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Abstract

Traditional funding patterns for universities are changing across Europe, as a response to societal and economic developments. In a context of enhanced competition for public resources, funding efficiency in large sectors such as higher education and research, which in Europe relies heavily on public support, is becoming a more pressing political objective. Public authorities are eager to get more for the money invested in universities. Since 2008, the economic situation of many European countries has significantly deteriorated, and authorities are often expecting more outputs with less money as EUA's annual Public Funding Observatory shows. Apart from steering universities through funding modalities, many systems engage in some degree of restructuring the higher education landscape in order to rationalise costs, increase visibility and altogether boost international

16.7.2025

competitiveness of their higher education institutions. The present analysis is drawn from the DEFINE project on funding efficiency in higher education, which provides data and recommendations supporting the improved design and implementation of university funding mechanisms and thereby contributing to enhanced funding efficiency in the sector. The present article focuses on three main thematic pillars: (i) an analysis of funding modalities for universities in Europe, with a particular focus on the spread of performance-based funding mechanisms; (ii) an exploration of funding mechanisms to foster excellence, often specific initiatives outside of the regular financial framework in which universities operate; (iii) a review of operational efficiency measures implemented within and between universities. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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