

# Public consultation on a renewed Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education in the European Union

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

## 0. Information about respondents

\* Are you answering this survey as a) as an individual or b) as a representative of an organisation?

- As an individual
- As a representative of an organisation

Please indicate which type of organisation you represent

- A higher education or research institution or representative body of higher education and research institutions
- An educational establishment outside the higher education sector
- A student union or other student representative organisation
- A public administration
- A social partner organisation
- A non-governmental organisation not covered by the above
- Other

\* Is your organisation registered in the Transparency Register of the European Commission and the European Parliament?

If you are answering this questionnaire as an organisation, please register in the [Transparency Register](#). If your organisation/institution responds without being registered, the Commission will consider its input as that of an individual and will publish it as such.

- Yes
- No

\* What is the name of the organisation you represent?

*Text of 1 to 100 characters will be accepted*

Royal College of Nursing UK

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\* In which country do you live or is your organisation located?

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- The Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Italy
- Ireland
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Norway
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- The United Kingdom
- Other

Please specify

## 1. The State of Higher Education Systems in Europe

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\* This question is designed to gather your views about the current state of higher education systems in Europe, including possible challenges. Please indicate whether you wish to comment on the state of higher education in:

- A specific European country you know well
- The EU in general

\* Which country would you like to comment on?

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- The Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Italy
- Ireland
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Norway
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- The United Kingdom
- Other

## 1.1 Access and completion in higher education

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in general* with the following statements about access and completion in higher education in the country you have selected or in the EU in general.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion
*My country / the EU needs more people with higher education than is currently the case	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Too many people drop out of their higher education studies without finishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Prospective students are supported well to make informed choices about what to study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*There is good cooperation between higher education and secondary schools in the area of study and career guidance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Too few students study science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Too few students study professionally oriented courses with a direct link to a particular profession	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*People with talent and interest can go into higher education irrespective of their own financial resources	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 1.2 Teaching and learning in higher education

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in genera*/with the following statements about teaching and learning in higher education in the country you have selected or in the EU in general.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion
*The quality of teaching in higher education is generally high	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Students receive adequate academic guidance during their studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Teaching staff in higher education institutions receive the training they need to teach well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Good teaching in higher education institutions is rewarded in an adequate way	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Technology is being used effectively to improve teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Students have enough opportunities to gain relevant work-related experience during their studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Cooperation with employers in the design and delivery of courses is sufficiently developed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Students have enough possibilities to study or train abroad as part of their studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>*State-of-the-art research results are regularly embedded into higher education courses</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>*A well-balanced range of academic and professionally oriented study programmes is available</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 1.3 Preparing students for the future

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in general* with the following statements about how higher education in the country you have selected or in the EU in general prepares students for the future.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion
*Higher education courses equip students with the kinds of knowledge and skills that are needed in the labour market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Higher education courses are effective at helping students to develop "soft skills" like communication, problem-solving and working in teams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Higher education courses encourage students to be creative and innovative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The people designing higher education courses are sufficiently aware of likely skills needs in the labour market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>*There is a good match between the supply of higher education graduates and the knowledge and skills the economy needs</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>*Higher education courses help prepare students to contribute actively to society</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>*Higher education courses are effective at helping students to develop digital skills and digital literacy</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



### 1.4 Research and innovation in higher education institutions

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in general* with the following statements about research and innovation in the higher education system(s) in the country you have selected or in the EU in general.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion
*Researchers, including doctoral candidates, are recognised as professional members of staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Researchers receive the support that they need from their institutions to reach their potential	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The value of inter-disciplinary research is appropriately recognised and rewarded	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Cooperation between higher education institutions and businesses in applied research and innovation is sufficiently developed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Higher education institutions play a strong role in contributing to innovation at regional and national level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 1.5 Internationalisation of higher education

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in general* with the following statements about the internationalisation of the higher education system(s) in the country you have selected or in the EU in general.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion

*There are enough staff in higher education with international experience	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The international experience of staff members is viewed as an asset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The presence of foreign students is positive for higher education courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*There are enough foreign students in higher education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Recognition of qualifications from abroad works well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 1.6 Funding and governance of higher education

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in general* with the following statements about funding and governance in the higher education system(s) in the country you have selected or in the EU in general.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion
*Higher education institutions receive enough funding overall for them to fulfil their missions effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Higher education institutions have enough freedom to make decisions about their strategy and activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Quality assurance of teaching and learning in higher education is well organised and effective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The way research is funded rewards quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*The way teaching is funded rewards quality	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 1.7 General assessment

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree *in general* with the following general statements about the higher education system(s) in the country you have selected or in the EU in general.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion
*The higher education system(s) is (are) functioning well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Higher education receives adequate attention in government policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

## 2. Priorities for change

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This question focuses on things you would like to see *change* in higher education systems and what the priorities should be for those in charge of higher education systems (in particular higher education institution leadership and government). For each of the statements about future priorities below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

**Those in charge of higher education should...**

	Disagree strongly	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Agree strongly	No opinion

*...do more to widen access to higher education to more groups of society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...do more to steer students to study fields where there is strong labour market demand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...steer students away from courses with no clear link to the labour market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...make higher education courses more rigorous in terms of academic content	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...ensure higher education courses focus more on developing "soft skills" like communication, creativity and working in teams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...encourage more inter-disciplinary courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...improve the training available to teaching staff in higher education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...attract more international staff and researchers to institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*... do more to support short-term mobility abroad in higher education courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...do more to increase cooperation between higher education and business in design and provision of courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

*...provide more opportunities for students to gain work experience during their studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...make work experience a compulsory part of all higher education courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...develop more cooperation between higher education and business in the area of product and service innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...support more international cooperation between higher education institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...go further in involving students in research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*...increase the availability of professionally oriented programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...make institutional funding more dependent on the results they achieve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*...do more to help students develop their digital skills and digital literacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

### 3. What should the EU do?

The Treaties stipulate that the EU should support Member States to develop their higher education systems, and encourage cooperation and mobility of individuals across borders. Please indicate how useful you think it would be for the EU to undertake the types of activity listed below.

	Not at all useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	No opinion
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*Collect comparable information on higher education in the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Provide information about future skills needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Improve the way we measure how well national higher education systems perform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Examine how EU higher education graduates move into the labour market and their career development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Support more cooperation between governments and higher education institutions to widen access to higher education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Support more cooperation between governments and higher education institutions to reduce drop-out from higher education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Support more cooperation between governments and higher education institutions to improve the labour market and societal relevance of higher education courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Support more cooperation between governments and higher education institutions to develop links between higher education institutions and business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
*Support more cooperation between governments and higher education institutions to improve higher education's contribution to innovation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Improve recognition of qualifications and learning credits gained abroad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Support more international mobility for higher education students	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Support more international mobility for higher education teaching staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
*Support more international mobility for researchers	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have particular suggestions about what the EU should do to help improve higher education systems in Europe? If so, please say briefly what these are.

*2400 character(s) maximum*

With a membership of around 430,000 registered nurses, midwives, health visitors, nursing students, health care assistants and nurse cadets, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is the voice of nursing across the UK and the largest professional union of nursing staff in the world. RCN members work in a variety of hospital and community settings in both the NHS and the independent sector. The RCN promotes patient and nursing interests on a wide range of issues by working closely with the Government, the UK parliaments and other national and European political institutions, trade unions, professional bodies and voluntary organisations. The RCN welcomes the opportunity to comment on the future of higher education. Please note these responses have been given from a nursing education perspective and when specific questions have been asked about courses, students, teaching or research these have been answered through a nursing education lense. Equally where a question does not have direct relevance to a nursing education perspective the RCN has not offered a specific opinion.

Whilst most of the responses given are self explanatory the RCN would draw attention to a question where further elaboration is necessary. In relation to the question regarding students having enough opportunities to gain relevant work related experience during their studies, the RCN would highlight that all nursing degree courses require half of he study time (4600 hours) to be completed in clinical practice. However the RCN is very aware that the ability to source effective clinical placements for nursing students remains difficult and our response to questions relating to professional experience reflect that. It should also be noted that in England, the Government will be consulting on changes to the NHS bursary scheme for nursing students. Our answers to questions relating to access and the ability of students to fund their nursing studies (which will be impacted on by the proposals) reflect the concerns we have in relation to these changes.

## Contact

✉ EAC-MHE-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu

