



ROAD2EU SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

# From EU Priorities to Institutional Action: Implementing ROAD2EU in Higher Education Practice

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# WHAT THIS LECTURE COVERS

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**01** Why implementation matters

**02** EU policy architecture

**03** Institutional translation

**04** Governance, KPIs, and pilots

# EU HIGHER-EDUCATION POLICY DEMANDS IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY, NOT ONLY POLICY LITERACY

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- EU higher-education policy is now directly linked to **targets, indicators, monitoring, and review cycles**.
- Universities need **implementation capacity** — the ability to translate policy into action — not only the ability to read and understand policy.
- This lecture responds to the growing operationalisation of EU policy across all higher-education systems.

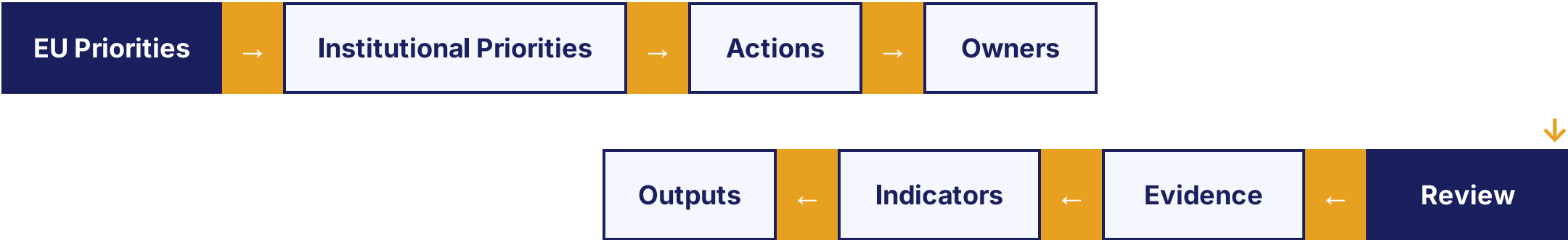
## THE IMPLEMENTATION IMPERATIVE

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**Policy literacy is necessary but not sufficient. The real challenge is building the institutional capacity to act on policy commitments in a structured, accountable way.**



# THE ROAD2EU IMPLEMENTATION CHAIN: FROM EU PRIORITIES TO EVIDENCE AND REVIEW



A simple internal planning logic for departments and faculties — adaptable to any scale of institutional action.

# THE EEA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK LINKS EDUCATION POLICY TO THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER

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- The **European Education Area (EEA)** supports cooperation, targets, indicators, and monitoring across all EU member states.
- It formally links education policy to the **European Semester** and the Education and Training Monitor, creating accountability at national level.
- The EEA is the strategic planning layer within which all ROAD2EU implementation takes place.

## THE STRATEGIC LAYER

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**The EEA is not just a political aspiration; it is a structured governance framework with binding targets, annual monitoring, and national reporting obligations.**



# DEAP IS THE KEY POLICY FOR TURNING DIGITAL PRIORITIES INTO INSTITUTIONAL ACTION

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- The **Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP)** provides the main EU framework for digital transformation in education.
- It directly affects **curriculum design, assessment methods, accessibility standards, and institutional readiness.**
- DEAP is the primary policy instrument for translating digital priorities into concrete institutional actions.

## THE DIGITAL IMPLEMENTATION LAYER

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**DEAP is the bridge between EU digital ambitions and institutional practice. Every university needs a clear DEAP response embedded in its strategy.**

# THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR UNIVERSITIES EXPECTS COHERENCE ACROSS ALL GOVERNANCE LEVELS

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- The **European Strategy for Universities** explicitly expects coherence across EU, national, regional, and institutional governance levels.
- Universities are expected to become **active agents of change** in the green and digital transitions, not passive recipients of policy.
- This requires internal governance structures that can connect external policy commitments to internal planning and action.

## COHERENCE AS A GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENT

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**Coherence is not optional. Universities that cannot demonstrate alignment between their strategy and EU, national, and regional priorities will face growing accountability pressures.**



# COHESION POLICY LINKS HIGHER EDUCATION TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLACE-BASED ACTION

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- EU Cohesion Policy provides the **language of PO1-PO5** (Policy Objectives) and the investment logic for territorial development.
- It formally links higher education to **regional development, social inclusion, and place-based action**.
- ROAD2EU implementation therefore sits inside a broader territorial investment environment with its own rules, indicators, and accountability requirements.

## THE TERRITORIAL INVESTMENT CONTEXT

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**Cohesion Policy is not just a funding mechanism; it is a governance framework that shapes how universities are expected to contribute to regional development.**



# POLAND COMBINES STRONG TERTIARY ATTAINMENT WITH CLEAR TERRITORIAL AND DIGITAL-SKILLS GAPS

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- Poland has achieved **strong tertiary attainment rates**, but significant gaps remain in territorial access, STEM participation, and digital skills.
- Implementation must therefore respond to **specific national and regional needs**, not just generic EU-level priorities.
- The Polish context provides a concrete and data-rich environment for grounding ROAD2EU implementation.

## THE POLISH CONTEXT

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**Poland's combination of strong overall attainment and persistent structural gaps makes it an ideal laboratory for testing targeted, evidence-based implementation strategies.**



# A SIMPLE INSTITUTIONAL MODEL: ONE PRIORITY, ONE OWNER, ONE ACTION, ONE REVIEW POINT

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- 1 Select One Realistic Priority**  
Choose a single, achievable priority that is relevant to your institutional context and EU policy commitments.
- 2 Define One Objective and Assign One Owner**  
Clarity of ownership is the single most important factor in successful implementation.
- 3 Design One Action With a Clear Indicator Set**  
Keep the action specific, time-bound, and measurable. Avoid vague commitments.
- 4 Schedule One Review Point**  
Build in a structured review to assess progress, learn, and adjust the action if needed.

# A PILOT PORTFOLIO OF PRACTICAL ROAD2EU OUTPUTS

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## OUTPUT 1

### **Alignment Roadmaps**

Visual tools mapping institutional actions to EU policy priorities and targets.

## OUTPUT 2

### **Micro-Credential Prototypes**

Short, stackable learning units aligned with EU micro-credential standards.

## OUTPUT 3

### **Accessibility Audits**

Systematic reviews of digital and physical accessibility against EU standards.

## OUTPUT 4

### **Small Dashboards**

Simple monitoring tools tracking key indicators against institutional targets.

## OUTPUT 5

### **Stakeholder Workshops**

Facilitated sessions engaging staff, students, and external partners in implementation.

## OUTPUT 6

### **Policy Briefs**

Concise documents communicating institutional positions and evidence to policy audiences.



# IMPLEMENTATION ARTEFACTS BUILD INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR CHANGE, QA, AND FUTURE PROJECTS

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- **Implementation artefacts** — roadmaps, audits, dashboards, briefs — help universities move from vision to operational, measurable change.
- They also serve as **quality assurance tools, reporting evidence, and foundations for future project development.**
- Building a portfolio of implementation artefacts is therefore a form of institutional capacity-building with long-term strategic value.

## BEYOND THE PROJECT

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**Implementation artefacts outlast individual projects. They become part of the institutional memory and evidence base that supports continuous improvement and future funding applications.**

# SELECTED REFERENCES

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- **European Commission.** *European Education Area Strategic Framework.* 2021-2030.

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- **European Commission.** *Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) 2021-2027.*

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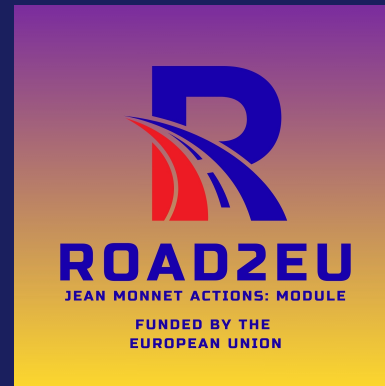
- **European Commission.** *European Strategy for Universities.* COM(2022) 16 final.

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- **European Commission.** *Cohesion Policy 2021-2027.* Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

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- **European Commission.** *Education and Training Monitor 2025: Poland.* Publications Office of the EU, 2025.



# Questions & Discussion

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**Which action is most feasible in one year: curriculum action, governance action, digital action, or partnership action?**

**Dr. Habil. Yan Kapranov**

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