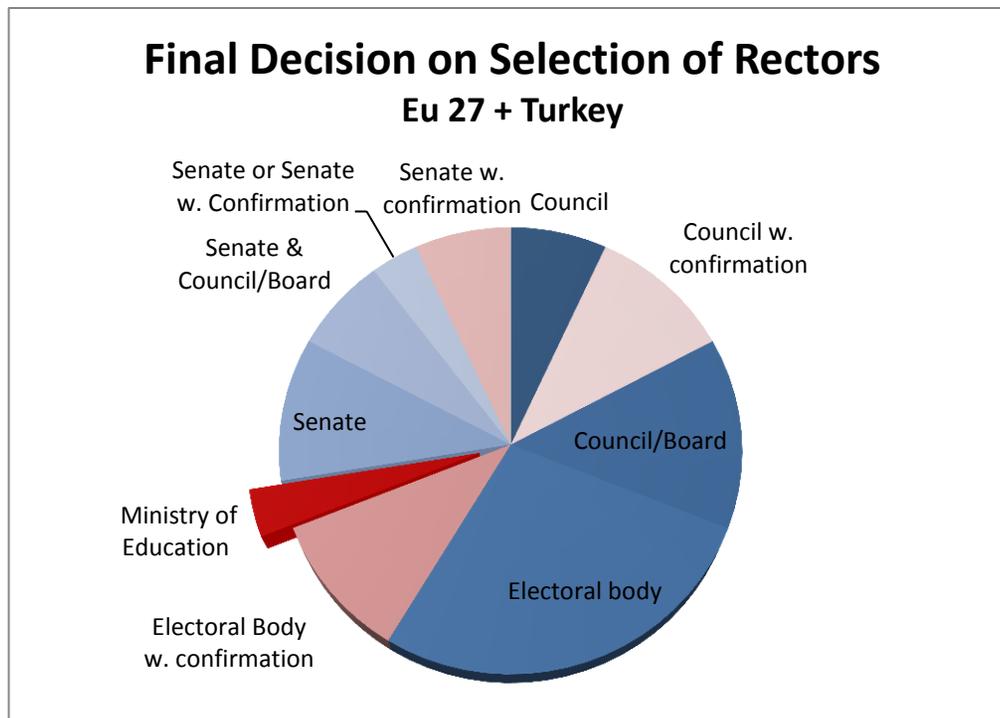


Election Procedures of Higher Education Institution Rectors / Executive Heads

In the words of EUA “autonomy is a success factor for European Universities”, facing new challenges in an increasingly complex and global environment. There are several aspects of university autonomy and governance, i.e financial, organizational, staffing and academic autonomy. Numerous EUA studies found that in Europe institutional autonomy varies greatly and legal settings and even definitions differ drastically across countries. Thus the relationship between state and university can take several forms; there is no one ideal model. Key findings included that while in general there is a trend towards greater autonomy, this is mostly found in administrative and academic areas, but legal frameworks are often restrictive towards governance structures and university leadership.

Higher education institutions in most countries vote on the executive head's¹ appointment with a large group/electoral body or via the Senate and/or Council.



Only in some, their selection of the Rector may also have to be confirmed, if only formally, by a higher authority, e.g. the Ministry of Education at national or state level or in some cases the President. Those procedures are formal as in most cases the higher authority has little veto power, or if it does, it does not make use of it frequently.

As pictured in the Graph, this mostly formal confirmation by a higher authority (in light reds) is not common in most countries. About two thirds of Universities can select the Rectors without confirmation and with little or no selection procedures prescribed by law (blue tones). Hungary is the only nation of the 29 national systems² studied in this survey, where the Minister of Education directly appoints the rector (dark red).

¹ The executive head is defined by EUA as the Rector; in some nations the Vice-Chancellor, President, Principal or similar.

² EU 27 plus Turkey and Belgium counting twice as Flanders and Wallonia.

Elected without confirmation					Elected with confirmation				
Council	Council & Board	Electoral Body	Senate	Senate & Council & Board	Council w. confirmation	Electoral Body w. Confirmation	Senate w. Confirmation	Senate or Senate w. Confirmation	Appointed by Ministry
Lithuania, Malta	Austria, Denmark, Ireland, UK	Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Slovenia, Spain, Wallonia	France, Poland, Portugal	Flanders, Bulgaria	Netherlands, Luxembourg, Sweden	Greece, Romania, Turkey	Czech Republic, Slovakia	Germany	Hungary

The level of ‘formality’ of the confirmation by a higher authority varies, hence the organizational autonomy, in this case the selection of an executive head, is more or less restrictive:

Czech Republic	The law contains various regulations concerning the executive head. The Rector is nominated by the University Academic Senate and appointed by the President of the Czech Republic.
Flanders (Belgium)	Restrictions on organizational autonomy only relate to the prescribed selection criteria for the Rector. If these criteria are met, the Rector is appointed through a two-step process in which both the Senate and the Council/Board are involved.
Germany	The situation strongly differs between the 16 federal states: while in some states universities have full autonomy over the selection of the Rector (e.g. North Rhine Westphalia), in some only some minor regulations apply to the selection of the university’s executive head (e.g. Hessen), and in some others his or her appointment has to be formally confirmed by the state Ministry of education (e.g. Brandenburg).
Greece	There are multiple legal selection criteria for the executive head. The Rector is voted by a large electoral body, including all academic staff and students as well as other internal stakeholders. But the selection is subject to approval by the education Ministry.
Hungary	A multitude of selection criteria are stated in the law. The Senate votes and issues a recommendation for the position of the

	Rector. However, as the final appointment is done by the Minister of Education, who does not have to follow the preferences of the Senate.
Luxembourg	Luxembourg University is restricted in almost all aspects of organizational autonomy. The selection via the Council, appointment, dismissal and term of office of the executive head are regulated, external representatives are appointed by the Ministry and academic structures are explicitly listed in the law. Appointments are confirmed by the Grand Duke of Luxembourg.
Netherlands	Institutions in the Netherlands are rather autonomous, as there are no legal regulations regarding the executive head. The Council elects the Rector and the minister gives formal approval.
Romania	The Rector is elected by a governing body, which itself is democratically elected within the university community (usually the Senate). The appointment of the Rector must be formally confirmed either by the government, or the Ministry.
Slovakia	The law in Slovakia strictly regulates the selection procedure, term of office and dismissal of the executive head. Once elected by the Senate, the appointment is formally confirmed by the President of the Republic.
Sweden	The modalities for the selection, appointment, term of office and dismissal of the executive head are regulated by law. There is formal confirmation by the Ministry for the executive head but appointment of external members on the Board by the government, which have to be included.
Turkey	Modalities for the selection, appointment, term of office and dismissal of the executive head are strictly prescribed. The Rector is elected by an electoral body, but appointment needs confirmation by the Ministry.