

University Autonomy

– A Practical Handbook

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The Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education at Central European University is a collaborative academic initiative promoting applied policy research and professional training in higher education. The Center builds on more than two decades of experience at CEU in promoting policy research in higher education, as well as policy advising and professional development programs for governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and higher education institutions from countries on all continents. It places a particular focus on applied studies regarding the relationship between higher education policies and practices, and issues of democratic development. Specific research projects are carried out by CEU faculty members, researchers, and graduate students in cooperation with higher education experts from other universities and organizations. The Center also builds on the long history of cooperation between CEU and the Higher Education Support Program (HESP) of the Open Society Foundations (OSF). <https://elkanacenter.ceu.edu/>

CONTENTS

PART 1: INTRODUCTION	7
1.1. Executive summary	7
1.2. Open Society Foundations (OSF) and Central European University (CEU)	10
1.3. Higher education in Myanmar: a snapshot	11
1.4. University autonomy: a practical Handbook – methodology and structure	13
PART 2: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY	17
Question 1: What is university autonomy?	17
Question 2: What is governance?	20
Question 3: Why is university autonomy an important higher education policy matter in Myanmar?	21
Question 4: What is the relationship between institutional autonomy and accountability?	24
Question 5: What is the difference between university autonomy and financial independence?	26
Question 6: What is the relationship between university autonomy and academic freedom?	26
Question 7: What are some of the main aspects/dimensions of university autonomy?	29

Question 8: What are the main trends and other relevant developments in Europe regarding university autonomy and more broadly higher education governance?	34
Question 9: What challenges may be encountered in relation to the higher education reforms that promote university autonomy?	36
Question 10: How is the role of the State changing in higher education systems in relation to university autonomy?	38
Question 11: What is “the best model” of university autonomy for Myanmar?	40
PART 3: AUTONOMY IN PRACTICE: COUNTRY AND UNIVERSITY EXAMPLES	41
1. Institutional autonomy to decide about internal governance & organizational structures	42
a. Freedom to set up internal governance structures including governing bodies	42
Governing bodies and external members	42
b. Freedom to determine internal academic structures	44
c. Freedom to select institutional leadership (executive head)	44
d. Legal status of universities	45
e. Examples of university governance and organizational structures	46
2. Institutional autonomy to decide about curriculum, academic programs, & teaching methods	49
a. Capacity to design academic content	50
b. Capacity to introduce new degree programs	51
c. Capacity to choose language of instruction	51
d. Capacity to organize and take part in academic events	52
3. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to quality assurance	52
a. Capacity to choose quality assurance mechanisms	52
b. Capacity to select a quality assurance agency	53

4. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to research and freedom to publish	53
5. Institutional autonomy to decide about students-related issues	54
a. Deciding on the overall student numbers	55
b. Student selection process and admission	56
6. Institutional autonomy to decide about staff employment issues (academic and non-academic staff)	57
a. Staff recruitment	57
b. Capacity to decide on staff salaries	58
c. Capacity to decide on dismissals and promotions	58
7. Institutional autonomy to decide about finances and administration	59
a. Allocation of public funding	59
b. The right to keep a surplus	59
c. Income-generating activities (diversification of income sources)	59
d. The right to charge tuition fees	60
e. The right to own buildings	61
f. The right to borrow money	62
8. Institutional autonomy related to internationalization	62
a. The ability of universities to independently enter & decide on international cooperation schemes	63
b. Branch campuses	63
CONCLUDING REMARKS	64
INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY CHART TEMPLATE	67
REFERENCES AND FURTHER LITERATURE	72

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Executive summary

Myanmar is in the middle of a major process of political, economic, and social transformation. Currently, it also has an opportunity to radically transform and develop its national higher education system. It can do so by building on its own traditions, making use of positive experiences from other countries, and also by avoiding some of the mistakes that have been made elsewhere during similar transition periods.

The area of university autonomy is key to the transformation of the national higher education system and a debate focusing on this area has already started in the country.

The aim of this report, which is presented in the format of a practical Handbook, is to provide a concise overview of the key aspects related to university autonomy, based on selected international studies and other higher education policy literature, as well as to elaborate on specific practical dimensions of institutional autonomy that may be relevant for Myanmar, primarily using examples from countries in Europe.

The topic of university autonomy sparks a debate not only in contemporary Myanmar. From the early days of the first modern universities, it has been an important, and often contentious, matter. Today, as higher education is becoming more globalized, dynamic, more concerned about competitiveness based on knowledge production, and increasingly affected by both government regulations and market mechanisms, university autonomy has become a key area of focus for any higher education system and its reform process.

Autonomy has an impact on the overall performance and effectiveness of the higher education system and of individual uni-

versities. In fact, autonomy is a crucial factor conditioning the capacity of universities to exercise their role in the society, which includes knowledge production, transmission, dissemination, and use. The autonomy of universities influences their capacity to make a contribution to the economic development and competitiveness of a country; to the democratic education and democratic development; to the training of national professional, intellectual, and political elites, and of the state bureaucracy; and to the construction and assertion of national identity in a globalized world.

This is true for all countries and regions of the world, Myanmar included. In Europe, which is used as the main reference point in this Handbook, the prevailing conviction is that the higher the level of institutional autonomy the better the overall performance of higher education institutions. This is supported by evidence from several recent studies, which are presented in this report. Autonomous universities, having more flexibility to steer and manage themselves, are often regarded by the state authorities, by representatives of the universities, and by the civil society as better positioned to more effectively address the challenges higher education faces today. Even though autonomy is not the only factor in this puzzle (for example, funding of higher education, governance, or accountability are other important topics), in recent years it has certainly been one of the main focus areas for policy makers concerned with improving the efficiency and relevance of higher education. Reforms focusing on autonomy have been particularly important in the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which have experienced a transition from closed political regimes to democracy. At the same time, other countries in Europe, including those with established democracies and a long tradition of democracy, have also undergone reforms in the area of university autonomy.

In the last three decades, the dominant direction in higher education policies in Europe has been towards significantly enhancing the autonomy of universities. Despite the similarities in policy trends, however, the actual implementation approaches and pace of reforms have varied from country to country. In some cases policy makers decided to introduce regulations and measures drastically decreasing the level of state interference in higher education institutions (although never to withdraw completely), allowing the universities to make their own decisions in nearly all aspects. In other parts of Europe they opted for more gradual approaches and increase institutional autonomy of universities step-by-step, making changes in selected areas of autonomy rather than all of them.

In view of the large scope of university autonomy reforms in Europe, considerable country data is now available for in-depth analysis and preliminary assessments. Several international comparative studies focusing specifically on university autonomy have been conducted in recent years, including by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank (WB), the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) based in the Netherlands, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the European University Association (EUA).

As institutional autonomy is a complex concept lacking a single universal definition, it is typically understood and analyzed according to specific institutional or policy aspects identified as ***dimensions of university autonomy***. Depending on the countries or regions they are focusing on, and also on the type of comparative approaches used, the existing studies on university autonomy consider different dimensions of university autonomy.

Using five major comparative studies as a framework, and building on the consultations with representatives of the universities, civil society and authorities from Myanmar, as well as with international actors, the authors identified in this Handbook eight broad dimensions of university autonomy, which are presented as potentially relevant for Myanmar in the current period. These include:

- 1) Internal governance and organization of universities;
- 2) Curriculum, program design and teaching methods;
- 3) Research and publications;
- 4) Quality assurance and academic standards;
- 5) Student-related issues;
- 6) Staff-related issues (both academic and non-academic staff);
- 7) Finance and administration, and
- 8) Issues related to internationalization.

Although the main reference point used in this Handbook is the experience of how university autonomy is implemented in Europe, some examples from countries in Asia, where such reform discussions and efforts have been taking place, are also briefly introduced. Even without having an in-depth expertise about the Asian and Southeast Asian regions, it is noticeable that in the area of higher education autonomy a rather mixed picture and a limited number of successful outcomes can be reported to date. This is the case despite the fact that some countries, for example Indonesia, have started their reform efforts in this area two decades ago. In a recent report, the World Bank called for more institutional autonomy for public universities in Malaysia, or urged China to grant universi-

ties more freedom in order to increase their contribution to innovation, which would in turn help to accelerate economic growth by 2030.¹ Clearly, university autonomy remains a major issue at both policy and operational level, and far from being completely solved in most countries of the Southeast Asian region. This is one area of this Handbook, which could be expanded in the future. Specifically, a closer comparative analysis of “lessons learnt” regarding institutional autonomy in the region could help the stakeholders in Myanmar to better inform their decisions and policy and implementation approaches.

This, however, due to time and capacity constraints remains a task for future research, as the Handbook continues to evolve with contributions from regional higher education experts, which the authors warmly encourage.²

A draft version of this Handbook was presented by Professor Liviu Matei at the University of Yangon on May 26, 2014 at the workshop “Institutional Autonomy, Funding, Quality Assurance and Private Higher Education: Best Practices from ASEAN and Beyond” organized jointly by the Myanmar’s Ministry of Education, UNESCO and Open Society Foundations. The present version of the Handbook incorporates feedback and questions collected during the workshop discussion as well as further feedback received shortly thereafter. The Handbook is available online and further feedback and discussion about it are encouraged. The Handbook can be accessed online at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/oBzzrCIXQAxzNVzIxY1gtTXk5TVU/view?usp=sharing>.

1.2. Open Society Foundations (OSF) and Central European University (CEU)

The idea to compile this report in the form of a practical Handbook on university autonomy emerged from the discussions with and also in response to higher education stakeholders, policy makers and institutional leaders and university administrators in Myanmar. The Handbook attempts to help mapping the most important aspects of institutional autonomy for the direct benefit of higher education institutions in Myanmar, and also to help facilitate the national debate, and the implementation of higher education reform.

Since 2012, the Open Society Foundations (OSF) have been present and active in Myanmar, ready to assist with and collaborate on capacity

¹ The relevant WB report is quoted by the University World News at: <http://tinyurl.com/822vldl>

² Further feedback should be sent by email directly to Julia Iwinska at iwinskaj@ceu.edu

building and development efforts, including in the area of higher education. Central European University (CEU), as a long-time partner institution of the OSF, has been involved in higher education projects in Myanmar since 2013. CEU faculty in the fields of legal studies, international relations and political science organized capacity building and curriculum development workshops at universities in Yangon and Mandalay. CEU hosted on its campus in Budapest a delegation from Myanmar with government and civil society representatives involved in the preparation of higher education reforms in November 2013, while a small team of CEU administrators and higher education experts visited University of Yangon in early 2014 to work together on topics related to institutional management, in particular strategic planning. Finally, CEU hosted a group of seven professors from Mandalay, Yangon and Dagon who spent several months as visiting fellows in Budapest conducting research and acquainting themselves with how CEU, an international, student-centered and research-intensive university dedicated to the promotion of open society and democracy, operates on a daily basis.

During the meetings with the Myanmar delegation in Budapest, as well as with the institutional leaders in Yangon and parliamentary groups working on the educational reform, the topic of university autonomy was raised and emphasized numerous times as a central issue to the entire conception of reform and its success. It remains an important issue, although certainly difficult and controversial, on the political and larger public policy agenda in Myanmar.

1.3. Higher education in Myanmar: a snapshot³

As highlighted throughout this Handbook, institutional autonomy is a multidimensional concept that can be interpreted in different ways depending on the country and regional context, unique features of a higher education system, as well as other factors such as traditions, culture, or national historical developments.

This section presents a quick overview of the higher education system in Myanmar. Since the intended audience of this Handbook - academics, policy makers, and other stakeholders from Myanmar - know the situation in the higher education system in the country a lot better than the authors, only a brief snapshot focusing on selected issues is presented here in order to begin setting a context for a Myanmar-specific discussion about university autonomy.

³ A large part of this section is based on the presentation made by Oleksandr Shtokvych, Open Society Foundations/HESP, on April 10, 2014 at Central European University, Budapest.

Higher education in Myanmar: a snapshot

- **Student population** - for a country of nearly 60 million, Myanmar's total university student population in 2014 is just under a million students, with approximately a quarter of this number enrolled in distance education programs at 32 campuses across the country.

As the economic changes begin to accelerate in Myanmar, it can be expected that more and more young people will be turning to universities for the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the new demands of the society, and of the changing labor market and a developing economy.

- **Over 160 universities coordinated by 13 ministries** - at present, there are over 160 higher education institutions of diverse profiles, overseen by 13 ministries. The Ministry of Education oversees a share of approximately seventy institutions, including 47 comprehensive universities at present.
- **Limited provision of undergraduate education** - for the past two decades, some universities in Myanmar offered postgraduate programs only, with undergraduate education available outside of the cities. 2014 marks a milestone as undergraduate students were welcomed back on campuses in Yangon and Mandalay.
- **Faculty transfers** - another unique feature is the faculty rotation system, in which faculty members periodically move from one higher education institution to another for a set period of time.
- **International partnerships** - there is high interest among international organizations and country partners in academic collaboration and support for higher education in Myanmar. Universities from the US, UK, Australia as well as Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and other countries already expressed their interest in building partnerships with Myanmar institutions.
- **University autonomy** - as the higher education system is being modernized, the topic of institutional autonomy is at the forefront of the reform debate. In 2013, first steps were taken to introduce more autonomy for universities, and new legislative framework and Law on Higher Education are currently under preparation.

As illustrated above, universities in Myanmar find themselves at present in the midst of a dynamically changing landscape marked by system-wide reforms. The future of the universities also appears in the center of political discussions, and the topic of university autonomy is currently at the core one in of these debates.

Despite being already quite central to the (political) discussions, the topic of university autonomy appears, nevertheless, to require further clarification and elaboration in operational and technical terms. With the first steps towards autonomy taken in 2013, further guidelines appear to be needed regarding the specific, concrete aspects of institutional autonomy that could encompass the overall legal, political, and operational approach to be deployed in Myanmar.

1.4. University autonomy: a practical Handbook – methodology and structure

The area of institutional autonomy is broadly covered in the literature on higher education policy and management. Several large comparative studies were conducted recently by prominent intergovernmental organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2008; UNESCO, 2013; or the World Bank, 2008; and by higher education experts such as those at the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) at the University of Twente in the Netherlands, 2010 or the Brussels-based European University Association (EUA), 2011⁴. This confirms that the topic remains very high on the higher education policy agendas worldwide.

The present Handbook is based, to a large extent, on the analysis of and information derived from five major recent comparative studies on university autonomy. These major studies, which are briefly introduced below, are extensively referenced, cross-referenced, and quoted throughout the Handbook.

1. Anderson, D. & Johnson, R. 1998: University autonomy in twenty countries

- One of the earliest comparative studies on university autonomy providing an overview of twenty countries. They are analyzed and categorized into three groups based on their tradition of university autonomy⁵: i) the Anglo-American group including: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom, and United States; ii) the European group including: France, Germany, Italy, the

⁴ All indicated studies along with links to access them, where available, are listed in the References and Further Literature section at the end of the Handbook.

⁵ As Anderson and Johnson explain, “the basis for this classification is the historical differences in the development of university systems which are reflected in the continuum according to the extent of state control devised by Neave and van Vught (1994).”

Netherlands, Russia and Sweden; and iii) the Asian group including: China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

- Although the study may seem slightly outdated by now, especially since at the time when it was conducted most systems were in their rather early stages of the reform process in this area, the study remains a key work in the literature that is quoted and build upon by more recent research work. The study remains relevant for Myanmar as it attempts to take into account factors such as local traditions of university autonomy, and to distinguish across the Anglo-American, European and Asian higher education traditions.

2. [OECD, 2008. Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society. OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education: Synthesis Report.](#)

- A comprehensive report on trends in higher education providing large sets of comparative data for the OECD countries. In Chapter 3, the report outlines main trends and policy approaches along with specific practical examples in areas related to institutional autonomy, governance, accountability, or the role of the State. It also identifies six main aspects of university autonomy, which will be used for the comparative analysis later in the present Handbook.

3. [Center for Higher Education Policy Studies \(CHEPS\), 2010: Progress in higher education reform across Europe. Governance reform. Volume 1: executive summary and main report.](#)

- A more recent comprehensive analysis focusing on the assessment of higher education governance reforms in Europe. In addition to the data from over 30 countries, the study provides an extensive discussion about concepts and policy trends related to autonomy reforms. Although focusing on Europe only, many country experiences can be of relevance for Myanmar.

4. [Estermann, T., Nokkala, T. & Steinel, M. 2011. University Autonomy in Europe II. The Scorecard. Brussels: European University Association \(EUA\) – throughout the Handbook referred to as EUA, 2011.](#)

- This is a comprehensive study comparing the levels of and trends in university autonomy in Europe. It identifies four main dimensions of autonomy: academic, organizational, financial and staffing, and based on these assesses the levels of institutional autonomy in 27

European countries. The assessment is presented in the format of a scorecard, making cross-country comparisons easy to conduct.

5. Varghese, N.V. & Martin, M. 2013. *Governance reforms and university autonomy in Asia. IIEP Research Papers*. Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Analyzes recent experiences in introduction of institutional autonomy in selected countries in Asia, namely Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Cambodia and Laos.
 - The study is based on interviews and might provide useful lessons for Myanmar given its regional context and certain similar elements and factors relevant for the discussion of autonomy.

Building on the review and comparison of methodologies, and how university autonomy is understood and assessed in the above studies, the present Handbook focuses on eight autonomy dimensions that seem most relevant for Myanmar at present as the country prepares for a major reform in this area.

The first seven dimensions are derived from the methodologies of the above studies, all of which broadly mention and take into consideration each aspect, emphasizing their importance. The eighth dimension, related to internationalization, has been added by the authors of the Handbook as it appears to be of particular relevance to Myanmar at present and an important element of the higher education reform in general that may also require clarification in terms of university autonomy.

Therefore, the complete list of autonomy dimensions identified as relevant and proposed in this Handbook for Myanmar’s policy discussion is organized as follows:

- 1) Internal governance and organization;**
- 2) Curriculum, program design and teaching methods;**
- 3) Research and publications;**
- 4) Quality assurance and academic standards;**
- 5) Student-related issues;**
- 6) Staff-related issues (both academic and non-academic university staff);**
- 7) Finance and administration; and**
- 8) Internationalization-related topics.**

The structure of this Handbook is the following:

Part 1. Introduction

- Executive Summary

- Background: OSF and CEU
- Higher education in Myanmar: a snapshot
- Methodology and structure of the Handbook.

Part 2. Questions & answers about main concepts and trends related to university autonomy

- Eleven questions have been identified to date (with the possibility of further expanding the list based on further feedback received)

Part 3. Practical approaches: country examples and case studies

Part 4. University autonomy chart template

Part 5. References and further literature

This Handbook was developed to serve as a hands-on resource to help facilitate the higher education policy debate and reform efforts in Myanmar. It is not intended as an academic paper providing new, original research.

PART 2: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

The aim of this section is to provide an overview of a number of key concepts related to university autonomy, and to answer some of the fundamental questions that could be asked in the context of the reform efforts in this area. In addition to an elaborate discussion about the concept of autonomy and its dimensions, this section brings up critical other topics such as: academic freedom, higher education governance, accountability and the balance between autonomy and accountability, and other key related topics.

For a more reader- and practitioner-friendly navigation, the section is structured in the format of possible questions and answers (Q&A), with a preliminary set of 11 questions proposed to start the discussion. The answers are an attempt to map and summarize the key issues under each theme in a relatively succinct manner, rather than to elaborate an in-depth discussion. The readers may choose to deepen their understanding by referring to available further resources mentioned in the References and Literature section.

As already indicated in Part 1, the Handbook is considered a work-in-progress collaborative document that can further evolve based on the feedback received. As such, the Handbook is openly available online for easy and broad access. It can be viewed online or downloaded from: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/oBzrCIXQAx2NV2lxY1gtTXk5TVU/view?usp=sharing>. In order to suggest additional feedback or questions that are important for the policy debate in Myanmar, and that should be addressed in this section, please do not hesitate to contact the authors (Julia Iwinska, iwinskaj@ceu.edu or Liviu Matei, mateil@ceu.edu).

Question 1: What is university autonomy?

- The key emphasis of the answer to this question is that a universal and comprehensive definition of institutional autonomy is difficult to identify. This is not because the concept is not real or does not exist in

practice, but because autonomy often has slightly different meanings in various higher education systems and national contexts. Also, the concept of “university autonomy” is highly complex and multidimensional, and it covers a range of aspects related to university operations: from academic matters - such as autonomy in curriculum design or teaching methodologies - to freedoms and responsibilities in internal financial management and strategic planning by universities. These concrete aspects or dimensions of autonomy are further detailed in Question 3, specifically in Table 1 below.

- Among other things, university autonomy also refers to aspects regarding the relationship between higher education institutions and the external world (state regulations, public and private funding organizations, partnerships with industry or non-governmental organizations, with international organizations, etc.). As such, university autonomy relates to both freedoms and to responsibilities and accountability.
- It is important to note here that the understanding of the concept of university autonomy and its implementation in practice are usually influenced by factors such as regional diversity of higher education systems, historical and cultural contexts, higher education traditions or sometimes even economic circumstances.
- In Europe there is a dominant view that funding of higher education is and must remain a responsibility of the State (i.e. public funding). At the same time, however, measures aiming at enhanced institutional autonomy should also be put in place. In other words, the State has a basic responsibility to finance higher education but the universities should be given enhanced autonomy to manage and develop themselves without significant State interference. While there is a general tendency towards increasing institutional autonomy, a variety of approaches exist in Europe regarding how it is actually being achieved and operationalized on both the system level and at the level of individual higher education institutions.

Examples of definitions

- Various general descriptions and definitions of university autonomy do exist in the literature. University autonomy has been described as, for example: **“the degree of freedom of the university to steer itself”** or **“a condition where academia determines how its work is carried out”** (Raaza, 2010). Others, for example von Prondzynski, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, refer to university autonomy as **“independence in formulating a strategy for the university, and in choosing the tools and approaches to**

achieve the set goals.”⁶ Anderson & Johnson define autonomy as **“the freedom of institution to run its own affairs without direction or influence from any other level of government”** (1998, 8). As it is the case in some countries in Europe, universities might be able to enjoy high levels of autonomy in one or more dimensions (for example in academic matters or in finance and administration) while their autonomy remains more restricted in other areas. An in-depth discussion of the main dimensions of university autonomy is provided under Question 4.

- Different countries employ different levels of autonomy in different areas of university operations. Particular settings of autonomy levels depend on cultural characteristics, higher education traditions, as well as broader policy goals and the perceived role of higher education in the economy. **Despite these differences, however, available evidence indicates that universities cannot perform well if they do not benefit from autonomy.**
- For a country in transition like Myanmar, it is important to ensure a thorough and across-the-board understanding of what the various dimensions of university autonomy mean in practice. Moreover, it might be important to consider which exact dimensions of university autonomy should be developed in priority, considering the local economic, social, and political conditions, along with current national objectives. This would entail identifying the best possible combination and/or a compromise between the role and prerogatives of the State and those of other actors including universities in adopting regulations with regard to enhancement of autonomy.

For example: If universities are expected to play a role in supporting the economic transition of the country or to collaborate with the industry sector, university governance arrangements could encourage that by making the participation of the business sector representatives possible if not mandatory in the governing boards of universities. There are countries in Europe where presence of “lay” members (meaning external members) is required by law for any university governing board. Other dimensions of university autonomy could be recognized as important depending on the priorities in the economy, society or politics. If universities are expected to contribute directly and rapidly to the democratization of the Myanmar society, to use another possible example, areas of autonomy related to academic freedom, curriculum development and also student enrollment

⁶ Article accessed online at: <http://universitydiary.wordpress.com/2013/06/18/the-meaning-of-university-autonomy/>

become important, and higher education institutions need to have both some external guidance and internal freedom in deciding upon and pursuing activities in these areas.

Examples could be added for almost any instance that would link a specific dimension of autonomy with identifiable priorities in the Myanmar economy, society, or politics.

Most of all, however, one should keep in mind that the basic function of universities is the pursuit of truth, the production and transmission of knowledge, and that this function cannot be fulfilled in the absence of university autonomy.

Question 2: What is governance?

Governance is another important concept that serves as a broader context for the understanding of university autonomy. University autonomy can be best understood in our times while considering larger issues of **governance**.

- By **governance** one can understand the “rules and mechanisms by which various stakeholders influence decisions [in higher education institutions], how they are held accountable, and to whom” (Eurydice 2008, 12). Another definition refers to governance as the “formal and informal exercise of authority under laws, policies and rules that articulate the rights and responsibilities of various actors, including the rules by which they interact” (Werner et. al in Eurydice 2008, 12). Governance encompasses “the framework in which an institution pursues its goals, objectives and policies in a coherent and coordinated manner to answer the questions: who is in charge, and what are the sources of legitimacy for executive decision making by different actors?” (ibid).
- The traditional State-dominated external governance of university has recently been transforming into more of a complex process of coordination referred to as “multi-level multi-actor governance” (van Kersbergen and van Waarden in De Boer and File 2009, 10).
- The OECD offers the following elaboration of the concept of governance:

“Governance encompasses the structures, relationships and processes through which, at both national and institutional levels, policies for tertiary education are developed, implemented and reviewed. Governance comprises a complex web including the legislative framework, the characteristics of the institutions and how they relate to the whole system, how

money is allocated to institutions and how they are accountable for the way it is spent, as well as less formal structures and relationships which steer and influence behavior (2008, 57)."

- Myanmar has now the opportunity to define new governance arrangements as part of the educational reform. This opportunity to reform governance is also an opportunity for Myanmar to identify suitable levels of institutional autonomy, appropriate accountability tools and mechanisms, as well as policies and legislative framework that need to be in place at the system level in order to support the work of higher education.
- Identifying suitable governance setup and mechanisms will have an impact on the higher education system and its effectiveness. As mentioned by the OECD (emphasis added):

"The design and functioning of governance arrangements and processes for tertiary education at both national and institutional levels are vital determinants of the effectiveness of the higher education system and of its capacity to contribute to national development. The objective is to put arrangements in place which are effective and efficient in addressing national economic and societal needs. They should also support the traditional and fundamental objectives of higher education in promoting scholarship through creation, diffusion and maintenance of knowledge" (2008, 59).

Institutional autonomy could be considered as one particular aspect (or principle) of governance, of how universities are operated.

Question 3: Why is university autonomy an important higher education policy matter in Myanmar?

- For the case of countries transitioning from centrally planned and controlled political regimes towards more open and democratic systems, such as Myanmar at present, and as it was the case with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) in 1990s after the fall of communism, a move towards enhancing institutional university autonomy is a natural and logical-necessary step of the overall transition process.
- The topic of institutional autonomy and academic freedom was one of the first ones to be dealt with in the CEE region in the early transition. At a 1992 UNESCO Conference in Romania, a special statement on academic freedom was endorsed. Highlighted points included: "All institutions of society, and especially universities, are affected

by the social, political, and economic upheavals surrounding them. (...) Indeed, universities have a singular opportunity and obligation to contribute to the development of society and to play an active role in shaping the societies they serve. History has shown that violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy have high costs in intellectual regression, social alienation and economic stagnation. In light of profound social changes and new demands placed on universities, there is a need to forge a new understanding between universities and society. A reaffirmation and revitalization of the principles of academic freedom and university autonomy are imperative”(...)”⁷

- **University autonomy is a necessary pre-requisite for the effective functioning of universities. This is even more relevant for the countries in transition, in which universities can and must make a contribution to the overall democratic development process, to the reorganization and development of the economy, and to the development of new types of structures, institutions, and ties in the society.**

Moreover, the experience of the higher education reforms in Central and Eastern Europe shows that higher education is a powerful instrument of regional and international integration, and that this integration requires functional levels of university autonomy. Countries that wish to be respected on the international scene, that wish to play a role regionally or globally, need to develop their higher education, and part of this development must include careful legal and institutional arrangements and practices with regard to autonomy.

- Beyond the case of the transition in Central and Eastern Europe, enhancement and increase of university autonomy has also been the focus of higher education reforms in the more established democracies and developed economies of Western Europe, where no major system transition has taken place. In fact, in the last two decades, almost all countries of the European Union initiated higher education reforms that included or often focused on institutional autonomy. The European Union, which has become an important actor in higher education policy beginning in the early 2000’s in addition to the national authorities in the member States, made higher education reform part of its overall strategy adopted in March 2000 to become “the most competitive economy in the world” and to reach “full employment”

⁷ Accessed online at: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/peace_library/UNESCO/HRIGHTS/332-334.HTM

(the so-called “Lisbon Strategy”, now replaced by Europe 2020 strategy). In turn, university autonomy became a cornerstone of the European Union reform program in higher education. The European Union advocates and supports increased university autonomy, in particular increased autonomy from direct state control, as a crucial element to achieve a number of major European objectives (social, economic, political), beyond the strict framework of higher education.

- To provide a very brief answer to the question why university autonomy is so important today, one could mention several trends and developments in higher education, in Europe and elsewhere, which converge in placing a pervasive focus on and push for more institutional autonomy. With globalization, the higher education landscape has become more dynamic. This includes increased global competition (university rankings illustrate this trend), interconnect- edness among higher education institutions across countries, but also rapidly increasing student demand for higher education (growing number of students globally). Governments are nowadays directly concerned with the overall performance of higher education systems, as well as with institutional management and effectiveness, because they are concerned about how to meet the newly emerging challenges, and to adapt to the changing conditions, with limited financial resources available for this rapidly growing sector. There is a mounting conviction among higher education stakeholders, which is also supported by research, that higher education systems with institutional autonomy are more effectively managed, perform and adapt better than those closely controlled by the State. Close control by the State is seen as less effective in steering higher education and a trend of “steering from a distance” or “State supervision” is being promoted in Europe. A document from the EU Commission explicitly emphasizes the need for more autonomy. The document affirms that the EU States „need to create the necessary conditions to enable universities to improve their performance, to modernize themselves and to become more competitive – in short, to become leaders of their own renaissance and play their part in the creation of the knowledge-based society envisaged under the Lisbon strategy” [the overarching EU strategy until 2010, now expanded in Europe 2020 strategy].⁸

⁸ Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 10.5.2006 COM (2006) 208. Final Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation.

- A comparative study of 33 countries in Europe by CHEPS concluded that **“autonomy is positively linked to performance (in terms of efficiency or effectiveness) although it is not the only factor.** Simply put, the general assumption is that higher education systems will benefit if higher education institutions are freed from state micro-management and have substantial discretion to take decisions independently. (2010, 31).”
- Therefore, possible answers to the question about the importance of university autonomy for contemporary Myanmar could be summarized as follows:
 - Universities can and must make a contribution to the democratic transition in Myanmar. They can and must make a contribution to the renewal of the politics and society in Myanmar, and to the economic development of the country. Without a good degree of autonomy, and without careful legal and institutional arrangements to make the autonomy possible in the everyday practice of universities, universities cannot be efficient institutions and make the contribution that is expected from them.
 - Universities can make a contribution to the construction and assertion of national identity in Myanmar, in new, democratic and pluralistic conditions.
 - Moreover, universities can contribute to strengthening Myanmar’s acceptance and respectability in the ASEAN region and in the international arena in general.
 - Therefore, universities can and must fulfil important functions for Myanmar, both domestically and internationally. They cannot fulfil these functions, and they cannot work properly, without autonomy.
 - University autonomy is a complex concept and practice. There are many models and experiences in the world. There is no single model that Myanmar could copy and implement as such. Political actors, the state authorities, the civil society, and the university community itself must work together to make their own choices, to design and implement a model that would fit the traditions, local conditions, and aspirations of Myanmar. In doing so, it is useful to look at a variety of other experiences.

Question 4: What is the relationship between institutional autonomy and accountability?

Governance has become a major tool for improving quality in all aspects of higher education. Meanwhile, the concern for quality assurance has

increased worldwide with a view to addressing the balance between autonomy granted to institutions and accountability towards the society (OECD 2008, 15). In other words, while there are efforts in many countries of the world to promote increased autonomy, there are also concerns to make sure that this increased autonomy does not render universities unaccountable, and that there are guarantees for the quality of the work and outcomes of universities.

- One of the main challenges with regard to autonomy seems to be finding the right balance between autonomy and accountability. International evidence reviewed for the purpose of this report suggests that in order for institutions to be able to effectively react and respond to the growing external pressures, they need to be able to freely decide on its academic program and course content, on staff appointments and financial matters (Canning, 2013:30). The pressure factors may include: growing student demand (massification of higher education), economic factors such as labor market expectations, and research and innovation in the age of economies based on knowledge. Quality, in other terms, can be enhanced by granting universities more autonomy in academic matters.
- On the other side, universities must be not only autonomous, but also accountable. Accountability is also a complex concept. It involves, for example, the responsibilities of the state authorities on behalf of the society to ensure that universities operate effectively, in accordance with their mission, that they use public and private resources carefully and efficiently, and that they operate according to proper ethical standards, combining efficiency with equity, etc.
- Accountability measures typically accompany increased institutional autonomy. For example, quality assurance systems are a form of accountability. Other examples of accountability tools include:
 - Performance-based funding/budgeting
 - Participation of external representatives in governance structures (such as university boards with external members) – to make possible a more direct contribution of universities to their communities
 - Licensing, accreditation and audit procedures, league tables, assessment of learning outcomes.
- However, too many accountability measures within the system, including exaggerated or overly bureaucratic state control mechanisms, are detrimental to the work of universities, as they slow down innovation and creativity. This could be the case, for example, when accountability means too much bureaucracy and leaves higher education insti-

tutions busy doing administrative paper work instead of focusing on teaching, research, knowledge production, or their social mission.⁹

Question 5: What is the difference between university autonomy and financial independence?

- This question is based on discussions in Yangon at a conference in May 2014. In some cases university autonomy may be understood as parallel to or the same as financial independence. That would mean that in order to have institutional autonomy a university must become financially independent, that is, generate its own financial resources from private sources (such as student fees, but not only), rather than rely on public funding. In Europe, universities in many countries typically enjoy high or relatively high levels of institutional autonomy, which have been further enhanced in recent years, but the funding remains, to a large extent, provided by the State. It is true that once granted institutional autonomy, in particular financial autonomy, universities may begin to generate additional income from their other entrepreneurial activities. But moving towards greater financial independence from the public funds is a long process, which can only begin once key dimensions of university autonomy have been implemented and is being exercised over a period of time.
- **In short, institutional autonomy and financial independence (or financial self-sufficiency) are not one and the same thing. Moreover, there is no direct or immediate justification in conditioning university autonomy on the ground that higher education institutions are not financially independent. Good autonomy arrangements, including in the area of financial operations, can be very useful, in fact, they are needed, even when universities are fully funded by the State.**

Question 6: What is the relationship between university autonomy and academic freedom?

Academic freedom is a crucial concept for modern higher education as well, but it is different from university autonomy, although the two are related.

⁹ Salmi, J. <http://tertiaryeducation.org/2014/01/the-governance-challenge-in-ibero-american-universities/>

- University autonomy is very closely linked with the principles of academic freedom, without which “a fully developed higher education system cannot exist“, as Philip Altbach - one of the most important scholars of higher education emphasizes. “Academic freedom is at the very core of the mission of the university. It is essential to teaching and research. Many would argue that a fully developed higher education system cannot exist without academic freedom” (Altbach, 2001:205).
- Berdahl explains that: “Academic freedom (...) is a universal concept, needed by universities, East and West, North and South, public or private. Autonomy, in contrast, is a relative value and may legitimately differ in its contents from place to place and from time to time.” (2010:1). **Academic freedom is the right of the scholar in his/her teaching and research to follow truth where it seems to lead without the fear of punishment for having violated some political, social or religious orthodoxy. Bardahl emphasizes and argues that “while academic freedom emerged, then, from a Western source [Humboldt’s Berlin University], it is a universal right and not just Western.”**
- In Europe, the importance of academic freedom is illustrated by the fact that in numerous countries academic freedom is guaranteed by the constitution or mentioned explicitly in the higher education legislation. It is a fundamental value and a pillar to the higher education system. For example, in the Czech Republic the protection of academic freedom is specifically mentioned in the Act on Higher Education Institutions: “The following academic liberties and rights are guaranteed at higher education institutions: a) Freedom of science, research and artistic activities as well as making the results public; b) Freedom of instruction, namely its openness to variety of scholastic theories, scientific research methods and artistic trends; c) The right of learning that includes free choice of study specialization within the framework of study programmes as well as freedom of expressing one’s opinion during lecturing; d) The right of academic community members to elect their representative academic bodies;” (Act on Higher Education Institutions from 2004, Art. 4 in Karran, 2007).
- An Irish definition of academic freedom as indicated in section 14 of the Irish Universities Act 1997 was highlighted as the **most comprehensive and adequately illustrating the significance of academic freedom** by the authors of the Review of Higher Education Governance in Scotland (von Prondzynski, 2012). The relevant excerpt of the Irish Universities Act 1997 reads as follows:

“A member of the academic staff (...) shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and any other activities in or outside the university, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions, and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the university, for the exercise of that freedom” (ibid:7).

- As illustrated by the above definitions, **academic freedom pertains to the level of individual academics and is considered as a universal right.** It refers to the freedoms of academics in the area of teaching, research and other activities outside the university, and it is supported by international conventions and supranational bodies such as Council of Europe or UNESCO.
- The **concept of university autonomy pertains to the level of universities as organizations.** In addition to the crucial aspect of autonomy in academic matters developed on the pillars of academic freedom, university autonomy includes additional topics as well, such as organizational structures, staffing, financial management, etc.
- The Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec (2012)7, highlights the importance of both:

“Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are essential values of higher education, and they serve the common good of democratic societies. They are, nevertheless, not absolute, and rely on a balance which can only be provided through deliberation and consultations involving public authorities, higher education institutions, the academic community of staff and students and all other stakeholders (...) (<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1954741&Site=CM>).

- Academic freedom should guarantee the right of both institutions and individuals to be protected against undue outside interference, by public authorities or others. It is an essential condition for the search for truth by both academic staff and students (...). University staff and/or students should be free to teach, learn and research without the fear of disciplinary action, dismissal or any other form of retribution.
- Institutional autonomy, in its full scope, encompasses the autonomy of teaching and research as well as financial, organizational and staffing autonomy. Institutional autonomy should be a dynamic concept evolving in the light of good practice.

- Institutional autonomy should not impinge on the academic freedom of staff and students.
- The responsibility of public authorities for academic freedom and institutional autonomy is primarily exercised at the level of higher education systems.

While the implementation and overall understanding of university autonomy varies across countries and typically depends and is based on specific aspects of the respective higher education system (local cultural and social conditions among other factors), academic freedom has a more universal definition, one that applies in all types of higher education systems regardless of specific institutional settings, and indeed as Altbach emphasizes, it “is at the very core of the mission of the university (...) and “a fully developed higher education system cannot exist without academic freedom” (Altbach, 2001:205).

Question 7: What are some of the main aspects/dimensions of university autonomy?

As already mentioned in a number of places in this Handbook, the topic of university autonomy is highly complex and multidimensional. In this section, we will attempt to both elaborate and clarify some of the most important dimensions/aspects of university autonomy.

Despite its complexity, it is possible to study university autonomy systematically and meaningfully. In recent years, many studies have been conducted trying to assess institutional autonomy across countries. Since there is no single and uniform definition of what university autonomy or an autonomous higher education system entail, each study presented in its methodological approach a framework indicating the main aspects/dimensions of autonomy.

Although these studies were conducted at different times and focused on different groups of countries, the findings indicate certain overlaps and convergence in what authors identified as key indicators of university autonomy. **Table 1** presents an overview university autonomy aspects identified by each of the studies analyzed by the Handbook. This is not an exhaustive list but can serve as guidance in debating university autonomy initiatives in Myanmar, in deciding which dimensions of institutional autonomy are most important for Myanmar at present.

Table 1. Overview of key aspects of institutional autonomy as identified and assessed by five major international comparative studies. Part of this chart was adopted from CHEPS (2010:32).

HE studies AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS	Anderson & Johnson (1998)	OECD (2008)	CHEPS (2010)	EUA (2011)	UNESCO (2013)
INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES	Governance: councils, academic boards, student associations	Institutional Governance: legal status of universities, ownership of buildings, freedom to set up internal governance structures	Organizational Autonomy: to decide on internal governance structures; on internal authority, responsibility & accountability structures; & to select institutional leadership	Organizational Autonomy: ability to establish own academic and admin. structures & governing bodies, define modalities of leadership models	Governance & Management: autonomy & new structures of governance at the institutional level (governing boards, legal status of universities)
CURRICULUM DESIGN, ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, AND TEACHING METHODOLOGY	Teaching & Curriculum: teaching methods, assessment and examinations, course content, textbooks Teaching and curriculum issues, namely teaching methods, assessment and examinations, course content and choice of text books	Education: program supply, curriculum design, course content, quality assessment & modes of instruction & delivery	Policy Autonomy: the ability of universities to constitute themselves as academic communities in terms of student & academic staff selection, and to determine their teaching and research programs	Academic Autonomy: institutional strategy & profile; introduction, structure & content of programmes; quality assurance & student admissions)	Academic Matters: curriculum, teaching methods, examinations research & publications
ACADEMIC STANDARDS, QUALITY ASSESSMENT	Academic standards: degree standards, quality audits, accreditations	See above	See above	See above	Measures to improve the <i>quality of higher education</i> (internal and external quality assurance mechanisms)

Part 2: Questions & Answers about University Autonomy

RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS	<i>Research and Publications</i> , postgraduate supervision & teaching, re-research priorities, and freedom to publish	<i>Research</i> : design research programs, decide on research priorities	Area covered by Policy Autonomy	Area covered by Academic Autonomy	Area covered by Academic Matters
OVERALL STUDENT NUMBERS, STUDENT SELECTION PROCESS & ADMISSION	<i>Students</i> : admissions, progress & discipline	<i>Students</i> : selection and overall number of students	See above	See above	<i>Student admissions</i>
STAFF (ACADEMIC & NON-ACADEMIC)	<i>Staff</i> : employment conditions, appointments, promotions & status of academic & administrative staff	<i>Staff</i> : selection, career structure, working conditions	Conditions for <i>employment of staff</i>	<i>Staffing autonomy</i> : staff recruitment, civil servant status, salary setting	<i>Staff recruitment & management</i> : staff evaluation, promotions, recruitment, change from civil servant status to university employee
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION & PLANNING	<i>Administration & Finance</i> : funding of institutions; operating grants, capital & equipment grants, one-off tasks, non-government funding, accountability arrangements.	<i>Finance</i> : set & differentiate tuition fees, borrowing funds on the market, resource allocation, income-generating activities, & accumulating financial capital)	<i>Financial Autonomy</i> : the ability to decide on the internal allocation of public and private funds, to diversify sources of income (e.g. through tuition fees & other private contributions), to build up reserves, & to borrow funds on the capital market.	<i>Financial Autonomy</i> : procedural framework of public funding, universities' financial capacity)	<i>Administration & Financing</i> : resource allocation mechanisms, lump-sum budgeting, income-generating, cost recovery including student fees)

A comparison of the five major studies on institutional autonomy referred to in this table suggests that there are at least seven main areas that are considered key to institutional autonomy; these are combined and presented in the List 1 below. Each area includes a set of sub-topics, and the more detailed list that we present below is by no means a complete one since there are many aspects of university operations related to autonomy. However, the overview of the seven main areas could help to give sufficient information regarding the types of sub-topics that fall under each category.

In addition to the seven dimensions that emerged from the comparison of existing studies on autonomy, the authors of the present Handbook suggest adding one more aspect, namely issues related broadly to **internationalization**. This topic is high on the agenda of higher education stakeholders and actors globally, and it also seems very relevant for higher education in Myanmar and for its future development, since there are many universities worldwide interested in partnering and collaborating with higher education institutions and higher education stakeholders in Myanmar. Some partnerships have been already endorsed, and this trend is likely to continue and intensify in the coming years. Good provisions in terms of institutional autonomy are needed to help to take advantage of opportunities and also address the risks in the area of internationalization.

A list presented below represents a compilation of the main autonomy dimensions/aspects analyzed by the above mentioned major international studies, with slight modifications and additions by the authors; in particular several additional aspects relevant for Myanmar have been explicitly highlighted and added to the compilation. **The list of autonomy dimensions outlined here will be further elaborated upon in Part 3 of the Handbook and completed with concrete examples.**

List 1. Autonomy dimensions

1. Institutional autonomy to decide on internal governance & organizational structures

This dimension of autonomy is understood in various contexts as referring to aspects such as:

- a. Freedom to set up internal governance structures (including governing bodies and external members)
- b. Freedom to determine internal academic structures
- c. Freedom to select institutional leadership
- d. Legal status of universities

2. Institutional autonomy to decide about curriculum, academic programs, & teaching methods

- a. The ability to decide on teaching methods, examinations, textbooks
- b. The ability to decide on program introduction, supply and content
- c. The ability to decide on curriculum design, and course content
- d. The ability to organize and take part in academic events*

3. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to quality assurance

- a. Decision making with regard to academic standards: degree standards, quality audits, accreditation
- b. Decision making with regard to internal and external quality assurance mechanisms

4. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to research and freedom to publish

- a. The ability to decide on the design of research programs and setting research priorities
- b. The freedom to publish
- c. The ability to decide on participation in international research collaborations*

5. Institutional autonomy to decide about students-related issues

- a. Overall student numbers
- b. Student selection process and admission

6. Institutional autonomy to decide about staff employment issues (academic & non-academic staff)

- a. Staff recruitment and appointment procedures
- b. Capacity to decide on staff salaries
- c. Capacity to decide on staff promotions and dismissals

7. Institutional autonomy to decide about finances and administration

- a. Allocation of public funding
- b. Income-generating activities (diversification of income sources)

- c. The right to keep a surplus
- d. The right to borrow money
- e. Ability to create legal entities
- f. The right to charge tuition fees
- g. The right to own buildings

8. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to internationalization.* Degree of decisional freedom and responsibility regarding:

- a. International partnerships¹¹: entering into international university partnerships and cooperation, assessing, adjusting, and terminating such partnerships and cooperation.
- b. Branch campuses

* Additional autonomy aspect added by the authors of the Handbook due to relevance for Myanmar

Question 8: What are the main trends and other relevant developments in Europe regarding university autonomy and more broadly higher education governance?

- Traditionally, university governance and decision-making processes were characterized by their collegial nature, with the whole academic community taking part. The authority to make decisions lied with academic bodies, for example Senates, which traditionally also served as governing bodies of a university (OECD, 2003).¹¹ This has been changing quite significantly in the last decades as the traditional collegial models are seen as less relevant for the new challenges higher edu-

¹⁰ Such partnerships could include:

-mobility cooperation schemes (hosting foreign faculty and students and sending Burmese faculty and students to partner institutions) -participation and development of joint academic programs (offered by two or more universities within an international consortium) also leading to joint degrees/diplomas, joint research activities (a common practice nowadays, both in the developed and developing countries).

¹¹ The OECD report *Education Policy Analysis* identifies two major trends emerging in the field of institutional governance.

<http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/35747684.pdf>

cation is experiencing. Increasingly, universities have to act in a more professional, strategic, and business-like manner.

- As a result, the powers and authority of the executive leadership and management (rectors, presidents, and management teams) are rising significantly within the institutions. This means that the decision making is shifting from the collegial process into more managerial and executive style (OECD, 2003). Senates (where they exist, such as in Europe) typically exercise the authority to decide on academic matters but rectors/executive leadership and management teams or governing bodies (e.g. university boards) have increasingly more to say on non-academic matters.
- Transforming internal university governance is done in different ways, depending on the institutional autonomy set-up in a country. An EU project, EUERЕК (http://cordis.europa.eu/result/rcn/51594_en.html), illustrates how several universities in different countries in Europe managed to change and enhance their internal governance models. The authors of the project's report emphasize that the goal is not a complete replacement of the long-established academic values, found in the more traditional universities, with the new more market-oriented values and mechanisms. Rather, more successful outcomes were observed to be achieved by those entrepreneurial universities, which were able to orchestrate a fusion or reconciliation of the traditional academic values with the more managerial approaches (Kwiek, 2008).¹² (It should be noted that the concept of entrepreneurial university is a controversial one in Europe and in the world).
- The second trend noted in the OECD analysis is that external representatives (external to the universities) are more and more often involved in the governance of higher education institutions, typically as members of governing bodies (e.g. university boards). University boards typically decide or advise on non-academic aspects of university operations. External representatives can be from the industry and private sector, members of the local government, members of the local NGOs, civil society, other higher education experts, or community members – depending on the university and particular environment it co-exists in.
- The degree of autonomy that universities enjoy from the State control significantly impacts on their institutional capacity to manage complex sets of strategic developments, to define appropriate pol-

¹² The article is based on the EUERЕК project and includes case studies of Manchester University and Nottingham, which are cited as cases, for their success in combining the values in the governance and management structures. For more case studies see: http://www.euerек.info/Public_Documents/University

icies and organizational arrangements with the necessary support units, and the human resources and financial resources. Universities are increasingly recognized as drivers of the economic and social infrastructure in their regions. There is growing awareness on how universities can contribute to regional innovation and economic development through collaboration with business, local and regional governments and other local actors (ESMU, 2010).

- A general trend that has been observed is that of increasing levels of autonomy for the institutions to manage their own affairs, often accompanied by the implementation of new monitoring and supervisory instruments by the State and other stakeholders to hold HEIs more accountable for their contributions to national policy objectives. This is often referred to as the rise of the “evaluative” role of the State (De Boer and File, 2009:9 after Neave, 1998).

Question 9: What challenges may be encountered in relation to the higher education reforms that promote university autonomy?

- Transitioning from a strictly state-controlled to more autonomous higher education system can be very exciting and empowering and, at the same time, also challenging. When universities are granted more institutional autonomy, it does not only mean additional freedoms and flexibility to steer the institution but also more administrative work, project management, financial management, and, to an extent, internal bureaucracy to achieve all aspirations and ambitions. Increasing autonomy leads to professionalization of administrative structures within the universities, the need to improve the capacity for specialized management units in various areas, for example student services, alumni and development, research administration, etc. This typically results in an expansion and professionalization of university administration. Academic staff may also decide to take on additional management roles.
- Most universities already have some internal management capacities, even if it has not been put into use prior to the current reforms. Learning by doing is not unusual, especially in the context of a broader political system transition. **But further capacity-building in the area of leadership and management is likely to be needed in the medium-run in Myanmar.** This is one area in which international partners could be extremely helpful. When countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) were beginning their transition process, tremendous support, financial and professional, was provided to the universities by the European Union (such as TEMPUS

program), as well as by international organizations and partners from other countries. In the area of university administration, there were many opportunities for training, site visits and cooperation with the colleagues at Western institutions to learn how day-to-day effective management of universities should look like. With the high participation of international donors in Myanmar, this area could be considered for the capacity-building schemes.

- There are also challenges the Government is likely to face as universities are being granted more institutional autonomy. In Europe, it is typically the role and responsibility of governments to develop overall higher education strategies at the national level in order to create a vision for the higher education sector, articulate goals and also national expectations from the higher education system. Such broad and national-level strategies in turn guide universities that are expected to develop their own strategic development plans based on their unique features and circumstances. Regarding the development of a broad national vision and strategy for higher education, this may be a challenge for Myanmar as at present higher education sector is fragmented and universities report to 13 different ministries. Coordination across ministries and development of a unified vision for the whole higher education sector could be a challenging task.
- Other possible challenges in this area indicated by the OECD findings include:
 - Articulating clearly the nation's expectations of higher education institutions. Aligning priorities of individual institutions with the nation's economic and social goals.
 - Finding the proper balance between governmental steering and institutional autonomy.
 - Developing institutional internal governance arrangements to respond to external expectations.

We note that autonomy is a necessary means that national authorities promote to realize legitimate political objectives, or in fact to achieve **national** objectives. Autonomy is not only important (in reality, essential) for knowledge production inside the university, for the transmission of knowledge to students, for larger knowledge dissemination outside the university, but also for the use of knowledge in the economy, politics, society, etc. Realizing a good correlation between larger national objectives and specific autonomy arrangements is doable, but it is not something that happens automatically, by itself. It requires political commitment, coordination at national level, professional capacity, and resources.

Question 10: How is the role of the State changing in higher education systems in relation to university autonomy?

- The most important role of the State in higher education, according to influential organizations such as the World Bank or the European Commission, is to set a national vision and a strategy (Fielden, 2008), working with all relevant national and also with international stakeholders, where appropriate. It might be important for Myanmar to develop a national **higher education strategy**, along with the necessary reform **legislation**. The strategy should articulate the main objectives that higher education is expected to contribute to in the current period and in the following years, as well as the ways to achieve such objectives, for example by adopting new legislation, creating new national institutions, making changes in current governance, management or funding models, promoting new or reformed academic programs, etc. **A concern for introducing and strengthening institutional autonomy needs to be part of this strategy and its implementation.**

It is currently understood that **the State has a responsibility for putting in place a proper regulatory framework for universities in the respective country**. This element pertaining to the role of the State goes therefore beyond only a generic vision or strategy, and refers to important, more practical aspects that make possible the efficient work of universities. Autonomy and accountability are also immediately coming into the picture when talking about a national regulatory framework. For example, in Europe it is now understood that the State “should guide the university sector as a whole through a framework of general rules, policy objectives, funding mechanisms and incentives for education, research and innovation activities. In return from being freed from over-regulation and micro-management, universities should accept full *institutional* accountability to society at large for their results”¹³

- **In these ways, through developing a vision, a national strategy, and a regulatory framework for higher education, the**

¹³ Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 10.5.2006 com (2006) 208 final. communication from the commission to the council and the European parliament delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation

State can guide or “steer” the universities in the country towards common goals and ambitions. This effort of the State involves seeking answers to major questions, such as those posed by the World Bank:

- 1. What is higher education for?**
- 2. What are the principal goals that it should achieve in our country?**
- 3. What targets should be set in terms of participation in higher education (meaning access to higher education)?**
- 4. How will these targets be achieved – by what type of institutions, by what kind of teaching and learning, and over what time exactly?**
- 5. What is the role, if any, of the private sector and of the external community (city, region, etc.)?**

Based on the European and international experience, it appears that university autonomy is a cornerstone of any good answers to these questions. The question is not whether or not autonomy is necessary, but what kind of autonomy arrangements work best.

- The OECD also speaks of the changing role of the state as universities are becoming more autonomous. Accordingly, the main roles of the state in higher education are summarized as follows:
 1. Setting the goals and strategic aims (clear articulation and guidance regarding what is expected from higher education institutions), goals for the sector, vision for long-term development, and role of higher education.
 2. Regulating higher education – creation of a regulatory environment (legal framework, policies, etc.).
 3. Provision of higher education (public institutions are here to stay, as it is a role and responsibility of the State for this sector).
 4. Steering higher education.

Question 11: What is “the best model” of university autonomy for Myanmar?

- As mentioned above, we strongly believe that there is no one single model in the world that is “the best model”, and which should be copied and implemented as such in Myanmar. Rather, there is a need to make choices, innovate, identify, develop, combine, adapt and implement such elements of the international experience that are fit for the local conditions and national imperatives in Myanmar. The authors of the present Handbook aim to assist in this effort by pointing to possible questions that could (in some cases even have to) be asked in Myanmar, why they are important, and how they have been answered in other countries.
- There are many experts in the world who would be willing to help relevant stakeholders in Myanmar (current authorities, the opposition, representatives of academic community/universities, of the civil society, etc.) to answer such questions. But **deciding which questions are the important ones and answering them is the responsibility of the people and institutions in Myanmar itself**. As the reform process progresses, new issues and questions will emerge at every stage. The authors of the Handbook are willing to work with colleagues in Myanmar to further elaborate on some of the examples and topics provided, perhaps expand the scope of these examples by including other regions of the world that might be of interest in Myanmar. *As mentioned at the beginning of this Handbook, the authors look forward to receiving comments, questions and other feedback that could be further incorporated into this document.*

PART 3: AUTONOMY IN PRACTICE: COUNTRY AND UNIVERSITY EXAMPLES

This section focuses on practical aspects of the university autonomy dimensions identified and described in the previous part of the Handbook. The aim of this section is to further untangle and analyze each specific area of autonomy by looking at practical aspects of each, as well as country and university examples. Given the long list of aspects of university autonomy, only a short “practical” overview is provided for each area at this point. This could be further expanded, starting with aspects that would be identified in Myanmar as being of particular interest.

The section relies on and to a large extent highlights the examples used in the studies referred to in this report, mainly in the EUA’s *Autonomy Scorecard*, but also in the UNESCO comparison of countries in Asia, and the OECD comparative data. The *Autonomy Scorecard* study analysed a total of 28 higher education systems from Europe, including countries with unitary systems, but also complex systems like Germany, a federal country in which higher education is regulated at the level of the Länder (individual states of the German federation) and not of the country as a whole.

We would like to reiterate that the Handbook does not attempt to cover all regions of the world. The main focus is on the experiences of countries in Europe, with limited examples from Asia and Australia. North America, South America, to a large extent East Asia, as well as Africa and Middle East are not included in the analysis at this time.

1. Institutional autonomy to decide about internal governance & organizational structures

a. Freedom to set up internal governance structures including governing bodies

- According to the 2010 CHEPS study of 33 countries, freedom to determine internal governance structures remains rather low in most of these countries:¹⁴

“Across Europe, the organisational autonomy of public universities to decide on their own internal governance structures; on their internal authority, responsibility and accountability structures; as well as to select their institutional leadership is still restricted in many countries by national legislation, regulations and Handbook lines. Only a few countries have implemented reforms that have seriously transferred to the universities the power to decide on their internal governance structure (p.10).”

- The EUA also looked at this aspect of autonomy. Their finding, similar to CHEPS, was that national legislative frameworks strongly shape the governance structures and leadership of universities. In most cases the basic framework for decision-making bodies (the main governing body within a university) is stipulated in the relevant laws or decrees. The universities may nevertheless have some autonomy in the implementation of the national frameworks (Estermann and Nokkala: 12).

Governing bodies and external members

- The EUA study finds that there are two dominant models of internal university governance setups in Europe.

In 15 systems (out of 28), there is a **dual governing structure**, which typically consists of an internal representative body, such as a university senate, and a board or council (a more external one). In dual governance models decision-making and decisional competencies are divided between the two bodies. Academic matters often fall under the competencies of a university senate, while strategic matters pertain to the university councils/boards. The division of competencies and decision-making authority between the two types of governing bodies may vary significantly. In some

¹⁴ CHEPS study identifies this area as „organizational autonomy”

cases, for example in several German Länder (states), the council/board (more external) has only an advisory role, while the main decision-making authority lies with an elected university senate (internal).

In 20 systems universities are required to include external members (from outside the university) in their governing bodies, typically in the councils/boards.

- With regard to external members of university boards/councils, there are four most common approaches in Europe for appointing them:
 - i. Universities can freely appoint external members;
 - ii. Universities recommend external members but appointments are made by an external authority;
 - iii. Some external members are appointed by the university, while others by an external authority;
 - iv. All appointments are made exclusively by an external authority.

Country examples of governing board setups:¹⁵

- In the UK, there is dual governance with both an academic senate and a council.

A council is an independent entity (usually of approximately 25 members) but it typically includes academic staff and student representatives. The exact powers and decision-making authority for each governing body is detailed either in the university charter and statute, or for younger institutions, it is regulated by the Education Reform Act.¹⁶

- In Sweden, the Governing Board has a majority of external members from business, regional government, and industry; typically 8 out of 15 board members are external. Moreover, the chair of the governing board is also an external member appointed by the government and not employed at the institution.
- In the Netherlands, the Board only has 5 members, all external. The chairman is appointed by the Minister (based on the cases of 3 Dutch universities).

¹⁵ Adopted from the Modern Governance (De Boer and File, 2009:13).

¹⁶ HE Act of 1992

- In Norway, the Board has 11 members – 7 internal and 4 external appointed by the Minister.

b. Freedom to determine internal academic structures

- One reason why internal academic structures (such as faculties, schools, departments, centers) are analyzed separate from governance structures is because there is significantly greater autonomy in the area of deciding on academic structures (or academic units) by universities in Europe.
- According to the EUA Autonomy Scorecard, universities in most of the higher education systems of Europe (in 18 out of 28 analyzed) can freely decide on their internal academic structures. This relates to the establishment, the number and names of the academic units (e.g. faculties, schools, departments, etc.). This area of autonomy also covers aspects such as merging or closing of academic departments, which is also within the university authority in most cases.
- In five countries universities must adhere to legal guidelines regarding internal governance structures. In Italy universities have to be organized into faculties and departments, while in Slovakia, Luxembourg and Cyprus universities are not able to establish new faculties or departments or restructure the existing ones without amending the law.

c. Freedom to select institutional leadership (executive head)

- The EUA Autonomy Scorecard identified four main procedures for appointing executive heads at universities in Europe. By executive heads it is meant rectors, vice-chancellors, presidents, etc.:
 - i. Elected by a large university electoral body with broad representation, including academic and administrative staff, and students.
 - ii. Elected by the governing body of the university, which is democratically elected within the university community (usually the Senate, i.e. the body deciding on academic issues)
 - iii. Appointed by the council/board of the university (governing body deciding on strategic issues)
 - iv. Appointed through a combined, two-step process, which involves both the senate and the council/board.

- The picture in Europe in this area is quite diverse. The first method remains slightly more common in Europe, as it is used in 12 countries. In this approach, the rector is elected by a large body representing all different groups of the university community, sometimes set up specifically for the purpose of rector election. (Estermann & Nokkala, 2009). One of the criticisms of this method of election of the university leader is that it may appear as a popularity contest; on the other hand it also involves the largest representation of the university community.
- A rector/executive head of the institution appointed/selected by a governing body (a board or council), or selected by senate-type academic body are two approaches that are equally common. In seven countries, including the UK, Ireland, Denmark, and Sweden, the selection process is done by a board or council (which typically includes external members). In another group of seven countries, including France, Hungary, Slovakia, and Portugal, the university top leader is selected by a senate-type, elected governing body. In universities in Germany or Norway the procedure varies across institutions.
- In some countries the appointment of the rector (or president, etc.) has to be confirmed either by the ministry, president or by a national decision-making body outside higher education. Typically, however, in Europe the rectors/executive heads are not directly appointed or selected by the ministries or other government bodies.

d. Legal status of universities

- Changing the legal status of university can be one of the elements of a higher education reform focusing on institutional autonomy. Rather than remaining a part of the public sector as a State agency, universities may become independent legal entities. Depending on the country and its legal framework, there are different models what legal status is granted to the universities.
- The OECD highlights the legal status of universities as an important aspect in the regulatory relationship between the State and institutions. Granting independent legal status to universities is an important means for increasing institutional autonomy.
- Independent legal entities in education can of different types. They can be incorporated – thus become a company - or unincorporated. They can hold a not-for-profit or for-profit status (this is rather rare in Europe). In the UK, higher education institutions are legally independent entities with a charitable status. Some are incorporated, but not-for-profit. A charity can earn a surplus within its charitable aims. It cannot distribute dividends. It can also set up a separate company

(non-charity), which will then be liable for paying tax on its profits. (OECD 2008:70)

- As of 2010, universities in Finland act as corporations under public law. Universities can also acquire a status of foundations under private law. Advantages of the foundation status include more freedom to pursue goals without interference or external constraint, better conditions for long-term planning, and bring opportunities for generating additional resources. CEU for example, is a private (non-state maintained) university, which is owned and maintained by a private foundation. In Hungary, foundations, church organizations, and even corporations can set up and maintain private universities, which in turn are run exclusively as not-for-profit entities. Such private universities can also get state funding under certain conditions.
- In Portugal, under certain conditions universities can apply for a status of a foundation as well, which guarantees more autonomy and flexibility regarding internal governance structures and financial management. In order to apply for such status, the university has to meet certain requirements, for example 50% of its income has to be external (non-governmental). As of 2010, there were three universities in Portugal who were approved for a foundation status.
- UNESCO (2013) provides an overview of autonomy reforms in Asia. One of the aspects analyzed is how the legal status of universities was changed within the reform process. For example, universities in China became independent legal entities under the leadership of a university president (1998 HE Act). In Cambodia a provision was adopted to allow universities to transform into Public Administrative Institutions (a new legal status). In Japan, universities received in 2004 the status of national university corporations with new governance structures, while in Indonesia the approach was to allow universities (first only a selected group and later expanded to all higher education institutions) to become non-profit legal entities with a governing board under the civil law.

e. Examples of university governance and organizational structures

- **University of Manchester, United Kingdom, governance and organizational structure**¹⁷
- ✓ Strong President and Vice-Chancellor (one person) as the CEO (Chief Executive Officer, a term borrowed from the corporate world) of the

¹⁷ Adopted from ESMU (2010) data source: Kwiek, 2008 and University of Manchester website: <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/>

university responsible for the establishment and composition of his/her management team. The most decision-making power is located in the university's core management team headed by the President and Vice-Chancellor.

- ✓ Board of Governors (25 members including 14 lay members)¹⁸, to which the President and Vice-Chancellor reports.
- ✓ Senate as the principal academic authority with responsibilities limited to academic issues and chaired by the President and Vice-Chancellor.
- ✓ General Assembly with limited powers.
- ✓ The Registrar and the Secretary (one person) serves as a secretary to the Board, the Senate, and the General Assembly, and at the same time serves as the Head of Administration of the university, responsible to the President and Vice-Chancellor for providing administrative support.
- ✓ Heads of Schools (Deans of Faculties) are members of the management team as Vice-Presidents, which is considered important in decreasing the tensions between the traditional academic and new managerial/entrepreneurial values.

- **University of Copenhagen, Denmark**

- ✓ The University of Copenhagen is a self-governing entity under the State. The University reports to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, with which the Board of the University has entered into a Development Contract. This contract formulates the University's objectives and intended progress for a fixed period of time.
- ✓ The Board of the University is the highest authority at the University of Copenhagen. The Board manages the general interests of the University as an education and research institution. It includes 13 members and the majority of them are external.
- ✓ The Rector and the Pro-Rector are appointed by the Board to lead the daily management of the University. Deans are nominated by the Rector and appointed by the Board to head the eight faculties.
- ✓ The Central Administration conducts the day-to-day administration and special initiatives. The administration is managed by the University Director.

- **University of Vienna, Austria**

- ✓ In Austria, universities are free to determine their organizational structure but university councils (Boards) were created as supervi-

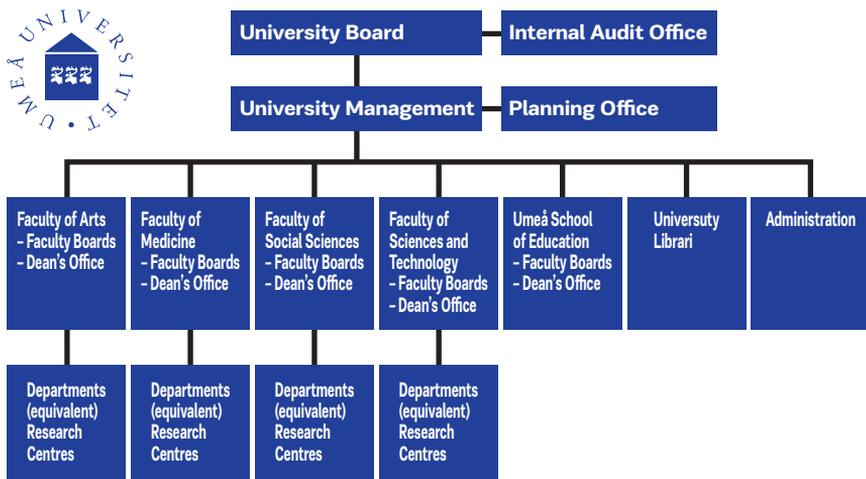
¹⁸ Adopted from ESMU (2010) report, data source: University of Manchester website: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=7617>

sory bodies for the rectorates. The degree of self-governance was increased and rectorates received more decision-making authority.

- ✓ The Senate's sphere of competence was reduced from strategic to academic affairs.
- ✓ The highest bodies of the University of Vienna are: the University Board, the Rectorate Team with a Rector and 4 Vice Rectors and the Senate.
- ✓ The Board has 9 members elected/appointed for a period of 5 years – 4 members are selected by the Senate and 5 are appointed by the Federal Government.
- ✓ The Board represents a comprehensive decision-making authority. Among other duties, it selects the Rector, concludes the Rector's service agreement, and approves the strategic plan, the organization plan and the draft performance contract between the university and the Federal Ministry. The organizational chart below adopted from the University of Vienna clearly illustrates this structures

- **University of Umeå, Sweden, as an example of an institutions with strong links to the society¹⁹**

The organizational chart provides an overview of the governance structures that are in place at a Swedish university.



¹⁹ Adopted from ESMU (2010) report, Data Source: EUERЕК case study and University of Umeå website

- ✓ Umeå University was founded in 1965. It is located in northern Sweden, 300 km south of the Arctic Circle and 650 km from Stockholm. A public comprehensive university of 28,000 students and 4,000 employees, Umeå University is a well-recognized magnet for the city and the surrounding region. The university developed over the past forty years from medicine & dentistry programs, and a faculty of philosophy. It is now a fully comprehensive university, with five faculties: the faculty of arts, medicine, social science, science and technology and faculty of teacher education.
- ✓ The revisions of the Higher Education Act in 1996 clearly indicated that those universities in Sweden should “co-operate with the surrounding community and inform about their operations,” which translates into closer collaboration with the society and economy. This approach has led to an increase in the number of external members on the Board of Directors.
- ✓ The Board of Directors – the highest governing body of the University of Umeå - has been made deliberately more pluralistic in view of the “third mission” and closer ties to the economy and society.
- ✓ The Board is composed of representatives of the University, the society and economy, teachers and students. The Vice-Chancellor is always a Board member. The students’ term of office is one year and for the others, except the Vice-Chancellor’s, is three years. The Vice-Chancellor is appointed by the Government for a six-year term.
- ✓ The profiles of some Board representatives for the economy and society (appointed by the Government) included: a former president and CEO of Svenska Lantmännen; a business manager and member of the board of directors of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce; a former general manager; a publisher; a professor and former university chancellor; a county governor; a former chairman of the Union IF Metall; a professor and permanent secretary to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. In addition, there are several Umeå University professors on the Board, as well as Student Union representatives.

2. Institutional autonomy to decide about curriculum, academic programs, & teaching methods

Overall, in this category the majority of universities in Europe have high levels of autonomy as this area is directly linked with the principles of academic freedom as discussed in Part 2, Question 5 of this Handbook. In most countries full autonomy is granted to higher education institutions in the programming of their research and teaching activities.

a. Capacity to design academic content

- The European University Association emphasizes that the ability to **design the content of courses** (what is taught) is a fundamental aspect of academic freedom; this also applies to teaching methodologies (how is taught). Therefore, universities in Europe in most cases can freely decide on the content of degree programs and courses, except for regulated professions (for example medicine or engineering). In 25 out of 28 higher education systems analyzed in the EUA study universities are free to design the content of academic programs and courses. This is the case in: Austria, Brandenburg in Germany, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flanders in Belgium, France, Greece, Hesse in Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.
- Some restrictions exist in Italy, where universities can design degree programs by adhering to the “guidelines set by a framework decree, which circumscribes the general structure of the academic system and defines educational activities, objectives and learning outcomes for each academic programme” (EUA, 2011:51).
- In Poland, 40% of degree content is predetermined. Formal national guidelines broadly indicate which areas should be covered by a degree program; they do not specify academic content on the course level. Lithuania and Latvia also impose some restrictions on the content of degree programs. In the former, the quality assurance agency within its accreditation process determines some of the content of degree programs. This is seen as a significant barrier to diversification, innovation and competitiveness. Latvia is an interesting case, as it requires universities to follow general guidelines on higher education standards, which in some cases prescribe specific elements to be incorporated into degree curricula. For example, modules on entrepreneurial skills development are prescribed for all degrees.
- The overall situation in this area of university autonomy seems different in Asia. As indicated in UNESCO study (2013), the freedom to design curricula in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan and Vietnam has been traditionally more restricted. In all five countries specific ministerial guidelines existed in the past for higher education curricula. These were abandoned in China, Japan and Indonesia in the 1990s and in Vietnam in 2006.

b. Capacity to introduce new degree programs

- Having the autonomy to introduce new academic programs allows the university to develop its academic profile and gives the flexibility to pursue its mission and strategic goals, as emphasized by the EUA study.
- At the level of Bachelor and Master's programs, universities in seven countries in Europe (Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) have the **full autonomy to introduce degree programs** without any restrictions, such as for example prior to having to fulfill accreditation requirements.
- On the other hand, in 12 higher education systems universities are required to obtain prior accreditation before a new Bachelor or Master's program can be introduced. (HE systems in this group include: Brandenburg in Germany, Czech Republic, Denmark, Flanders in Belgium, Greece, Hesse state in Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, Portugal, and Slovakia).
- At the level of Doctoral programs, there is a slightly higher level of autonomy. Universities in 13 countries can freely introduce doctoral programs without prior accreditation or other restrictions.
- UNESCO (2013) indicates that universities in China, Vietnam, and Japan also are free to introduce new academic programs. In case of Indonesia some universities have such autonomy, while in Cambodia universities are not able to do that.
- Ability to terminate degree programs is another aspect where there is a high level of autonomy in Europe. Universities in 24 systems out of 29 can freely terminate degree programs.

c. Capacity to choose language of instruction

- In the age of globalization and internationalization of higher education, which is a popular topic in Europe, the EUA study also analyzed university autonomy to determine the language of instruction. It appears that universities in Europe can often determine freely the language of instruction for BA and MA programs (in 21 higher education systems out of 29).
- France, Greece and Cyprus are indicated as countries where undergraduate programs can only be offered in the national language.

In Turkey, a national higher education council must approve any course taught in a language other than Turkish.

- In the Czech Republic, universities are free to choose the language of instruction but academic programs taught in a foreign language are not eligible for public funding.

d. Capacity to organize and take part in academic events

Higher education institutions make a contribution to the society not only by teaching in a classroom, or by conducting research in a laboratory. An important part of their work is to organize and take part in academic events, such as conference, workshops, symposia, etc. Academic events can be restricted (with participants from that institution only), can be open to colleagues from other institutions (academic or not), or to the general public; they can be local, national or international. The freedom to organize academic events is a basic aspect or dimension of institutional autonomy. The freedom for academic to take part in academic events, national or international, is part of both academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

3. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to quality assurance

a. Capacity to choose quality assurance mechanisms

- In a large majority of higher education systems in Europe, universities cannot choose which quality assurance mechanisms to apply (25 cases out of 29). Quality assurance mechanisms are typically regulated and include instruments such as accreditation at the level of programs (often periodic) or at the level of institutions (institutional accreditation).
- However, in Austria, Cyprus, Iceland and Switzerland higher education institutions have the freedom to decide on the relevant **quality assurance mechanisms** as they find appropriate.
- In the Netherlands, as of 2011 the higher education system is moving away from the program accreditation model towards institutional quality audits instead. This can be interpreted as a move toward greater institutional autonomy as it indicates shifting away from detailed program level accreditation bureaucracy to broader institutional level quality assurance control system.

b. Capacity to select a quality assurance agency

- This area may be of interest for Myanmar as ASEAN countries are currently also considering developing a regional approach to quality assurance similar to the European one. With the development of the European Higher Education Area following the Bologna Process, a push towards harmonization of quality assurance standards has been in place. For example, an umbrella organization, the **European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)** was established and is in charge of establishing and safeguarding the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance. Moreover, a **European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)** has been established, which is a register of national quality assurance agencies that comply with the European principles for quality assurance.
- In a number of countries there is slightly more flexibility for universities with regard to being able to select freely a quality assurance agency. In Austria, Cyprus, Iceland and Switzerland but also Estonia, in the German Länder: Brandenburg, Hesse, and North Rhine – Westphalia, , universities can choose an agency, including quality assurance agencies from other countries (typically other European countries). For example, theoretically a university in Estonia could opt for a quality assurance agency in Germany, but this approach is not yet used too often. This model is possible due to the development of a unique European Higher Education Area (as a result of the Bologna Process) and it might also be relevant for countries in the ASEAN region, including Myanmar.

4. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to research and freedom to publish

We have included this aspect of university autonomy, also closely related to academic freedom, as a separate point for discussion to emphasize its importance and possible relevance for Myanmar.

- An OECD (2008) study indicates that: “Academics (...) ought to have autonomy in the design of courses they teach and freedom to select research topics and approaches to research – possibly within priorities defined at the institution or system level”. Moreover, “they should not be constrained in their interpretation of research results or prevented from publicizing them.”

- The area of institutional autonomy related to research is also closely linked with the principles of academic freedom, which were discussed in Part 2 above, similar to teaching, curriculum and program design. In Europe, academic freedom is usually guaranteed by either the country's constitution or other respective national legislation. In Czech Republic, Ireland, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain, national legislation mentions explicitly the protection of academic freedom for teaching **and research**, and institutional autonomy. The example of the Czech Republic already mentioned in the previous chapter of the Handbook specifically mentions academic freedom in research, as well as the right to publish in the Act on Higher Education Institutions from 2004 (Art. 4): "The following academic liberties and rights are guaranteed at higher education institutions: a) Freedom of science, research and artistic activities as well as making the results public (...)."
- This area, however, becomes more complicated when public funding for research comes into the picture. Increasingly, governments develop comprehensive higher education strategies at the national level that are meant serve as a guiding and coordinating instrument for higher education institutions. Development of such a strategy may include setting out research priorities and specific earmarked funds (not an uncommon trend). In such cases, the State has the ability to stimulate and direct in a way research activities by specific funding schemes and conditions. This is also a trend at the level of European Union, which flags certain areas as priority for research funding.
- In short, excluding in some cases public funds for research, academics are typically free to select research topics, research designs as well as to freely publish the results. When we consider public funding schemes for research, certain restrictions and conditions may apply based on the goals and priorities set out by the Government.

5. Institutional autonomy to decide about students-related issues

This aspect of institutional autonomy is often considered as belonging to the broader category of academic autonomy. We have identified it here as a dimension on its own to emphasize, in our view, its importance and possible relevance for higher education in Myanmar. As has been the case of transition in Central and Eastern Europe, the number of students enrolled in higher education increased dramatically in the first years of changes – as part of the global trend of massification. This is likely to be the case for Myanmar too, as the country is systematically progressing with its

economic development. Managing properly increased enrollment requires paying attention to issues of university autonomy as well.

a. Deciding on the overall student numbers

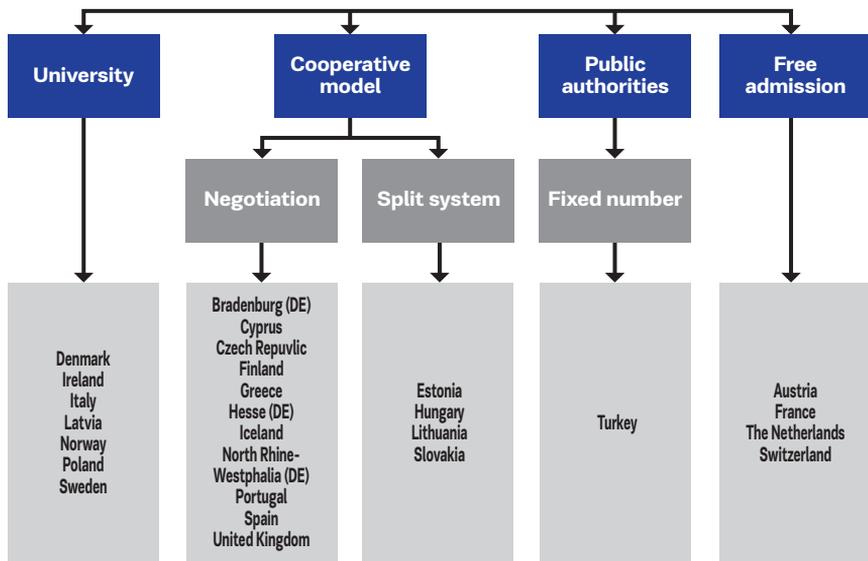
- o Quoting from CHEPS (2010): “The ability to **decide on overall student numbers** and **set admission criteria** are fundamental aspects of institutional autonomy. While the number of study places has important implications for a university’s profile and finances, the capacity to select students contributes significantly to ensuring quality and matching student interest with the programmes offered.”
- o Still, diverse models exist across higher education systems in Europe for this particular aspect of institutional autonomy, especially when it comes to undergraduate education (BA level). The EUA study identifies five different methods for making decisions about the overall annual number of students. To better illustrate the variety of approaches used, we adopted a Figure from the EUA’s Scorecard. The figure clearly shows what is the most popular approaches in the larger Europe (beyond the European Union), with Turkey being the only country where national authorities alone fix student numbers.
 - i. The overall student number can be negotiated between and agreed by both the university and the relevant ministry. Sometimes maximum or minimum levels are set for academic programs. This model operates in 11 countries in Europe, for example in the United Kingdom, Spain and Finland.
 - ii. In 8 countries, higher education institutions can decide on the student number they will admit but even in this model some restrictions and caps may apply for certain disciplines.²⁰ Country examples: Denmark, Ireland, Sweden.
 - iii. In 4 countries, there is a free admission model. This means that all students who complete secondary education can enter higher education. E.g.: Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and in most cases France (except Grands Ecoles and arts).
 - iv. The ministry or other relevant public authorities decide on the number of state-funded student places, while the university can set the number of fee-paying student places. This model operates in four countries in Europe, for example Estonia, Slovakia or Lithuania.

²⁰ For example in Denmark there are restrictions on the total number of students for specific fields, such as engineering or medicine (EUA, 2011 Scorecard).

- v. In one country in the EUA study, in Turkey, the State makes the decision alone on the overall fixed number of students to be admitted. In this case it is the national higher education council that decides on the maximum annual student number for each program after reviewing proposals made by the universities.

Adopted from EUA Autonomy Scorecard (2011, p. 45)

Overall student number



b. Student selection process and admission

- The process of how students are selected and offered admission to universities is usually rooted in the history and traditions of each higher education system. In some cases it is through entrance exams, while other countries traditionally support open access and accept all students without significant selection or conditions. These approaches have not been reformed in recent years (CHEPS, 2010).
- In Europe, for undergraduate studies (Bachelor’s, or BA level), universities in 11 countries are free to devise and set their admission criteria individually. In this group we find for example: the United Kingdom, Finland, Ireland, Estonia, and the Czech Republic.

- On the other hand, in 7 countries the admission criteria are regulated by an external authority. This applies for example to higher education systems in: Greece, Austria, Denmark or Switzerland.

6. Institutional autonomy to decide about staff employment issues (academic and non-academic staff)

The extent to which universities can decide on staff employment matters for both academic and non-academic staff is an important aspect of autonomy, but at the same time a difficult one to compare across different legal frameworks in Europe. This situation is related not only to higher education regulations proper, but also to public and private labor law and other regulations.

a. Staff recruitment

- Universities in 18 countries out of 28 declared that they are essentially free to recruit their own academic staff.
- In countries like Sweden or Austria, general guidelines exist in the law outlining the overall recruitment procedures, basic qualifications for senior academic staff, the requirement to publish open positions, the requirement to compose selection committees, and basic requirements for the composition of such committees. But apart from these guidelines indicated in the law, no external authorities are involved in the recruitment process in these countries.
- In 10 countries, there are further restrictions regarding recruitment of academic staff. In four countries, the appointment has to be confirmed by an external authority. In France, Greece and Turkey, the number of posts for some or all senior academic positions is also regulated by an external authority. In Turkey, the council for higher education allocates a specific number of vacancies to universities, which then may conduct the recruitment process on their own.
- Estonia has an interesting approach, as institutions are free to recruit academic staff but must comply with a “Quality Agreement” that was developed and signed by the universities themselves. The Agreement includes guidelines on the selection of senior academic staff and more specific regulations with regard to different academic ranks – full professors, associate professors, or assistant professors).
- With regard to recruitment of administrative staff, there is slightly more flexibility as universities in 22 systems can freely select their staff.

b. Capacity to decide on staff salaries

- Contrary to staff selection, most public universities in Europe cannot freely set the salaries of academic and administrative staff. In some cases, there are preset salary bands (ranges), or salaries are completely fixed. In several countries, academic staff still holds a civil servant or similar status, for example in Austria.
- In the UK, most universities follow a 52-point pay scale, which is agreed at the national level. However, the pay scale serves for guidance only and universities are free to implement it and set individual qualifying criteria.
- Collective bargaining by the universities can also result in the introduction of minimum wage.
- Four countries are an exception and have the authority to set the salary levels: Czech Republic, Estonia, Sweden and Switzerland.

c. Capacity to decide on dismissals and promotions

Once again, the picture is highly diverse among the 28 higher education systems analyzed by the EUA Scorecard.

- Universities are able to freely promote both academic and administrative staff based on merit and without restrictions in 11 higher education systems; for example in Estonia, UK, Sweden, and the Netherlands among others.
- In other countries various types of restrictions and system-level regulations exist. In Turkey and Lithuania promotion of both administrative and academic staff is possible only if a post at a higher level is/ becomes available.
- In Latvia and Luxembourg administrative staff can be promoted without restrictions but academic staff can be promoted only if there is an open position at a higher level.
- In France, promotion quotas are determined by the State.
- In Ireland, although universities can freely promote staff, due to the recent financial crisis there was a moratorium (freeze) imposed by the State on all promotions in the sector.

7. Institutional autonomy to decide about finances and administration

a. Allocation of public funding

- EUA notes a trend towards introduction of longer-term contracts negotiated between the institutions and the State, and a shift away from line-item budgeting to block grants/lump-sum budgeting systems, which represent a higher level of financial autonomy. Block grants as opposed to line-item budgets are used in 25 out of 28 higher education systems analyzed by the Scorecard. Line-item budgeting is still used only in Turkey, Cyprus and Greece.
- Although it does not mean that universities can completely freely use the basic funding they receive from the State, the block grant model indicates a more autonomous approach. In a block grant/lump-sum budgets, universities can independently decide about the distribution of funds internally. Typically block grants are allocated for a period of one year but some countries work with longer periods (such as Austria or Luxembourg).

b. The right to keep a surplus

- In Europe, most higher education systems make it possible for universities to keep any surpluses remaining from State funding without any restrictions. It is the case in 15 countries according to EUA (e.g. UK, Denmark, Austria, and Estonia among others). In some cases an approval from external authorities is needed in order to keep the surplus (Lithuania, Portugal, and Latvia).
- In Poland surplus can be spent only on investments. In other countries, such as Sweden and Norway, universities are allowed to keep a maximum 10% of the surplus.

c. Income-generating activities (diversification of income sources)

The EUA Scorecard does not cover this aspect of financial autonomy and we cannot indicate specific country examples. On a more general note, however, if a university is granted an appropriate level of institutional autonomy and a suitable legal framework exists on the system level, it is possible to undertake a number of different types of income-generating activities. In view of the trend of decreasing public funding for higher

education institutions globally, more and more universities undertake “entrepreneurial”, income-generating activities

- First of all, externally funded research projects (from companies, for example) are seen as an important area for income generation. In case of CEU, income from research projects represents almost 30% of the university budget.
- Academics can also serve as experts, consultants or advisers, which, in certain circumstances, may also generate income for the institutions. This can depend, however, on further aspects of autonomy, for example: the legal status of the university itself, which determines the types of activities an institution can get involved, or the ability to create legal entities (for example a company or a consultancy).
- Philanthropic funding (fundraising) is considered an important source of additional income for universities, although this is a practice a lot less developed in Europe compared with the United States, for example. Funds may be raised from alumni, other private donors, or from charitable organizations. Offices responsible for fundraising are increasingly being set up in Europe, although it is still a relatively new trend, given the strong reliance on public funding of higher education. For expertise in this area, one should look rather at the United States, where fundraising is a very important method for income generation.
- Other types of income generating activities include: tuition fees (a controversial topic in Europe, which started to be used only recently, and it is still not an extensive practice), conferences, science parks and various modes of cooperation with the industry and the private sectors as well as leasing buildings, land, etc.

d. The right to charge tuition fees

This is a highly controversial topic in Europe and again a very diverse picture when it comes to individual country approaches. Figure 2 below adopted from the EUA Scorecard presents how countries in Europe approach the issue:

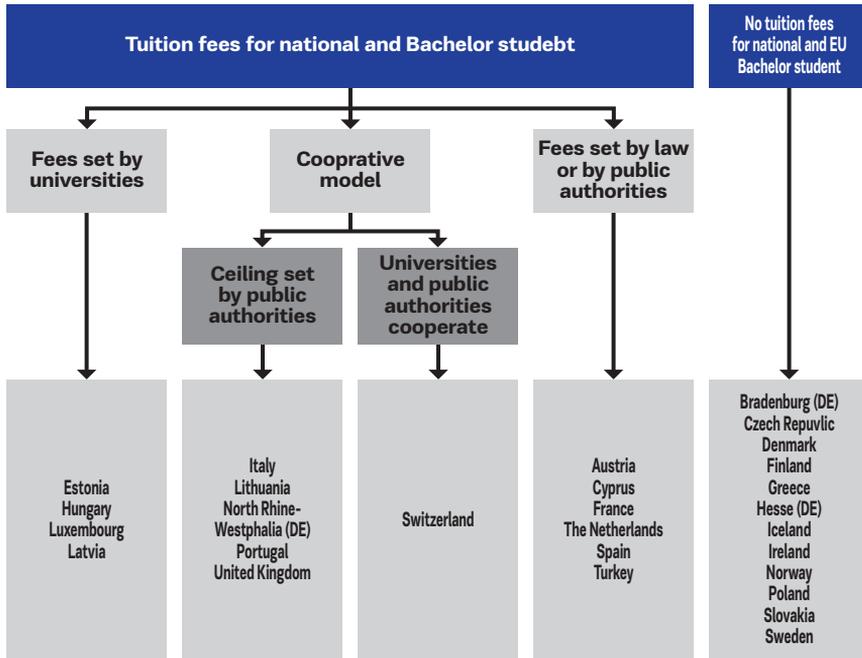
- Twelve countries are indicating as not charging tuition fees at all for national and EU students at the undergraduate level (bachelor studies).
- In 16 higher education systems, tuition fees are being charged but that is further divided into four different approaches and levels of institutional autonomy. For example in Estonia, Latvia and Luxembourg, universities are completely free to set the tuition fees.²¹

²¹ As of 2013 Hungary has a new Higher education law and the situation has changed

- In the UK the authorities set a ceiling for the tuition fees, which is also a topic of many discussions. Other countries also use the “tuition ceiling” approach while there are also cases where tuition is set by national authorities, for example in Austria.

Figure adopted from EUA Autonomy Scorecard (2011, p. 35)

Tuition fees for national/EU Bachelor student



e. The right to own buildings

- In many cases, universities own the buildings but there are restrictions on whether they can freely sell their real estate. Often permission from relevant authorities is required for selling real estate assets.
- Universities can sell their buildings without restrictions in 7 countries: the Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom.
- **Country example** adopted from OECD (2008): “In the Netherlands, institutions benefit from great autonomy in the management of their infrastructure. Several years ago, public institutions were given both ownership and control of their own campuses and capital fac-

ities. Capital expenditures and revenues are part of the lump sum budget, meaning that efficiencies and revenues in this category can be directed toward the operational needs of the institutions. This approach also encourages, at least theoretically, cooperative planning among institutions when constructing new facilities. Institutions can use debt financing when necessary to pay for the facilities”.

f. The right to borrow money

There is also high diversity with regard to the freedom to borrow money across higher education systems in Europe.

- Among the higher education systems analyzed by the EUA, universities in 7 of them can borrow money without any restrictions (Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland and the Netherlands)
- In some countries (Cyprus, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg or Spain) universities can borrow money but they need to obtain an approval from an external authority to do so.
- In Sweden or Brandenburg in Germany universities can only borrow from specified state-owned banks,
- In other countries, alternative restrictions apply – universities can borrow up to a maximum percentage, for example.
- In Iceland, it is not possible for public universities to borrow money but the companies they own can do that.
- In the UK, the universities are able to freely borrow money on the financial markets if the annual cost of the loan commitment does not exceed 4% of the total income of the university. Should it exceed 4%, then a university needs to obtain an approval of the Higher Education Funding Council.

8. Institutional autonomy related to internationalization

Although this aspect of autonomy has not been explicitly analyzed in any of the studies mentioned in this report, the authors decided to add it as a separate dimension so that to flag it as an important topic that appears to be highly relevant for the case of higher education in Myanmar. Given the already high interest of international partners in collaboration with universities in Myanmar, it may be helpful to determine explicitly the scope of institutional autonomy with regard to aspects related to international cooperation.

a. The ability of universities to independently enter & decide on international cooperation schemes

- In Europe, this area would typically be considered under academic affairs and academic autonomy, which is an area where universities are fairly independent in decision-making. As higher education is becoming more globalized international university partnerships, mobility schemes and joint degree programs are slowly becoming a norm rather than an exception.

A second aspect related to internationalization that we would like to bring up is establishment of branch campuses.

b. Branch campuses

- Most often, foreign universities establishing branch campuses do not always seek a local partner institution. This makes this topic appear slightly less relevant for university autonomy for institutions in Myanmar in comparison to the rest of the dimensions mentioned the Handbook. However, the topic of branch campuses can also be considered in a broader context of higher education in Myanmar and internationalization of its universities. Local universities, if granted the right level of autonomy, may also have opportunities to cooperate with international university partners who established a branch campus or are planning one in the near future.
- The trend to establish branch campuses is now quite visible South-east Asia. The University of Nottingham has a branch in Malaysia and China, while an Australian university established a branch in Singapore. In Malaysia alone, by the end of 2012 there were 6 international branch campuses offering degree programs. The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE) indicated that at the end of 2011, there were 200 international branch campuses offering degree courses and additional 37 were planned to open in 2013. Rapid developments in technology are certainly fueling this trend. Myanmar will have to make its own decisions in this area, and incorporate aspects of university autonomy when making such decisions.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this Handbook is to provide an overview of key concepts and principles related to university autonomy, along with concrete explanations and practical examples from a variety of countries, mostly from Europe. As the topic is very broad and complex, this document offers a snapshot of some of the most important issues in the area of university autonomy. We hope, nevertheless, that this work will help and inform the higher education reform debate in Myanmar.

Practical examples provided by international studies and highlighted here can serve as possible reference, models, or approaches, of what could be done, possibly needs to be done in Myanmar, and how. The examples are selected in such a way that is intended to point concretely to the very specific issues, dimensions, or aspects that policy makers, university representatives, all other relevant stakeholders in Myanmar, may wish to consider when developing and adopting legislation and regulations with regard to autonomy, all the way from the selection of the university leadership to designing the curriculum, or from student enrollment and admissions to the financial operations of universities.

Moreover, the various examples selected not only provide an inventory of concrete autonomy dimensions or aspects, but they may help to inform specific choices that will have to be made in Myanmar. For each dimensions of autonomy, different practices and approaches exist. The list of such concrete practices and approaches might be of use as they give some tangible, material indication, or suggestions of what could possible approaches be in Myanmar.

While acknowledging the large diversity of approaches, this summary of examples also shows that certain approaches are used more often than others. For example, it is not possible in all European countries that universities can decide freely on their internal academic structures (schools, departments, centers, etc.), but they can almost always in decide on what

is actually taught. This list of examples, we hope, could inform in this way the choices of national priorities (where to start, what is more important for Myanmar), and also the choices of concrete approaches and solutions regarding specific dimensions of autonomy. For that, a simple “autonomy chart template” has also been developed and is presented after this section.

We have also tried to indicate certain challenges in the area of institutional autonomy, both for universities and for the State. In a few cases, we have mentioned what are considered mistakes or negative results of specific choices regarding autonomy.

There are many other possible questions that are not mentioned in this report, but will need to be addressed in Myanmar in relation to the reform of university autonomy. **The present Handbook attempts to shed light on what autonomy is exactly (and why it is important). It does not attempt to provide answers to questions regarding how the reforms in this area should proceed at national level, how autonomy should be put in practice in Myanmar.**

Such questions regarding the implementation process could be asked in various ways. While in Myanmar, we have already heard a few, such as:

- Are universities in Myanmar ready to work as autonomous institutions (do they have the institutional capacity and readiness to become autonomous)?
- Are there any pre-conditions for autonomy (such financial independence or financial self-sufficiency of universities)?
- Should all universities be made autonomous simultaneously and quickly, or a selective and progressive approach should be taken (only a few, selected universities will be made autonomous)? Would it make sense to pilot autonomy only on one or two universities?
- What dimensions of autonomy should be developed in priority, or what dimensions of autonomy should be developed at all?

These any many other similar questions, which are not about “what autonomy is”, but about how autonomy reform should proceed can be answered and must be answered. The responsibility to answer them lies with the authorities (government, parliament), university representatives, and civil society representatives in Myanmar. Experts from abroad could help as well with advice, sharing experiences, and perhaps by helping all local actors involved to develop the necessary capacity for national higher education institutions to assimilate institutional autonomy. It is clear that universities in Myanmar at present have only limited capacity to implement any dimensions of autonomy, be it academic autonomy (curriculum development, for example), financial autonomy (managing their finances or real estate portfolio), or administrative autonomy. The lack of this capacity, however, is

not a valid argument against granting autonomy to universities. Rather, capacity should be developed at the same time with putting in practice specific aspects of autonomy. Universities in Myanmar have no choice but to significantly review their curricula and develop new ones, so that to reflect the current level of development in various sciences or professions. For this, trainings could be organized rapidly, with international support, so that the academic staff from Myanmar can do this work. Curriculum reform and development is a necessary and practical element of university autonomy, as not government in the world has the capacity to develop good curricula in hundreds if not thousands of disciplines.

At the same time, governments have an obligation to put in place a regulatory framework that makes possible autonomy, and in this way the effective work of universities - while at the same time ensuring quality, equity, and an efficient use of resources. What comes first, the autonomy or some other necessary regulations as mentioned here? Should Myanmar start by developing a quality assurance system and only later give universities autonomy? This is another important question that we did not attempt to address here. In short, however, both would be needed and they need to be developed simultaneously: universities cannot fulfill their role without a certain degree of autonomy, but that should go hand in hand with developing regulations, mechanisms, and policies to ensure quality. How a quality assurance system is to be developed, is a separate subject, which can be dealt with. Even before a comprehensive system would be put in place, quality assurance guidelines could be developed in a reasonable short period of time.

Finally, we acknowledge that the question “what dimensions of autonomy should be developed in priority” is a legitimate one, although it was not the place to try to answer it in this report. Should it be financial autonomy, academic autonomy, or administrative autonomy? Which dimensions or sub-dimensions could be considered lesser priorities or simply ignored? The answer to these questions, we believe, should be based on what is important for Myanmar, at present, combined with what could work best in the near future. It appears to us that well-defined elements of academic autonomy could be rapidly recognized as both important and not extremely difficult to put practice, with some effort, of course, and also with international support (curriculum development, for example). Other elements of autonomy, with regard to academic staff for example (such as appointment and promotion of academic staff), are also important, but they might be more difficult to implement immediately. In sum, identifying and answering the most important questions from a practical, reform perspective, is a complex and responsible matter that requires a lot of work. This work can be done by those with responsibilities for higher education in Myanmar and by the people directly involved in the higher education institutions of Myanmar, and it does not even need to take a very long time to start.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY CHART TEMPLATE

This template chart was developed based on the autonomy dimensions and aspects as presented and detailed in this Handbook. It was created as a simple yet potentially useful tool for mapping and prioritizing autonomy dimensions that could be considered as the most important, suitable and relevant for Myanmar.

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS (AS INDICATED BY THE HANDBOOK)	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF EACH FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN MYANMAR	LIST (RANKING) OF AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE ²³
1. Institutional autonomy to decide about internal governance & organizational structures	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT:
a. Freedom to set up internal governance structures (governing bodies & external members)	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT:
b. Freedom to determine internal academic structures	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	RELATIVELY IMPORTANT:

²³ After indicating/ marking the level of importance for each of the eight dimensions (column 2), the template allows to rank the dimensions in the order of importance for colleagues in Myanmar.

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS (AS INDICATED BY THE HANDBOOK)	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF EACH FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN MYANMAR	LIST (RANKING) OF AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE
c. Freedom to select institutional leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
d. Legal status of universities	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
2. Institutional autonomy to decide about curriculum, academic programs, & teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
a. Capacity to design academic content (what is taught)	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
b. Capacity to introduce degree programs	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
c. Capacity to choose language of instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
d. Ability to organize and participate in academic events	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
3. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to quality assurance	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY CHART TEMPLATE

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS (AS INDICATED BY THE HANDBOOK)	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF EACH FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN MYANMAR	LIST (RANKING) OF AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE
a. Capacity to select a quality assurance agency	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
b. Capacity to choose quality assurance mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
4. Institutional autonomy to decide about issues related to research and freedom to publish	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
5. Institutional autonomy to decide about students-related issues.	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
a. Overall student numbers	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
b. Student selection process and admission	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
6. Institutional autonomy to decide about staff employment issues (academic & non-academic staff)	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
a. Capacity to decide on staff salaries	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS (AS INDICATED BY THE HANDBOOK)	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF EACH FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN MYANMAR	LIST (RANKING) OF AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE
b. Staff recruitment and appointment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
c. Capacity to decide on staff promotions and dismissals	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
7. Institutional autonomy to decide about finances and administration	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
a. Allocation of public funding	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
b. Income-generating activities (diversification of income sources)	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
c. The right to keep a surplus	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
d. The right to charge tuition fees	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
e. Ability to create legal entities	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY CHART TEMPLATE

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS (AS INDICATED BY THE HANDBOOK)	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF EACH FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN MYANMAR	LIST (RANKING) OF AUTONOMY DIMENSIONS ACCORDING TO THEIR PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE
f. The right to borrow money	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
g. The right to own buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
8. Institutional autonomy in the area of internationalization	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
a. The ability of universities to independently enter & decide on international cooperation schemes	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	
b. Ability to engage with branch campuses	<input type="checkbox"/> VERY IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORTANT <input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVELY IMPORTANT	

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