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EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA: BOLOGNA PRINCIPLES IMPLEMENTATION AND ACADEMIC TRADITIONS

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a unique international collaboration on higher education and the result of the political will of 48 countries with different political, cultural and academic traditions (www.ehea.info). The EHEA building is based on Bologna Process development and Bologna Principles implementation by the countries signed the Bologna Declaration. The Bologna Process was started with the Occidental countries, it was spread through the whole Europe and now there are also former Soviet Union countries signed the Bologna Declaration like the Russian Federation (2003), Ukraine (2005), Kazakhstan (2010), Belarus (2015) among others.

During the last twenty years members of EHEA have systematically built a common area developing and implementing structural reforms and shared tools. These 48 countries agree to adopt reforms on higher education based on common values such as academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education. Through these reforms, countries, institutions and stakeholders of the EHEA continuously adapt their higher education systems making them more open, understandable and compatible and strengthening their quality assurance mechanisms.

In the Ministerial Conference 2018 held in Paris ministers made commitments for further development of the EHEA as an area where governments, higher education institutions and stakeholders are shaping the landscape of higher education together. The EHEA education policies are to encourage and support higher education institutions to fulfil their social responsibility and contribute to a more cohesive and inclusive society through enhancing intercultural understanding, civic engagement and ethical awareness, as well as ensuring equitable access to higher education (Paris Communiqué, 2018). For all the countries, the main goal is to increase staff and students' mobility and to facilitate employability throughout the EHEA (www.ehea.info).

This monograph aims to reflect on how to implement fundamental values of EHEA and the last ministerial commitments achieving coherence between the Bologna Principles and different academic traditions of the countries shaped the EHEA.