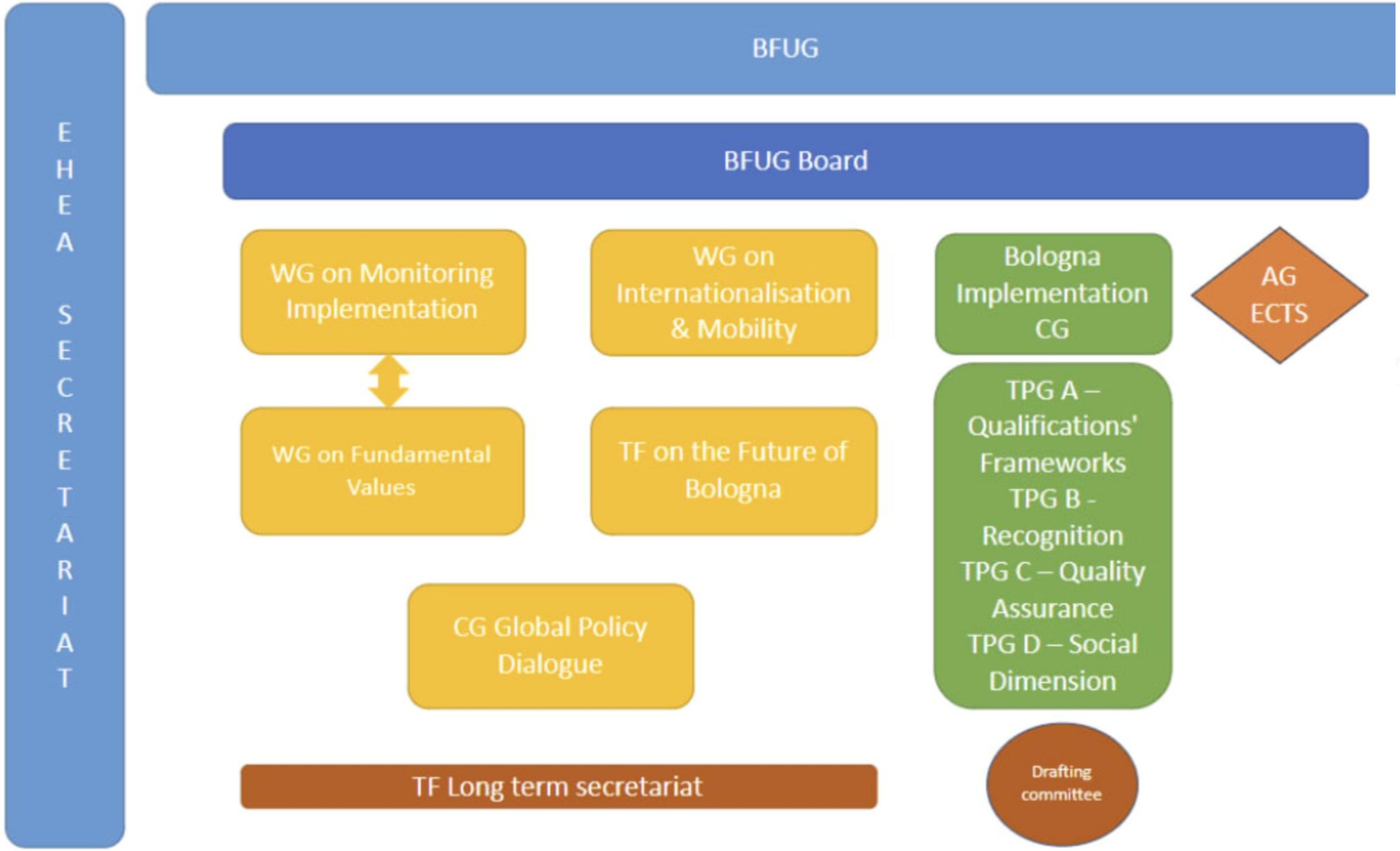
3 Inclusive, green, balanced student mobility.

4 ESG, European Approach for QA of JP, ECTS, QFs, automatic recognition



EHEA Secretariat

EHEA priorities



EHEA Secretariat

EHEA priorities

The Bologna Process: from Sorbonne, 1998 to Paris, 2018

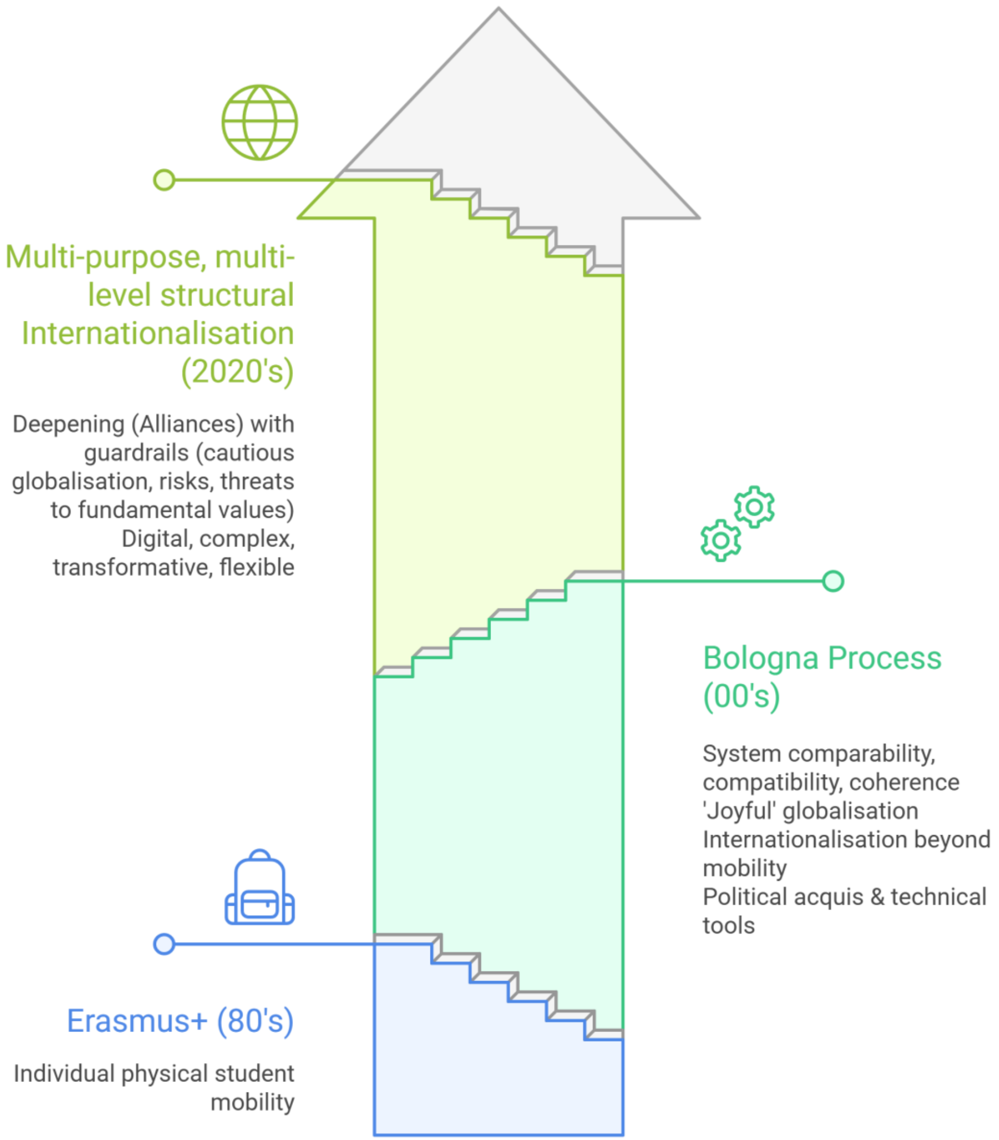
Mobility of students and teachers	Mobility also for researchers and administrative staff	Social dimension of mobility	Portability of loans and grants	Attention to visa and work permits	Attention also to pension systems and recognition	Target: 20 % graduate mobility by 2020	Explore path to automatic recognition of academic qualifications		Student digital data exchange
A common two-cycle degree system	Easily readable and comparable degrees	Fair recognition Development of joint degrees	Inclusion of doctoral level as third cycle	QF-EHEA adopted National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) launched	NQFs by 2010	NQFs by 2012	Roadmaps for countries without NQF	Implementation of key commitments	Short cycle as a stand-alone qualification level Revised Diploma Supplement
		Social dimension	Equal access	Reinforcement of the social dimension	National action plans	National targets for the social dimension to be measured by 2020	Widening access and completion rates	Social inclusion	Inclusion of under-represented and vulnerable groups
		Lifelong learning (LLL)	Alignment of national LLL policies Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Flexible learning paths	Partnerships to improve employability	LLL as a public responsibility Focus on employability	Enhance employability, LLL and entrepreneurial skills through cooperation with employers	Employability	Combine academic and work-based learning
Use of credits	A system of credits (ECTS)	ECTS and Diploma Supplement (DS)	ECTS for credit accumulation		Coherent use of tools and recognition practices	Implementation of Bologna tools	Ensure that Bologna tools are based on learning outcomes	Adoption of ECTS Users Guide	
	European cooperation in quality assurance (QA)	Cooperation between QA and recognition professionals	QA at institutional, national and European level	European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance (ESG) adopted	Creation of the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)	Quality as an overarching focus for EHEA	Allow EQAR registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA	Adoption of revised ESG and European Approach to QA of joint programmes	Ensure compliance with ESG 2015 Promote European Approach for QA of joint programmes
Europe of Knowledge	European dimensions in higher education	Attractiveness of the EHEA	Links between higher education and research areas	International coope-ration on the basis of values and sustainable development	Strategy to improve the global dimension of the Bologna Process adopted	Enhance global policy dialogue through Bologna Policy Fora	Evaluate implementation of 2007 global dimension strategy		Develop synergies between EHEA – ERA
								Learning and Teaching: Relevance and quality	Innovation and Inclusion in Leaning and Teaching Digitalisation and digital skills
								Sustainable Development	Support to UNSDGs
1998 **Sorbonne Declaration**	**1999** **Bologna Declaration**	**2001** **Prague Communiqué**	**2003** **Berlin Communiqué**	**2005** **Bergen Communiqué**	**2007** **London Communiqué**	**2009** **Leuven/ Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué**	**2012** **Bucharest Communiqué**	**2015** **Yerevan Communiqué**	**2018** **Paris Communiqué**

European Commission

The European Higher Education Area in 2024

Bologna Process Implementation Report

Waves of internationalisation in Europe



EHEA Secretariat

Rome Communiqué (2020)

We commit to continue and step up our investment in education, to ensure that higher education institutions have **appropriate funding to develop solutions for the current crisis, post crisis recovery, and generally, the transition into green, sustainable and resilient economies and societies.**

We commit to **supporting our higher education institutions** in bringing their **educational, research and innovation** capacities to bear on these **fundamental global objectives** and to deploying resources to ensure that our higher education **systems contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.** Moving towards climate neutrality is essential for all of us, and learners must be prepared for **new "green" jobs and activities**. They must be offered **up-skilling and reskilling** opportunities in a lifelong learning perspective, and enabled to develop and apply new technologies and approaches.

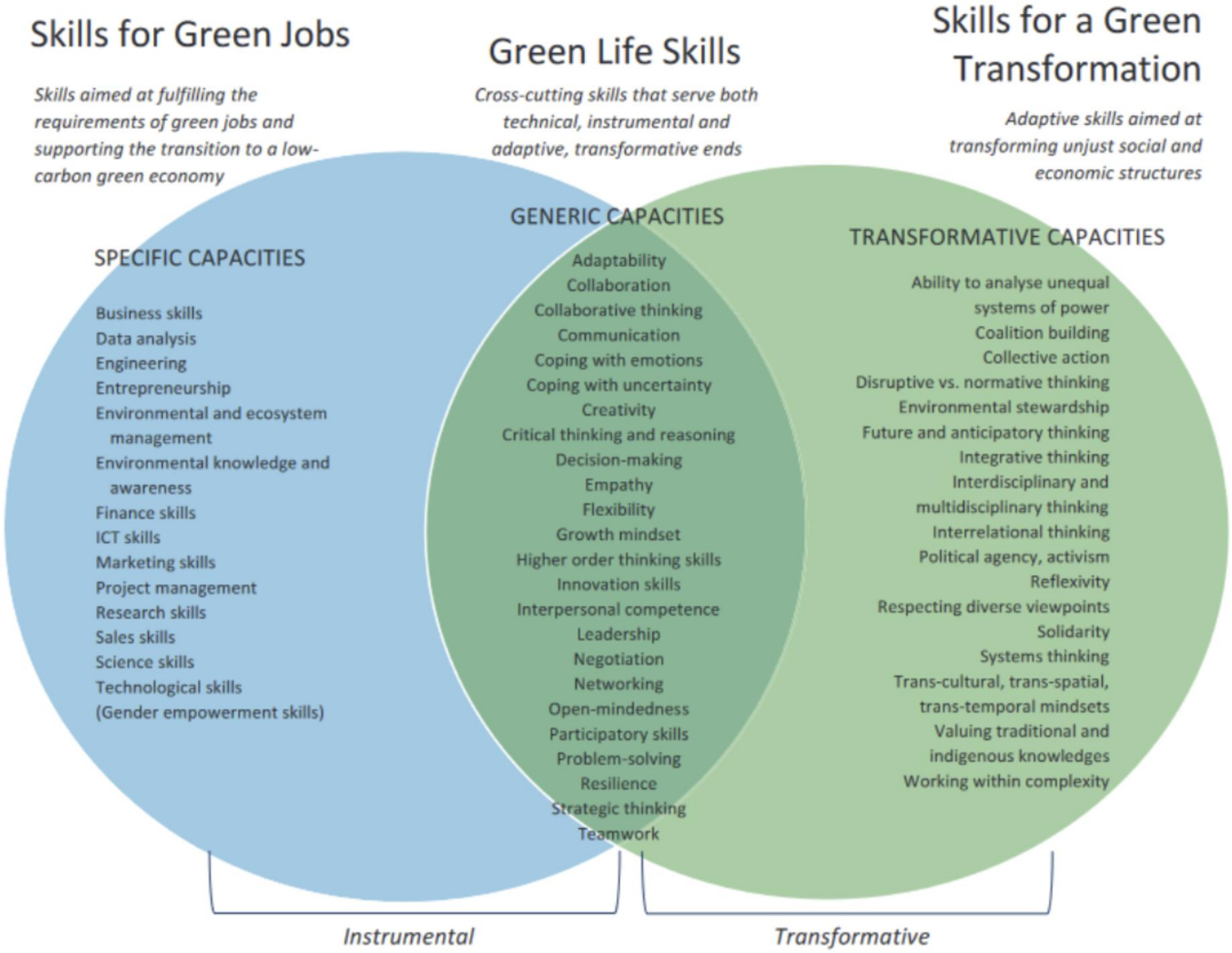
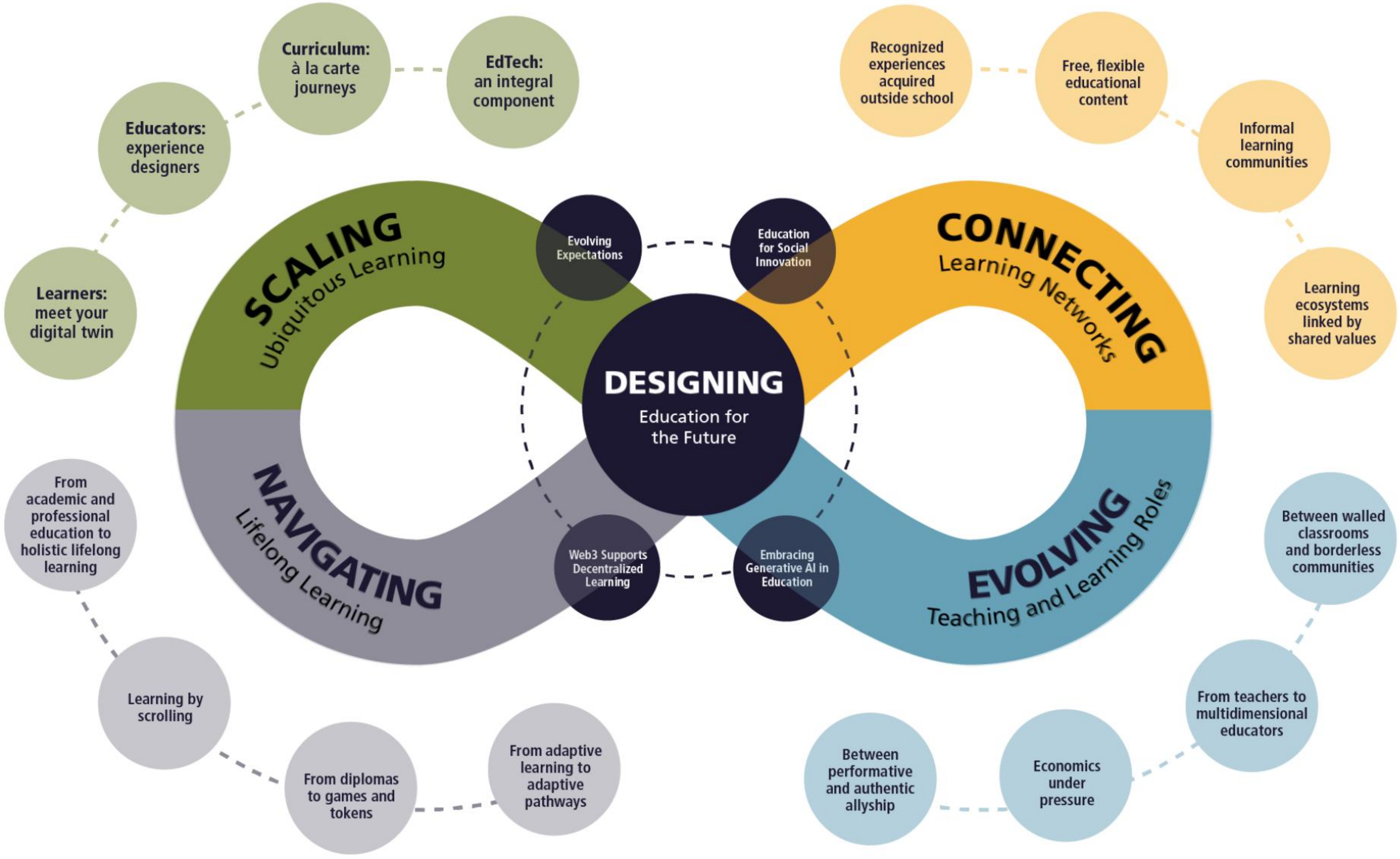


FIGURE 1 A green skills framework
Source: Kwauk and Casey (2021).

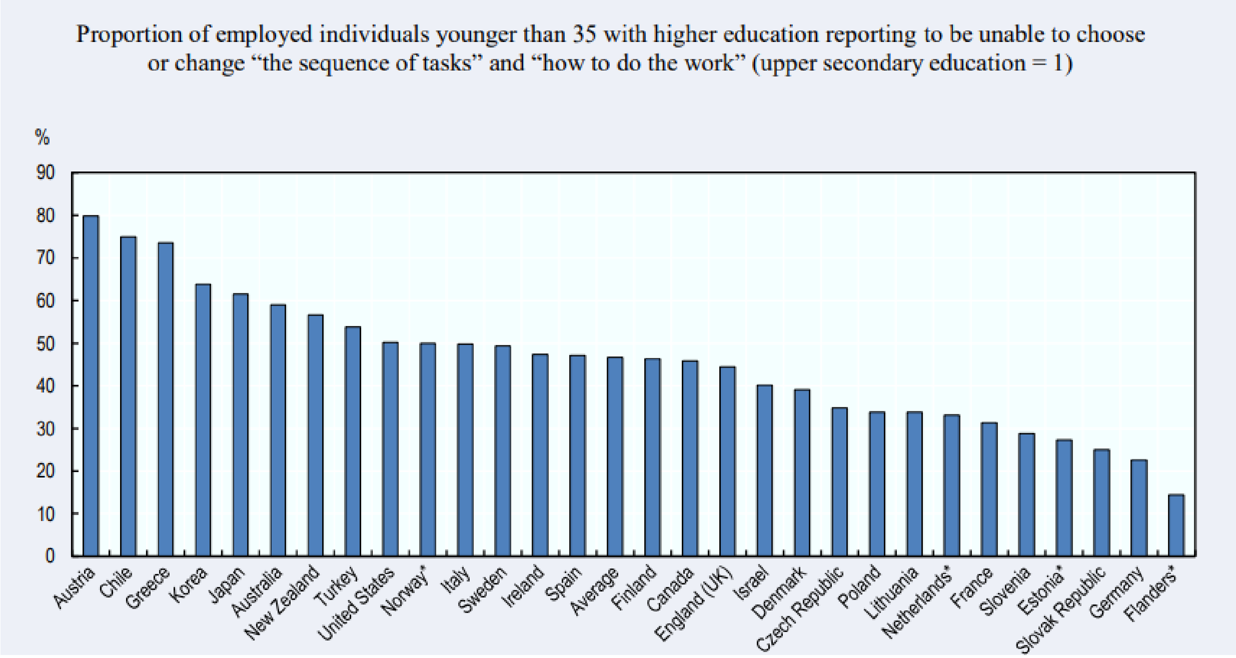
Tirana Communiqué (2024)

We will support higher education institutions in **strengthening their contribution** to society and their local communities, responding to the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** and the **green transition** in the area of higher education, to the **ongoing digitalisation** and the combination of physical and online learning and teaching.

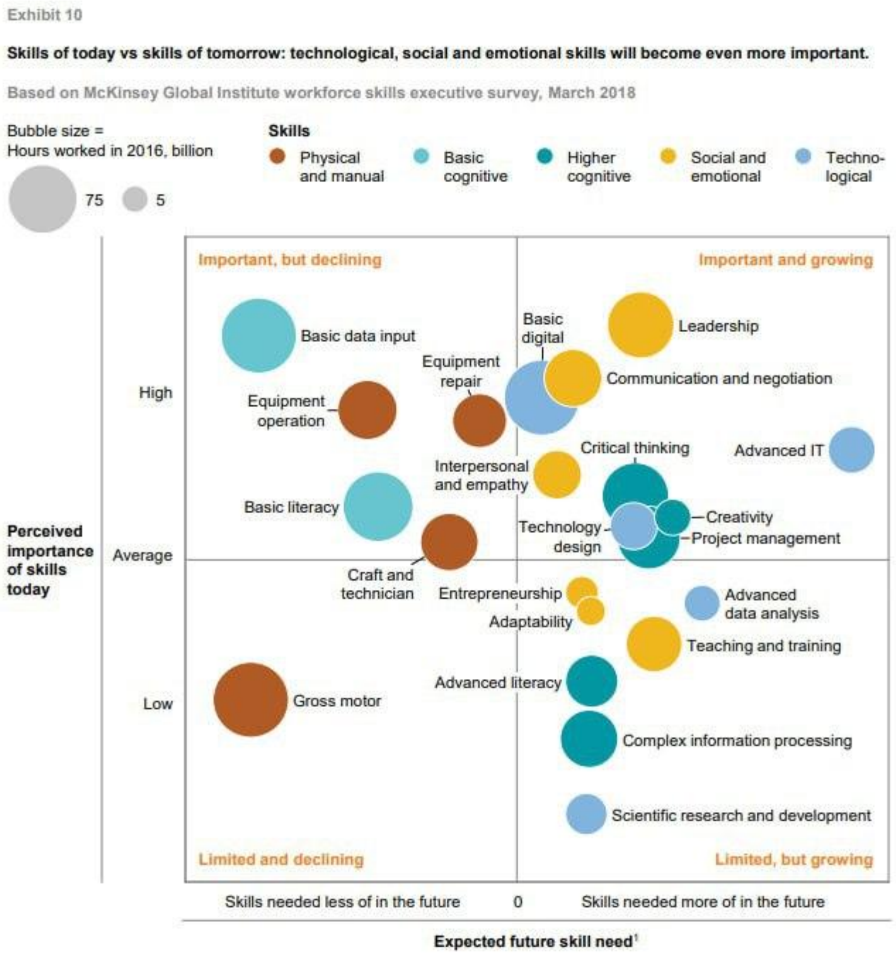
- Different students
- Different skills
- Different learning environment



eCampus Ontario, 2024



OECD, 2024



McKinsey, 2018

Bologna tools and sustainable development

- **Qualification Frameworks** (QF-EHEA, EQF): designing learning outcomes, RPL
- **Learning outcomes:** usage of learning outcomes in teaching and assessment, with ECTS as a common currency
- **European Standards and Guidelines for QA**

The Dublin Descriptors

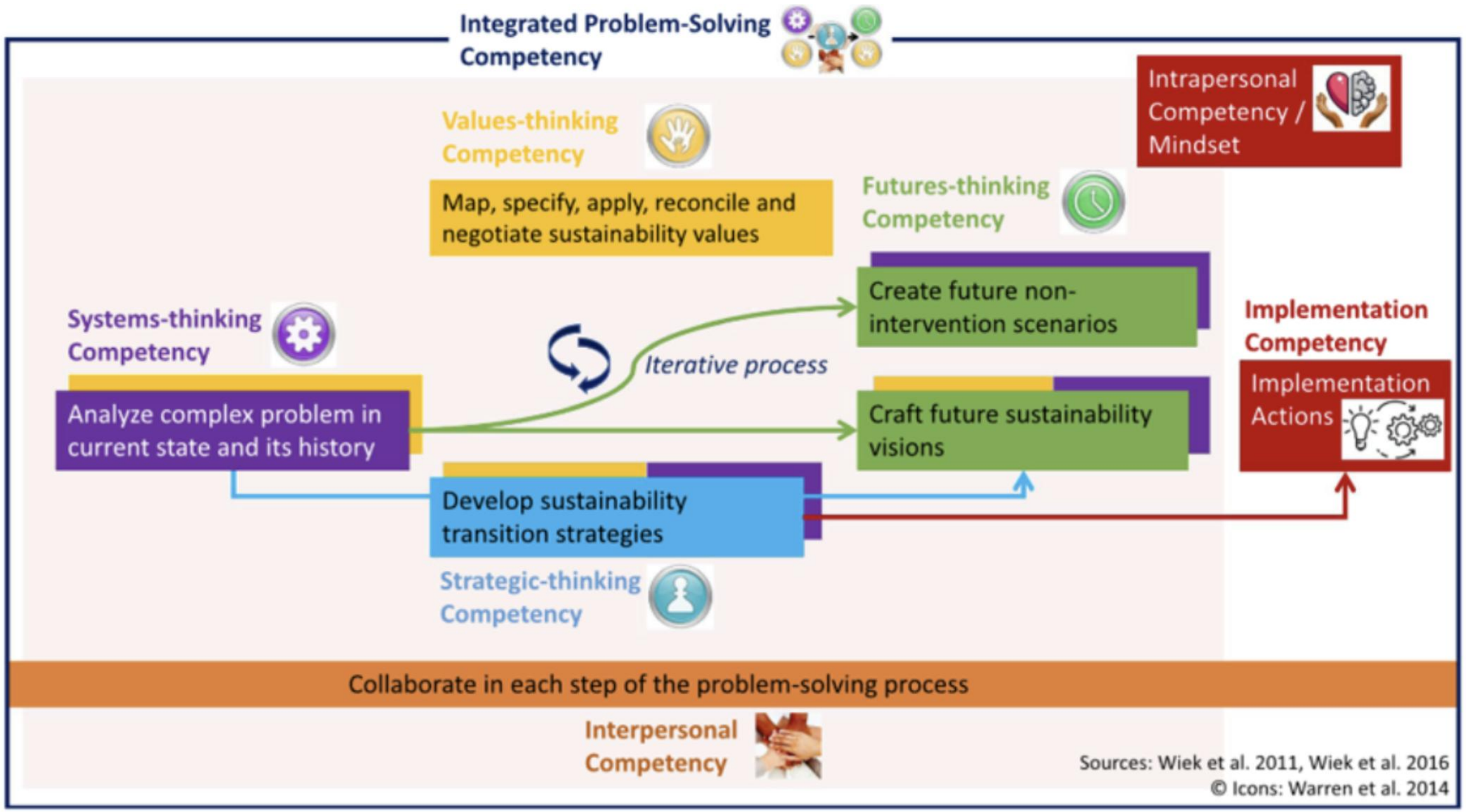
The Dublin descriptors were built on the following elements:

- knowledge and understanding;
- applying knowledge and understanding;
- making judgements;
- communications skills;
- learning skills.

Integrated in QF-EHEA

Dublin Descriptors Bachelor level	
Knowledge and insight	Has demonstrable knowledge and understanding of a discipline that builds on and exceeds the level achieved in secondary education; usually operates at a level where, with the support of specialised manuals, there are some aspects that require knowledge of the latest developments in the field of expertise.
Applying knowledge and insight	Is able to apply his knowledge and insight in such a way that it shows a professional approach to his work or profession, and also has competencies for drawing up and deepening arguments, and for solving problems in the field of expertise.
Judgement	Student is able to collect and interpret relevant data (usually in the field of expertise) with the aim of forming an opinion that is partly based on weighing relevant social, scientific or ethical aspects.
Communication	Is able to communicate information, ideas and solutions to an audience consisting of specialists or non-specialists.
Learning skills	Has the necessary learning skills to enter into a follow-up study that presupposes a high level of autonomy.

Levels and outcomes



ECTS User's Guide - The programme profile

The profile presents the **distinctive features** of the programme (Lockhoff et al., 2010). It indicates the **field(s) of study** (which may be expressed in ISCED-F codes), the **level of the programme**, the **main focus**, the key **learning outcomes** expected on completion, the **learning environment** and the **main learning, teaching and assessment activities.**

An effective programme profile will make it clear to students and stakeholders **what generic and subject specific competences will be developed** and the **employability** potential of the programme

Learning outcomes express the level of competence attained by the student and verified by assessment. They are '**statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process**' (Ibid.). They are formulated by academic staff, involving students and other stakeholders. In order to facilitate assessment, these statements need to be verifiable.

Competence means **'the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development'**. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of **responsibility and autonomy**' (Recommendation 2008/C 111/01). Competences can be **generic or subject–specific**.

ECTS User’s Guide - Formulating LOs

The learning outcomes should adequately reflect the **context, level, scope and content** of the programme:

- **succinct, not too detailed, mutually consistent, easily understandable and verifiable**
- **achievable** within the specified workload, **linked with appropriate learning activities, assessment** methods and assessment criteria.
- Experience suggests between 10 and 12 LOs/study programme and 6-8 LOs/course, which coherently progress and contribute to the LOs of the study programme (matrix)
- Written with **active verb + outcome (object/skill) + how is it demonstrated**

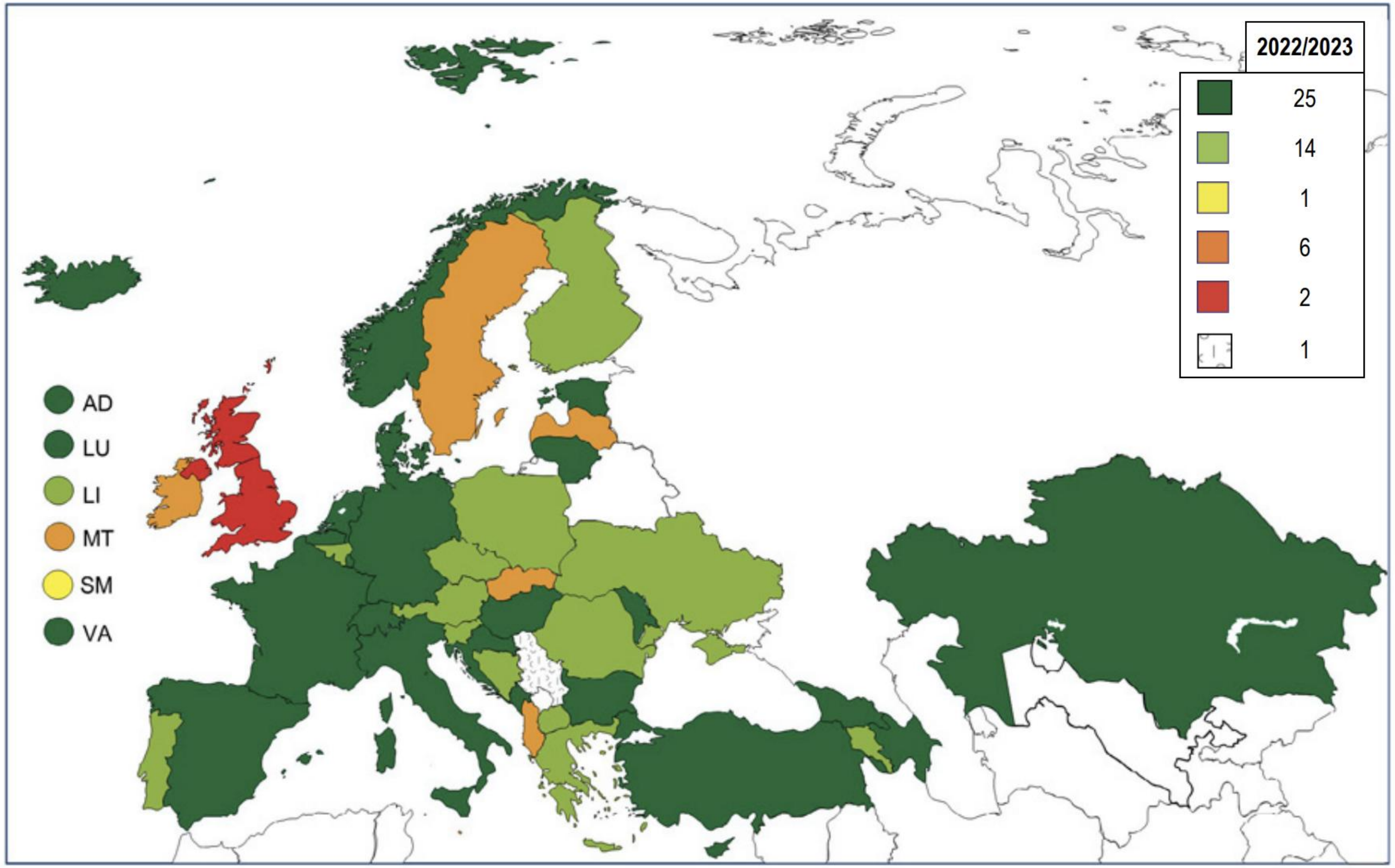
E.g.: graduates explain the interlinks of hardware-components by applying up-to-date scientific terminology

Allocation of ECTS: 25-30 hours/credit (total student workload). Fine-tuning through a priori/a posteriori methods

Supporting documents: course catalogues, learning agreements, transcript of records

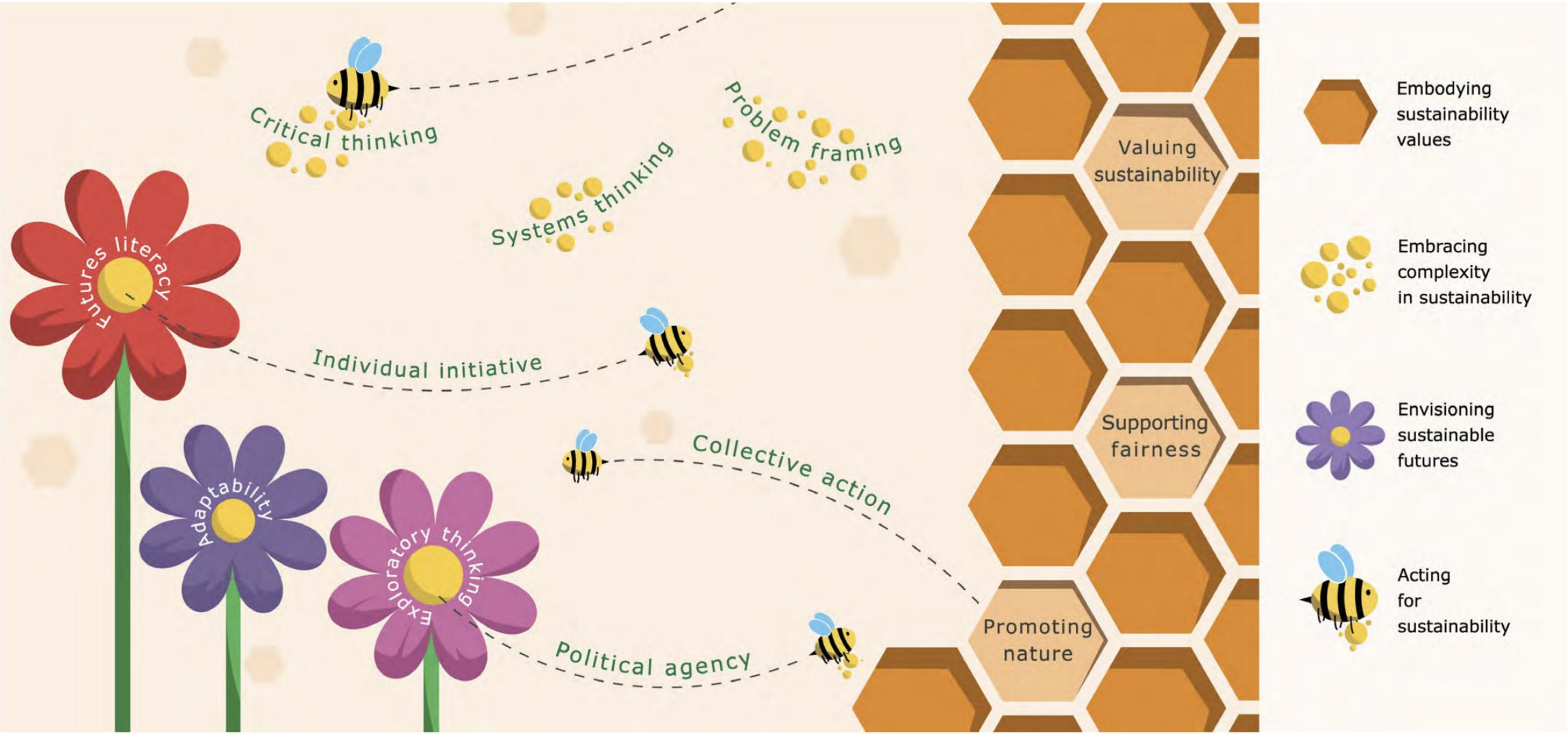
ECTS User's Guide Application

Figure 2.9: Scorecard indicator n°2: Monitoring the implementation of the ECTS system by external quality assurance, 2022/2023



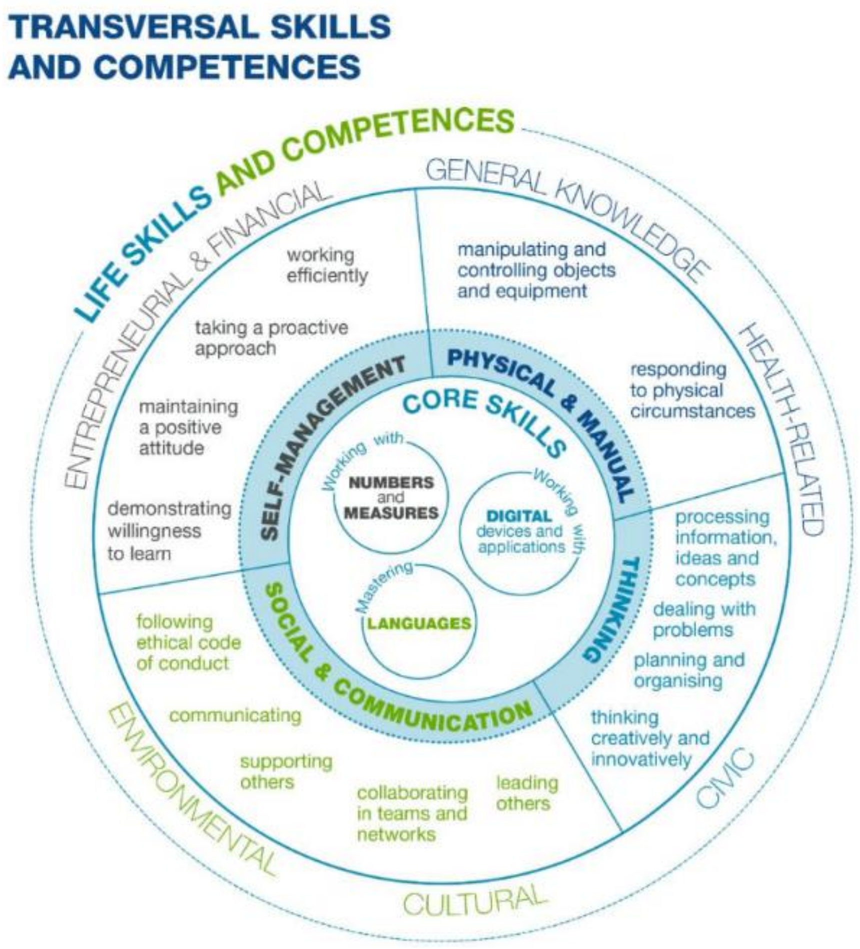
Source: BFUG data collection.

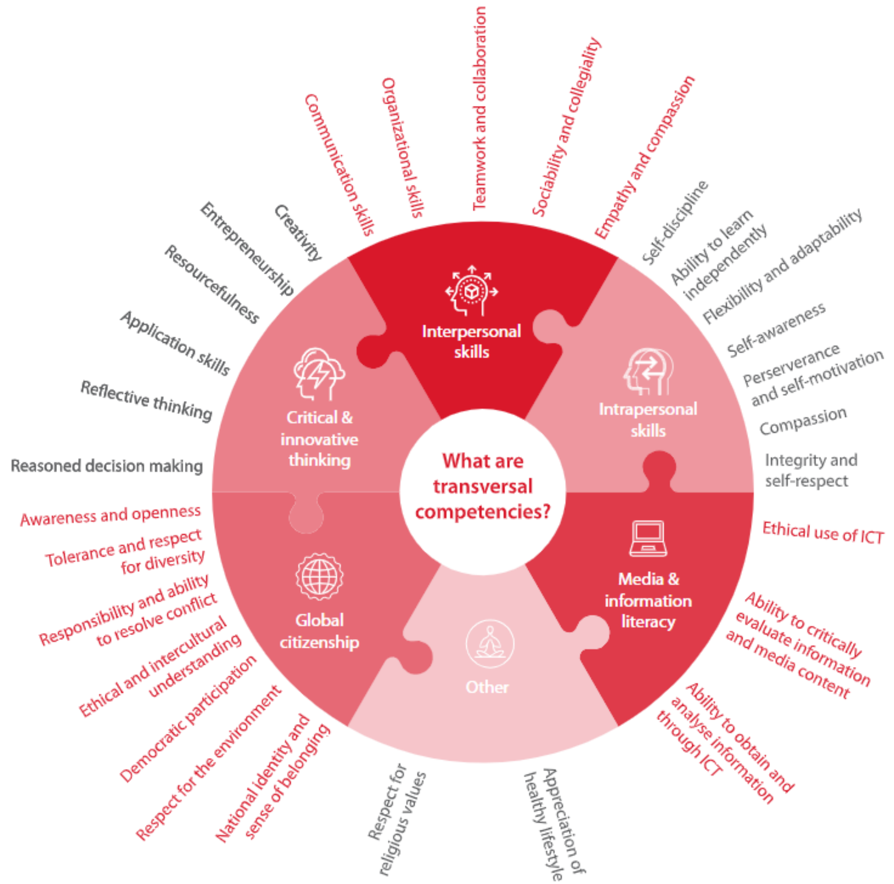
Green competencies



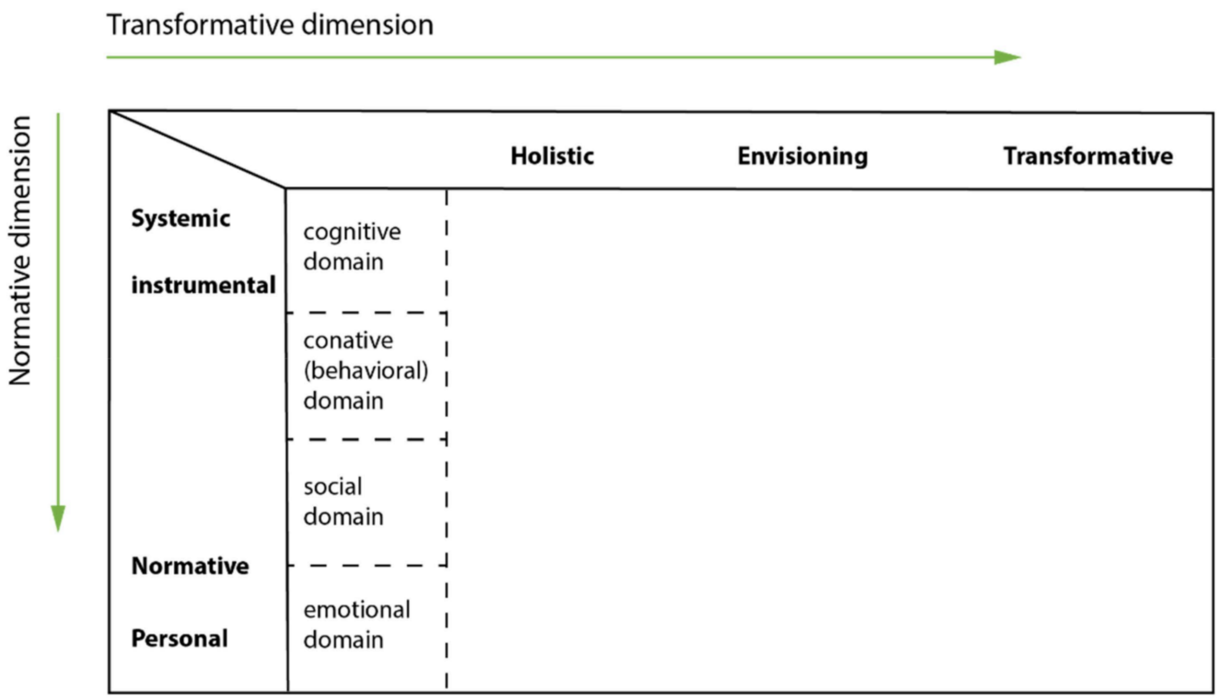
Visual representation of *GreenComp*.

‘Transversal’ skills driving sustainable competencies – OECD and UNESCO





Mapping the move towards sustainability skills



Jana Dlouhá, 2019

Standards and Guidelines for the QA in EHEA (ESG)

1.2 - Design and approval of programmes

The programmes should be designed so that they **meet the objectives set for them**, including the **intended learning outcomes.** The **qualification** resulting from a programme should be **clearly specified and communicated,** and refer to the **correct level of the national qualifications framework and QF-EHEA**

They provide students with both **academic knowledge and skills** including those that are **transferable**, which may influence their **personal development** and may be applied in their **future careers.**

Programmes are designed by **involving students and other stakeholders** in the work; **reflect the four purposes** of higher education of the Council of Europe; are designed so that they **enable smooth student progression**; define the **expected student workload.** in ECTS; - include **well-structured placement** opportunities where appropriate

1.9 – On-going monitoring and periodic review

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to ensure that the **provision remains appropriate** and to create a **supportive and effective learning environment** for students.

They include the evaluation of:
- The **content of the programme in the light of the latest research** in the given discipline thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;
- The **changing needs of society**;
- The **students' workload, progression and completion**;
- The **effectiveness of procedures for assessment** of students;
- The **student expectations, needs and satisfaction** in relation to the programme;
- The **learning environment and support services** and their fitness for purpose for the programme

Learning and Teaching

EHEAROME2020

Recommendations to National Authorities for the Enhancement of Higher Education Learning and Teaching in the EHEA

- promoting, within disciplinary courses, the development of soft skills, and the skills necessary for the enlightened citizen of the 21st century, in order to understand the challenges of a complex world and respect others and the environment;

- creating flexible learning pathways (including micro-credentials) on institutional and national levels and across the EHEA, and to explore opportunities offered by digital technologies to do so

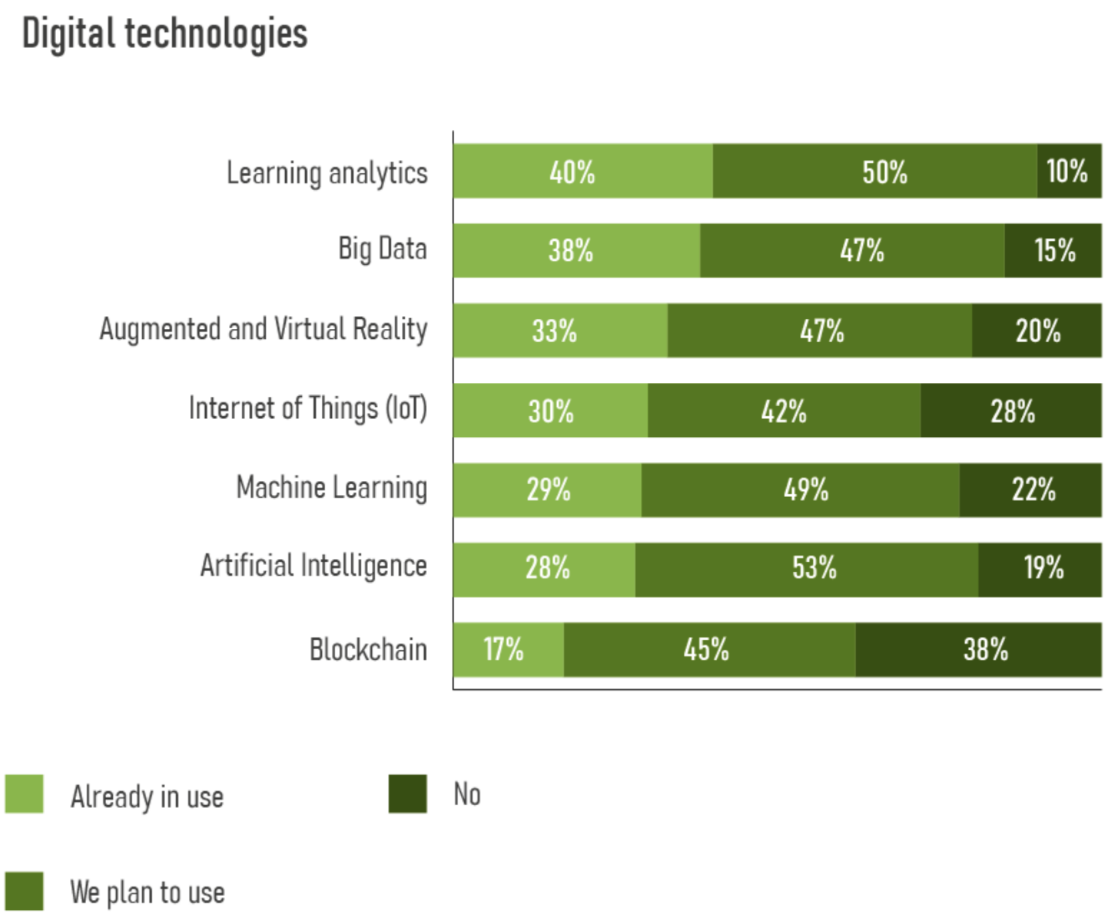
- national and institutional strategies and approaches for Open Education and the use of Open Educational Resources

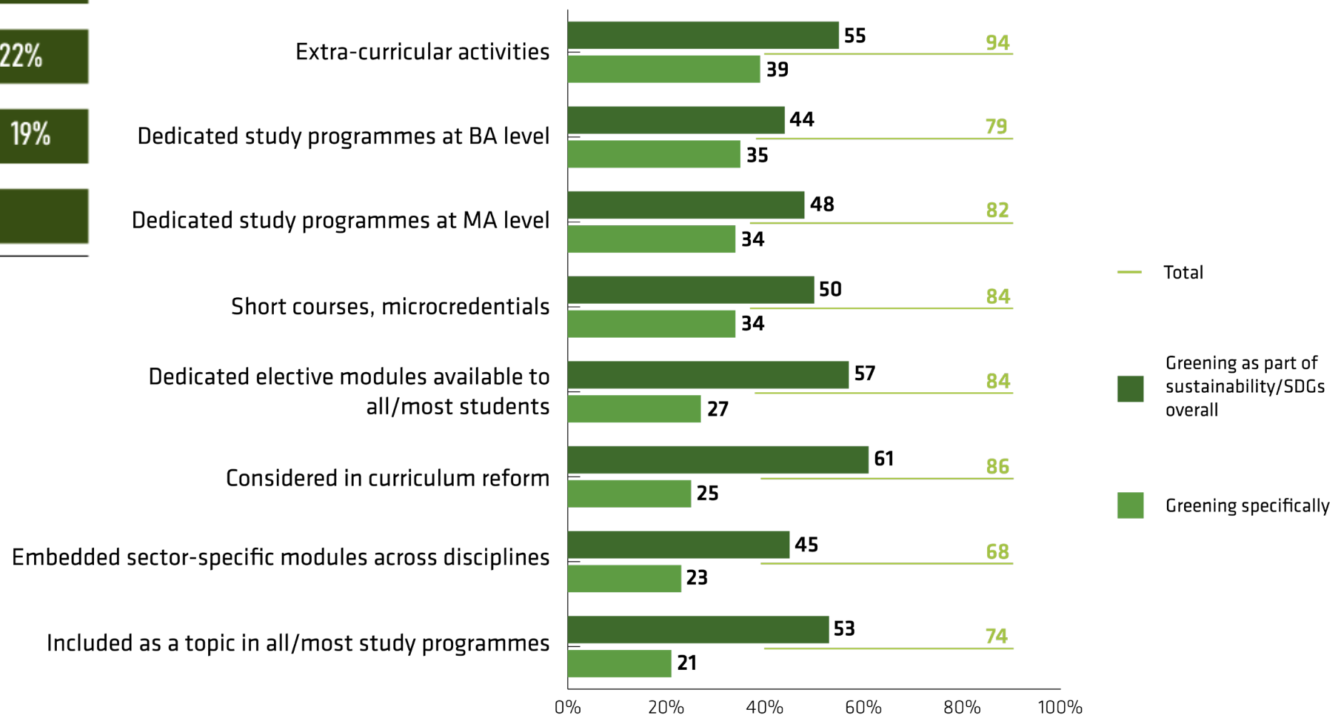
- supporting higher education institutions in enhancing the continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers

- assuring, in collaboration with the higher education institutions, structural measures to assure the parity of esteem for teaching and research

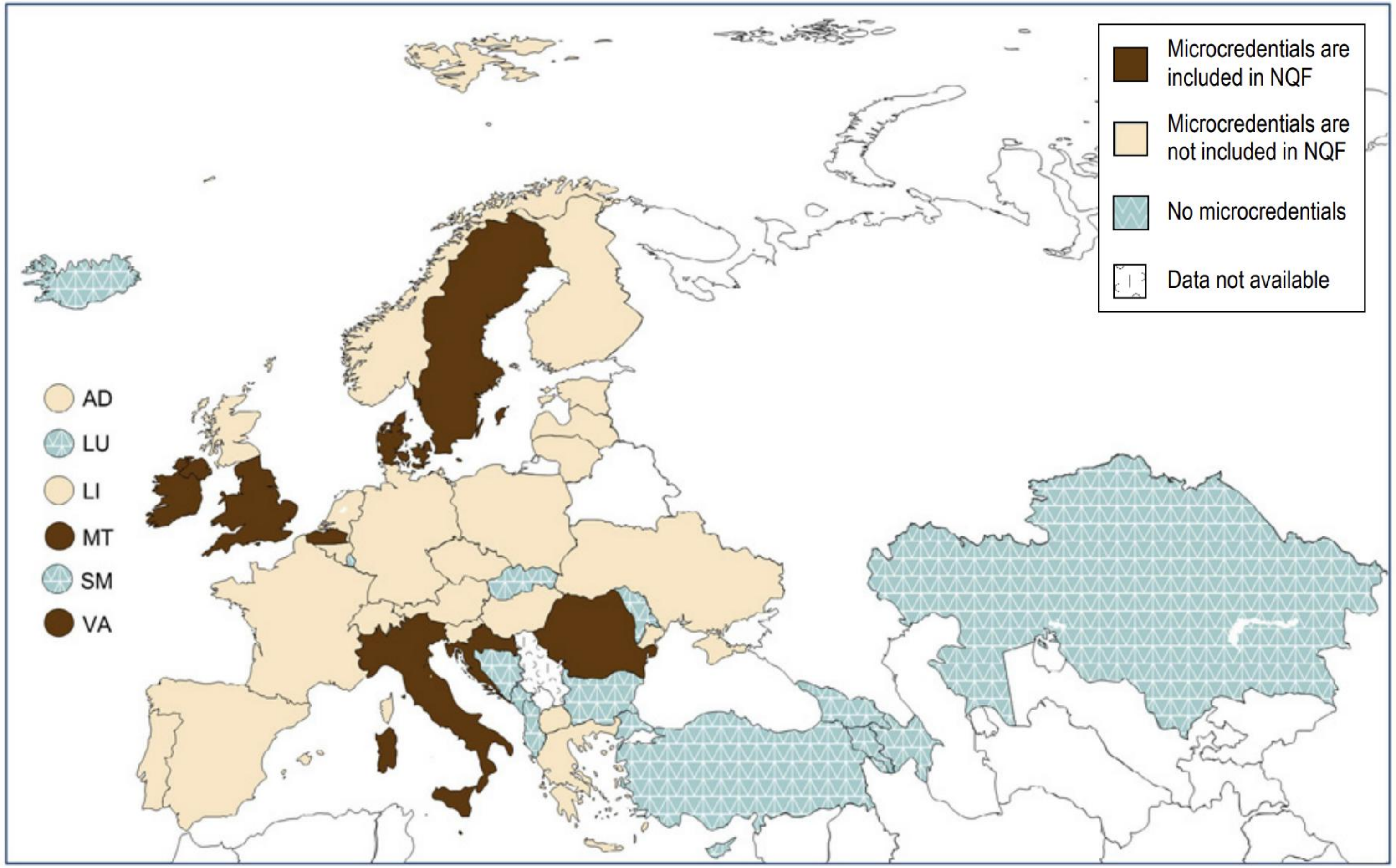
- focus on inter- and multidisciplinary approaches, research-based learning and teaching, appropriate use of learning analytics

Digital and green transition – EUA study

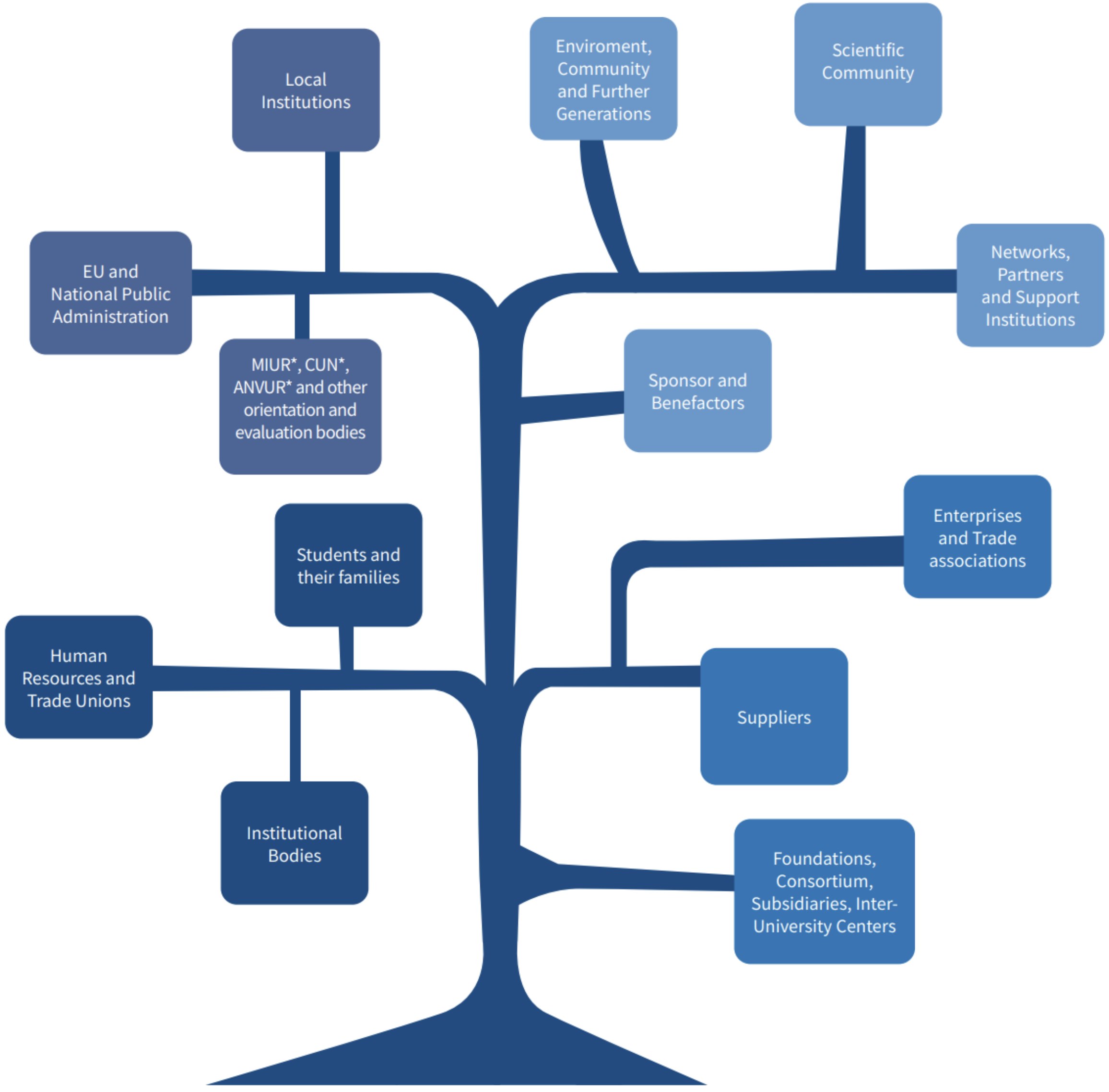




Some work to do on micro-credentials still



Institutional examples – University of Bologna



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM - UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

UN GOALS INCLUDED IN THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2019-2021

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages
Target: 3.4

4 QUALITY EDUCATION
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Targets: 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.a, 4.c

5 GENDER EQUALITY
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Targets: 5.1, 5.5

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Targets: 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
Targets: 9.1, 9.5

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
Reduce inequality within and among countries
Targets: 10.2, 10.4

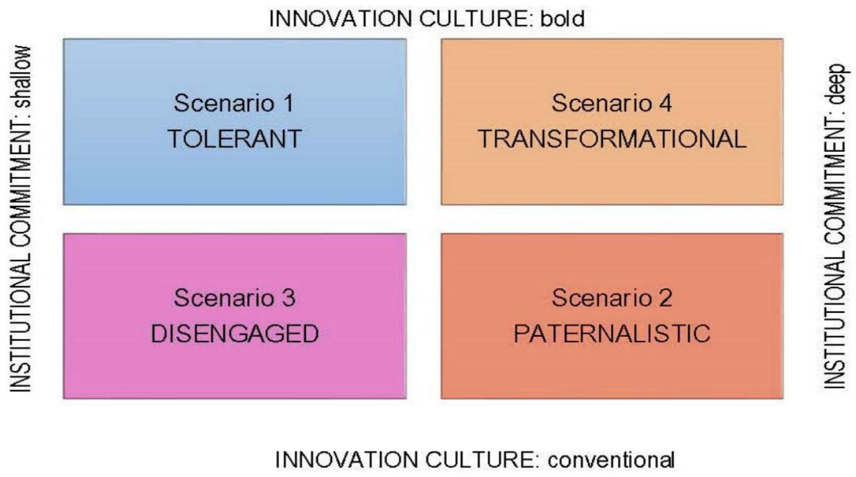
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Targets: 11.1, 11.3, 11.4, 11.6

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Targets: 16.6, 16.7

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
Targets: 17.16, 17.17

Conclusions

- If we truly believe in the missions of HE, then SDGs cannot be but central
- Yet SDGs cannot mean ‘everything’ – what’s beyond the buzzword and the surface level?
- Degrees, intensity and approach towards sustainability differs by (academic/professional) field
- Driving sustainability is an institutional pursuit, yet with international drives and peer-support



Steele and Rickards 2016

Conclusions

- Bologna embraces the political impetus
- Bologna offers the technical tools to frame the system - they give meaning, comparability, compatibility
- Used properly, the tools should lead to a more consistent & clearly minded approach towards sustainability skills
- However, Bologna does not touch institutional policy - change management frameworks needed

bologna process

EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area

Bologna principles & tools and its impact on sustainability development

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