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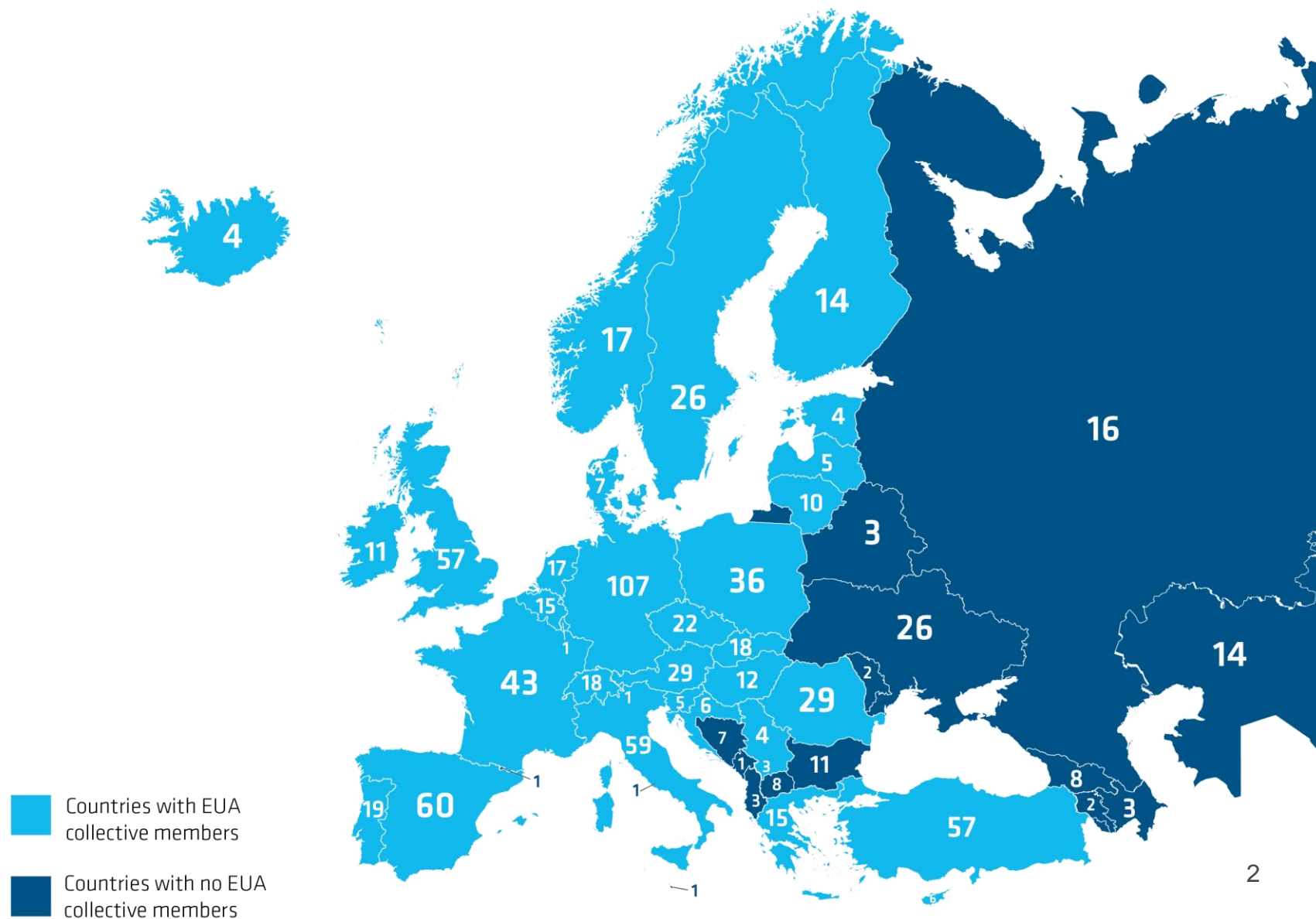
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THE UNI(DI)VERSITY “ATLAS OF INCLUSION”

Higher education diversity strategies for migrant and refugee inclusion

Henriette Stoeber, EUA

The **European University Association (EUA)** represents more than 800 universities and national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries.



Background (I) refugee integration

- 26 million refugees worldwide (2019), 10% in Europe
- “[...] education and training is the foundation for successful participation in society and one of the most powerful tools for building more inclusive societies” (European Commission, 2020)
- since 2015 - university support initiatives for refugees and migrants in a refugee(-like) situation
 - Ad-hoc
 - Bottom-up
 - Funded by core budgets, and/or (EU) projects



inHERE project (2018):

- few with links to strategies and core mission (values, third mission, role as an actor in society at large)
- crucial for ensuring long-term sustainability

Background (II)

Diversity and inclusion at higher education institutions

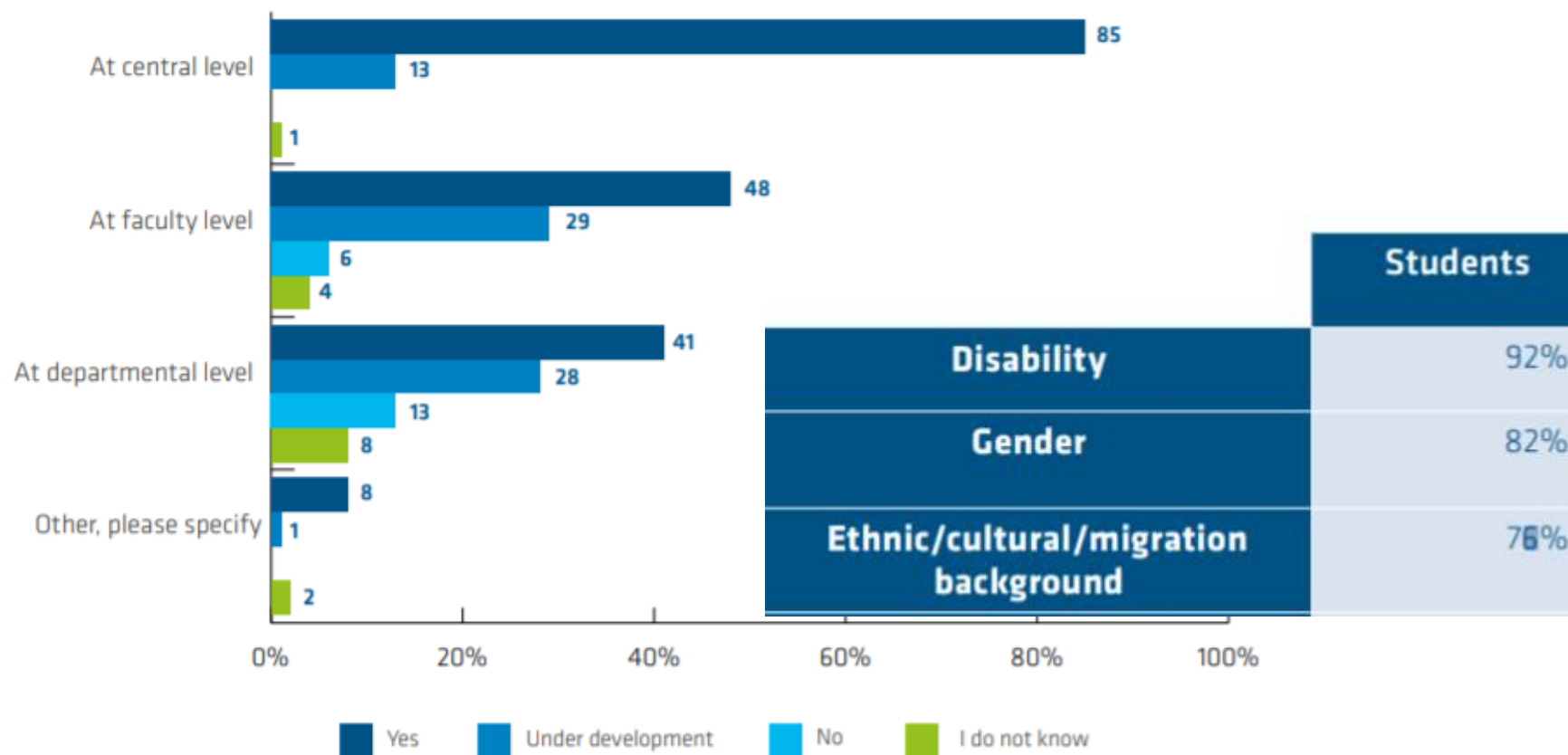
Source:

Diversity, equity and inclusion in European higher education institutions: results from the INVITED project (EUA 2019)

Figure 5 - Strategic engagement according to institutional levels

Q10a: Are diversity, equity and inclusion topics that are addressed in your institution's strategy or policies?

Please select the applicable option for each level at the institution





Methodology

- Project/datasert review: HEI with inclusion strategy + refugee support activities
 - ✓ EUA Refugees Welcome Map
 - ✓ TandEM - Towards Empowered Migrant Youth in Southern Europe
 - ✓ INVITED - Strategies towards Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Universities
 - ✓ Inspireurope – Initiative to Support, Promote and Integrate Researchers at Risk in Europe
- Survey & collection of diversity strategy documents (69 HEI)
- Interviews with 13 HEI

<https://www.eua.eu/resources/publications/988:higher-education-diversity-strategies-for-migrant-and-refugee-inclusion.html>

<http://www.university.eu/outputs/atlas/>



STRATEGY OR POLICY

Strategy or policy on diversity,
equality and inclusion

- ALL diversity strategies describe the institution's actions in the field of diversity, equity, non-discrimination and inclusion in terms of **institutional values**
- values are expressed differently
 - broad, “catch-all” strategy (8)
 - non-discrimination focus (2)
 - equity focus (6)
- Other strategic level documents
 - Central strategy, Global Agenda...
 - Signatory to national and international statutes on diversity and on refugee support



EXPLICIT LINK TO REFUGEE(-LIKE)

Diversity, equality and/or inclusion
strategy with explicit link to
migrants in refugee(-like) situation.

- Mostly indirectly - dimension of religion and/or ethnic background
- explicit reference to the target group of refugees, or migrants in a refugee(-like) situation (2)

Defining the target group

Definition challenge - **strategies**:

- legally many HEI cannot to collect information on the migration status or ethnic backgrounds of their students and staff
- cannot target refugees explicitly

Definition in **support programmes**:

- refugee, asylum seeker, other international protection background, or broadly refugee-like background
 - full refugee status required (5)
 - full refugee status or asylum seeker status (5)
 - recognised refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people, and refugee-like background (1)
 - legally recognised refugees and “students with a non-western” background (based on self-identification) (1)

Implementation

- Linked to leadership portfolios (6):
 - vice-rector for academic policy and career management, vice-rector for equality and diversity, vice-rector for teaching, learning and equal opportunities, vice-chancellor for global engagement, rector ...
- Coordination points:
 - diversity office (7)
 - internal task forces, working groups and committees (5)
 - refugee help desk (4)
 - admissions office (2)
 - international office (2)
 - student social services (1)
 - human resources office (1)
 - working group of all higher education institutions in the region (1)
 - + various actors across the institutions e.g. language centres, social services, psychological support services, student residence centres, as well as study and tuition services, staff and students of specific faculties, such as psychology or law

Examples of support measures

Direct support to migrants with a refugee(-like) background, e.g.:

- Language courses (11)
- Adapted procedures and services for admissions and/or recognition of prior learning (8)
- Fee waivers, scholarships and other direct financial support (8)
- Consultation and counselling (7)

Changing the narrative around migration itself

- Research, courses, or degree programmes on migration (7)
- Collaboration and exchange with national or local government and local NGOs (7)
- Cultural exchange, sport events and other integration activities (6)
- Cooperation with international organisations (3)

Challenges & recommendations from the interviewees

Barriers	Enablers
Limited funding, high reliance on volunteers	Diversity, inclusion and equity core to the university’s organisational culture
Lack of monitoring the impact of strategies/initiatives for migrants with a refugee(-like) background	Engagement of actors across the institution
Legal obstacles in working with asylum seekers	Enhanced national support and collaboration
Identification of migrants with a refugee(-like) background for support	Revision of administrative structures and admission criteria
Lack of collaboration with local or national government	Collaboration and dialogue with other higher education institutions
Lack of leadership support	Monitor and adapt support offer

Impact of Covid-19

No negative impact on the universities’ overall diversity and inclusion strategies:

- pandemic “shone a light” on the importance of accessibility and inclusion
 - underlined the need for coordinated strategies for inclusion for all disadvantaged learners
 - strategic documents and approaches regarding learning and teaching revised, not only with a view to digitalisation, but also with a closer eye on accessibility

Negative impact on support measures for migrants with a refugee(-like) background:

- social and community aspects of the programmes, considered crucial for integration, are largely lacking in an online classroom
- strong decrease in the spoken language learning
- postponed projects and activities
- increased dropouts from bridging programmes, (esp. female students)
- Increased need for financial aid – due to loss of part-time student jobs

Conclusion

- ✓ Institutional strategies or other central level steering documents for diversity, equity and inclusion are crucial for the success of their support activities for migrants with a refugee(-like) background.
- ✓ Linking support for migrants with a refugee(-like) background to institutional strategies – even if only in principle – enables a more systematic, integrated approach to supporting the target group.
- ✓ A move away from project-based activities towards strategic approaches strengthens the overall coordination across actors, and usually also secures some additional staff and financial resources.
- ✓ Inter-institutional networks are a means to enable peer learning and pooling of resources, and provide a way to offer joint support.
- ✓ A change of narrative is recommended, acknowledging that diversity and inclusion are not merely a matter of the institutions’ third mission, but can contribute to the overall quality of higher education.

Thank you for your attention

Henriette Stöber | Policy Analyst

EUA - European University Association | Higher Education Policy Unit

Henriette.stoeber@eua.eu

