



Data management plan for the project “Higher Education Autonomy in Europe: supranational, national, and institutional trends”

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1. General description of data

Five countries participate in this project - Portugal, Poland, Finland, France and the Netherlands. The comparison of higher education (HE) systems and higher education institutions (HEIs) seeks to identify the configurations they are assuming based on the analysis of governance, institutional management and the role of the professionals in enacting their pedagogic and research autonomy.

This project relies on a case study strategy. The national and institutional case studies will include the identification of relevant key actors to be interviewed at the national and institutional levels. The identification of institutions and document analysis and the data collection strategy includes interviews with institutional leaders, academics and researchers. The project will collect three kinds of data: (1) data from institutional documents, (2) data from an institutional survey; and (3) data from interviews with institutional leaders, academics and researchers.

- 1) Institutional documents will be collected via desktop research from publicly available sources. The analysis of the documentation will result in a set of

databases consisting of excerpts from documents relevant to the research issue as well as research notes, organised according to an analysis grid. This data is not considered sensitive since the analysed documentation is publicly available.

2) The institutional survey targets institutional leaders, academics and researchers. It was agreed among participating research teams that “LimeSurvey” would be the most appropriate choice to host the survey, as it does not collect personal information (e.g., email) and allows the survey to be available in the languages deemed to be relevant (e.g., English, Portuguese, French and Polish). CIPES is responsible for the English and Portuguese versions of the survey and will receive translations carried out by the international partners. CIPES will also be responsible for setting up the survey in utilising LimeSurvey and providing partners with the link for dissemination. Access to the platform's back office (raw data) and statistical analysis using IBM SPSS software will be conducted at CIPES. Results from the survey will also inform redrafting of interview guidelines. The survey is anonymous, hence the collected data is not considered sensitive.

3) The interviews will be semi-structured, with the interviewees fulfilling the role of institutional leaders, academics and researchers. Recorders will be used for interviews. The interview guidelines will be designed on the basis of the issues involved and the specificity of the actors and their institutional contexts, posts and positions, including safety procedures to protect the interviewee's personal data. We plan to conduct 9-12 interviews, per country (total ~45-60), each lasting approximately 45 minutes, which will be transcribed by the CIPES’s team. We therefore expect ~45-60 audio files (stored in MP3 format). The transcribed text will be stored in plain text format. The observations will be written down by hand. When necessary, interview transcripts will be translated to English. The transcriptions will undergo qualitative analysis using NVIVO software. Data analysis will be performed at CIPES. Procedures to ensure anonymity and secure storage of data are outlined below.



2. Ethical and legal compliance

The project was designed in accordance with the ethical principles and norms in effect in the field of research and was approved by the FCT, the Portuguese government entity responsible for funding and evaluating the scientific and technological system. The project was submitted and approved by the Ethics Committee (reference n. 2024-02-05b) of the Faculty of Psychology and Education Science, University of Porto (FPCEUP).

All procedures relative to the capture, storage, protection, transfer, destruction, and reuse of personal data are carried out in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU GDPR). Only the PI (Principal Investigator), the Co-PI (Co-Principal Investigator), the research members responsible for transcription and those who will perform the interviews on-site will have access to the non-pseudonymised version of the interviews. The data will be collected and treated in digital form: audio and text. The researcher responsible for the face-to-face interviews will hand over the audio data to the PI, who will be in charge of transcribing them or transferring them to the team members responsible for the transcription. This aims to increase the probability that all the data is handled with responsibility throughout and after the research process. The interview guidelines will be preceded by the signature of an informed consent, in accordance with the EU GDPR. There will be no incentives to participate. No special category data will be collected. As the interviewees will be pseudonymised, we do not foresee any increased risks in participating in this research project.

3. Documentation and metadata

The project under consideration does not require metadata considerations due to the confidential and restricted nature of its data.

4. Storage and backup during the research project

Data collected and analysed will be stored at CIPES that has a set of safety

procedures in place to protect personal data, namely, a data structure guaranteeing the pseudonymisation of the interviews at the beginning of the data treatment. Simultaneously, the transcription and review of the transcriptions referred to above will guarantee the pseudonymisation of the interviewees. All processing of personal data will be subject to registration, under the regulations in effect. Unedited personal data will be housed in a restricted access workplace, protected by a password that is only known by the person in charge of personal data and the person in charge of the host institution. Internet access at this workstation and all others within CIPES' facilities is safeguarded by a firewall managed by the computer services department of the University of Porto (UP).

5. Opening, publishing and archiving the data after the research project

The results will be disseminated to the research community and the main stakeholders in European and Portuguese higher education. The team plans to present the results of this project at national and international conferences on education, public management, political studies and organisational studies. The plan includes 10 (ten) presentations at international events and 4 (four) in national meetings. The plan also includes 10 (ten) papers in international journals, including 4 (four) in open access journals and 2 (two) papers in national journals. The dissemination plan also includes regular posting of short reports on the CIPES website (www.cipes.pt) about the project's activities and achievements. Moreover, the research team aims to contribute decisively to the international dissemination of this research project. Besides the presentations and papers, the team also intends to deliver and publish a final report summarising the project's findings, which will be sent to the HEIs participating in the project. Lastly, the team aims to produce a book presenting the main achievements of the project focusing on the analysis of institutional patterns of transformation in European HE, reflecting the variety of institutional profiles and cross-institutional themes underlying the achievements associated with political initiatives, expectations and changes within European HEIs. The dissemination of results will incorporate direct quotes from the data, including properly anonymized interview quotes. Dispensable data files and



temporary files created when programs are used will be erased when they are no longer needed. The audio files will be destroyed after the original research has been completed to protect privacy.

6. Data management responsibilities and resources

The project PI will have responsibility for the data management of the project. All team members have agreed to follow the guidelines and regulations set forth in this document and by the EU GDPR to ensure the responsible, legal and ethical collection, use and storage of data for this project.

7. Funding

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