



ARTICLES

Music in the European Higher Education Area. Inequalities with respect to the university system and the urgency of a solution

La música en el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior. Desigualdades respecto al sistema universitario y urgencia de solución

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Abstract

The location of Higher Artistic Education institutions in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is still to be completed after ten years of implementation. The academic literature and those responsible for management agree on the hypothesis that current Spanish legislation prevents the development of three essential aspects: institutional autonomy, the development of research and the equalisation of the rights of students and teaching staff with those of the rest of the university community. This article presents the results of the analysis of the content of the legislation, of the policies developed by the State Government and by the autonomous governments of three territories (Galicia, Andalusia and Catalonia), of which 3 centres are studied, with the aim of comparing the effects of the policies on the rights of students, teaching staff and the centres themselves. The resulting data will allow the development of new policies to serve the needs of the education system. The work suggests that schools in the EHEA, in general, are prepared to deal with the issues of student rights. The work suggests that the EE.AA.SS. schools, in general, are ready to face the challenge. In order to make the proposal, we have taken as a reference different European institutions that present successful models of higher education institutions.

Keywords: University; public policies; music education; higher education; conservatory.

Resumen

La ubicación de los centros de Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores (EE.AA.SS.) en el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES) está todavía por completar tras diez años de implantación. La literatura académica y las personas responsables de la gestión coinciden en la hipótesis de que la legislación española vigente impide desarrollar tres aspectos esenciales: la autonomía institucional, el desarrollo de la investigación y la equiparación de los derechos de alumnado y profesorado a los del resto de la comunidad universitaria. Este artículo presenta los resultados del análisis del contenido de la legislación, de las políticas desarrolladas por el Gobierno del Estado y por los Gobiernos autonómicos de tres territorios (Galicia, Andalucía y Cataluña), de los cuales se estudian 3 centros, con el objetivo de comparar los efectos de las políticas sobre los derechos del alumnado, el profesorado y los mismos centros. Los datos resultantes permitirán desarrollar nuevas políticas al servicio de las necesidades del sistema formativo. El trabajo sugiere que los centros de EE.AA.SS., en general, están preparados para abordar el reto. Para realizar la propuesta, se ha tenido como referencia a distintos centros europeos que presentan modelos de éxito de EE.AA.SS.

Palabras clave: Universidad; políticas públicas; educación musical; educación superior; conservatorio.

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1. Introduction

The development of the EHEA in Spain, although it has included the EHEA from the point of view of Bachelor's and Master's degrees (in the case of the doctorate, the participation of the university is required), has maintained the singularity of the centres (conservatories, higher schools or authorised centres) excluding the essential aspects for their true inclusion in the context of the Europe of knowledge: institutional autonomy, research and equity in access.

The centrality of the aforementioned aspects is reflected in the *Magna Carta Universitatum* (1988) which, together with academic freedom, defines the university by its autonomy and by research as an inseparable element of teaching. This recognition is reflected in the same scientific production which, in relation to university autonomy, is 58 times greater than that generated in relation to university digitisation, according to the SCOPUS database, to compare it with one of the issues that most occupies the current debate on the challenges facing the university (data from 1988 to 2022).

If the keywords "autonomy" and "EE.AA.SS." significantly fewer articles are found (98.8% fewer articles in the same database and the same time range). In Spain, the debate on autonomy can be followed since the *Spanish Association of Higher Centres of Artistic Education* (ACESEA) commissioned Embid (1997) to write a report on the need to articulate a regime of autonomy for higher education institutions.

The contributions made at the ACESEA 2002 and 2012 congresses are complemented by those published by various authors related to the EHEA in the same sense. Gómez (2011) suggests "including higher music education in the university system" (p.84); Cid (2012) argues that "the creation of artistic universities seems advisable" (p.19); Pliego (2014) denounces the lack of content of the EHEA for the EHEAs and calls for their integration into the university; Vieites (2020), seeing the difficulty in promoting regulatory changes, proposes an intermediate solution of university affiliation; or Zaldívar (2005) who proposes an asymmetrical solution by autonomous communities (CC. AA.), according to which the studies must be university studies, but the centres and teaching staff can continue to depend on the Special Regime education system.

In addition to the contributions of the authors of the EE.AA.SS. Grau (2018), in his study commissioned by the *Consell Nacional de la Cultura i de les Arts* (CONCA), presents a local and international overview, from which he proposes a final solution (creation of the University of the Arts) and an intermediate solution (integration of the centres into a general university).

From a European point of view, Gies (2019) recounts the process that began in the 1970s when the Nordic countries started to transform their conservatoires into university faculties and how the Bologna process triggered the transformation in Southern European countries. This transformation is not without the difficulties of incorporating research in a practice-based training context, as pointed out by several authors who have done comparative research on the academic output of higher music education teachers (Jorgensen, 2010) and analysed the challenges they face (Johansson and Georgii-Hemming, 2021).

This article analyses the current situation of music schools in comparison with the university system, also from a European context. Its relevance lies in the results of the analysis carried out. Applying the same criteria used for university education, it concludes that these centres are prepared to assume an evolution that generates three impacts: an advance in the rights

of students and teachers, the development of music and the arts, as well as the progress of the institutions that deal with their training and research.

The research is carried out at a legislative moment that will determine the development of higher education in Spain, both in the university system and in the Higher Artistic Education system. The results provided in the article are relevant to guide decision-making.

2. Method

Under an interpretative paradigm that allows understanding and interpreting an educational reality, as well as explaining a specific context and time (Bisquerra, 2019), different methods have been used to carry out this study: content analysis of legislation and publications, which has made it possible to compare the university system and the EHEA system; the case study of three Spanish public centres from the territorial, management and academic offer point of view; and the descriptive analysis of the 256 EHEA-Music centres that are members of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Academies of Music and Musikhochschulen (AEC), in relation to their links with the university system, in relation to their links with the university system. - Music that are members of the *Assotiation Europeenne des Conservatoires, Academies de Musique et Musikhochschulen* (AEC), in relation to their links with the university system.

The study method takes into account the distribution of competences in the Spanish State which, in terms of educational planning, reserves certain competences that hinder the asymmetry in the treatment of the educational establishments of the Spanish higher education system in its territory. This is not the case with the university system, which enjoys greater institutional autonomy.

2.1. Context

The drafting of this article takes place in a context of transformation. On the one hand, the *Organic Law on Universities* (2001, amended in 2007) is being revised on the basis of a preliminary draft of the *Organic Law on the University System*, drawn up in August 2021, with a second draft in 2022, which has begun parliamentary procedures for its approval. The article takes into account both texts, as well as *RD 640/2021 on the creation of universities*. On the other hand, the *Organic Law 2/2020* (LOMLOE) that modifies the *Organic Law 2/2006 on Education* (LOE) establishes in its *9th Additional Provision* that, in a period of two years (December 2022), the Government will present a normative proposal for the insertion of Artistic Education in the framework of Higher Education.

2.2. Selection of the institutions to be studied

The register of institutions of the Spanish Ministry of Education lists 24 public or government-established publicly funded higher education institutions of music. Their diversity is specified in different aspects. For this study, three have been defined: the management model, the academic offer and the formal capacity for research and knowledge transfer. Taking these criteria into account, three centres have been selected for study. Firstly, the *Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya* (ESMUC), based in Barcelona, which is managed as a foundation attached to the autonomous administration (Department of Education of the Generalitat de Catalunya). It is the

only publicly funded centre in Catalonia, offers bachelor's and master's degrees and has a pre-consolidated research group. Secondly, the Conservatorio Superior de Música Manuel Castillo (CSMMC), which is based in Seville and is directly managed by the regional administration (Consejería de Educación y Deporte de la Junta de Andalucía) and offers undergraduate studies. Finally, the Conservatorio Superior de Música de Vigo has been selected, which is directly managed by the regional administration (Consejería de Cultura, Educación y Universidad de la Xunta de Galicia), is one of the two higher conservatories in Galicia and offers bachelor's and master's degree studies.

On the other hand, the 256 institutions of Higher Music Education that are members of the European Association of Conservatoires, Academies of Music and Colleges of Music (AEC) have been analysed. Membership of the association is individual for each centre, so the sample may be biased in terms of representativeness depending on the economic capacity of the centres and their willingness to internationalise. In the case of the Spanish representation, 15 of the 24 public schools are members of AEC.

2.3. Data collection procedure

In order to obtain information from the Spanish centres, various tools were used: semi-structured interviews with the management of the three centres studied, with the exception of ESMUC, whose interview was conducted with the head of research, quality and innovation. These exploratory interviews were conducted at the beginning of the research, in an open-ended manner in order to "obtain information richer in nuances" (Bisquerra, 2019, p.329) that would allow us to delimit the scope of the research and the necessary techniques to be used. The interview is divided into three blocks that investigate the strategic environment, the political environment and the operational environment of the institutions. As a result of the analysis of the interviews and the public documentation (both official documents and public documentation produced by the centres), a questionnaire was drawn up for each of the directorates, which made it possible to gather precise information on the aspects already dealt with in the interview. The questionnaire was validated by 6 experts (academic, musical and management). The analysis of official, legal and public documentation has allowed the formulation of the hypothesis of the inequality of rights of the university community in Spain, as well as defining the fields of study in order to be able to generate the results offered. The people interviewed have given their permission to use the information in this article.

Information on the AEC centres is public and freely available on the AEC website.

3. Results

The results of the study provide evidence of the inequality of the AEC system in relation to the university system. They also describe the capacity for institutional autonomy of the 256 ACS member institutions as either supervised institutions (schools or conservatoires) or universities (whether faculties in generalist universities or universities of the arts). The results focus on the consequences on the lack of institutional autonomy, research and equity of access to these studies and offer a perspective on the European situation of these studies.

3.1. Dependence on the education administration denying institutional autonomy

Spanish education laws have placed the EE.AA.SS. -Music in the framework of non-university education, despite the fact that the qualifications obtained at the end of the studies have the same level as university studies in the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES) and the *European Qualifications Framework* (EQF). The LOMLOE was even modified in order to harmonise the nomenclature of the studies, which were established as Grado en Enseñanzas Artísticas Superiores and Máster Enseñanzas Artísticas through *RD 6/2022*. *Because* of this location in the non-university space, the centres have neither the legal personality (unless they are managed by foundations such as ESMUC) nor the autonomy that the laws grant to universities.

3.1.1. Definition of the academic offer

Both universities and higher education institutions offer courses leading to official degrees (in addition to their own degrees). The difference between one (universities) and the other (higher education institutions) lies in the process of implementing the degree.

The University System follows the process described by the National Agency for Quality Assessment (ANECA) and initiated by the university itself for any degree, whether it is a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree. Once the verification process has been passed, the autonomous community authorises the implementation of the degree, which is included in the Register of Universities, Centres and Degrees (RUCT). This degree will be monitored periodically by the quality agency, which will lead to its accreditation³.

The centres of EE.AA.SS. are not authorised to propose official degree qualifications, they can only offer the single qualification set out, in the case of music, in *RD 631/2010* which regulates the basic content of the EE.AA.SS. and where the specialisations of the degree are made explicit. The creation of new degrees is not contemplated and the creation of new specialities is reserved to the proposal of the educational administrations and the resolution of the State Government (*Article 8*).

The procedure for the accreditation of Master's degrees from higher education institutions is set out in *RD 1614/2009*, according to which the educational administrations submit Master's degree proposals to the Ministry of Education, which is assisted by ANECA and the Higher Council for Artistic Education (CSEA) for their accreditation, if applicable.

The EE.AA.SS. centres can host doctoral studies if they are offered in agreement with a university (*RD 631/2010, Article 2*) since, as they are not universities, their research capacity is not recognised. We will go into this aspect in more detail when we address the profile of the teaching staff.

Table 1 describes the undergraduate specialisations, postgraduate studies and own degrees offered by the three centres studied. The centre with the greatest autonomy offers the greatest number of undergraduate specialisations, postgraduate and other studies.

³ <https://srv.aneca.es/ListadoTitulos/>

Table 1. Educational offer of the centres studied

	ESMUC	CSMMC of Seville	CSM of Vigo
Undergraduate specialisations	Composition	Composition	Composition
	Musicology	Musicology	Musicology
	Choir and Orchestra Conducting	Choir Direction	
	Production and management		Production and management
	Sonology		
	Interpretation	Interpretation	Interpretation
	Classical and contemporary	Classical and contemporary	Classical and contemporary
	Early Music	Early Music	Early Music
	Jazz	Jazz	
	Modern music		
	Traditional music		Traditional music
	Pedagogy		Pedagogy
	Basic musical training		Basic musical training
Instrument pedagogy			
Official Masters	4 of Interpretation		1 with 3 lines [To be verified by ACSUG].
	Classical and contemporary		Creation
	Jazz		Research
	Lied		Interpretation
	Flamenco		
	1 research		
	1 of Flamencology (online)		
	2 with universities (UB and UAB)		
Own Master's Degrees	7 own master's degrees (2 online)		
Postgraduate courses	1 with the <i>Institut del Teatre</i>		
Other studies	Continuous training		
	Extension courses		
	ESMUC Juniors		
Approval of own degrees	Board of Trustees of the Foundation	It has no qualifications of its own	It has no qualifications of its own

3.1.2. Dual assessment

Two of the centres studied (ESMUC and Vigo) have implemented the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) and are therefore evaluated by both the university quality agencies and the education inspectorate.

In the light of public information from the 24 Spanish public institutions, 8% of the institutions offering bachelor's degrees have IACS and 60% of the institutions offering master's degrees have IACS.

3.1.3. Student admission process

Admission of students takes place in a different way at the university and at the higher education institutions. In both cases, the Bachillerato diploma is required, but the admission tests are different. In the first case, the General Conference on University Policy establishes the basic rules for admission, respecting the principles of equality, merit and ability, which are specified in *RD 412/2014*. In the case of the EE.AA.SS. In the case of the Autonomous Communities, a specific test is held for each speciality, which is regulated by each autonomous community in accordance with the provisions of *RD 631/2010* and which assesses maturity, knowledge and aptitudes. The criteria are different and so are the processes.

3.1.4. Selection of teaching staff

The teaching staff of the SS.A.S. or the teaching and research staff of the university system are entrusted with different responsibilities according to the definition of their own profile (either teaching or teaching-research).

Despite the mandate of the law, "higher arts education institutions shall promote research programmes in the field of their own disciplines" (LOE, *Article 58.6*, p. 17177); but only one of the three institutions studied (ESMUC) has created and developed research groups recognised by the corresponding research agency (AGAUR, in the case of Catalonia). Despite this, neither the recruitment processes contain research as a requirement (only as a merit), nor have any obligations, incentives or systematic reduction of teaching been established for the development of research.

The selection processes respond to the way in which each institution is managed. The centres studied have different legal forms and, therefore, the recruitment of teaching staff is also different. While the CSMMC in Seville and the CSM in Vigo recruit their teaching staff through selection processes organised by the corresponding Regional Ministry of Education, ESMUC has its own personnel policy described in its Internal Quality Assurance System (SIGQ).

3.1.5. University agreements

Article 58.5 of the LOMLOE establishes that the educational administrations shall promote agreements with the universities for the organisation of doctoral studies in the Autonomous Regions. Once again, the lack of autonomy of the centres should be highlighted. None of the three centres studied has an alliance with a university for doctoral studies, as other higher education institutions do (for example, the Royal Conservatoire of Music in Madrid with the Polytechnic University). However, we observe a new difference in the capacity to act related to the form of management: while ESMUC has developed agreements with two Catalan universities to offer shared official Master's degrees, the other two centres are not autonomous in establishing alliances with the university, but have to do so with their respective Education Departments.

3.2. Research

Both the LOU and its update in 2007 and the preliminary drafts of the *Organic Law of the University System* (LOSU) define research and knowledge transfer as a fundamental dimension of the university system. The LOSU establishes that the university will dedicate 5% of its budget to research programmes. To make this commitment possible, teaching staff have, as mentioned above, a dual status of teaching and research staff and their evaluation takes into account this contribution in terms of research. Quality agencies assess university teaching and research staff and their contribution to scientific, technological and artistic development (ANECA, 2007) (AQU, 2014).

In the case of the centres of EE.AA.SS. Despite the fact that *RD 631/2010* establishes that "the centres will promote scientific and technical research programmes and that the regional administrations will establish the appropriate mechanisms so that the centres can carry out or support research that allows them to integrate into the Spanish Science and Technology System" (*Article 2.3*, p. 48482), these programmes have never been developed. The educational administration is not competent in matters of research, so the centres that depend on it, the EE.AA.SS. centres, have been systematically left out of its programmes. have been systematically left out of its scope.

The detection of the profile and management of higher education teaching staff is decisive for the research dimension of higher education institutions. This has been pointed out by Zaldívar (2005), Grau (2018) and Vieites (2020).

3.2.1 Teaching staff versus teaching and research staff

Three aspects have been selected to observe the difference between teaching staff and teaching and research staff: prior accreditation, dedication to teaching and research and research-related incentives.

University teaching and research staff are subject to prior accreditation requirements by the corresponding quality agency, which are mainly based on their research experience; staff in higher education institutions are not. So far, no Autonomous Community has developed accreditation processes for higher education staff. Catalonia is exploring a process of defining an eventual accreditation process for teaching staff in the EHEA, driven by the Department of Education, the institutions and the quality agency (AQU-Catalonia).

In terms of dedication to teaching, university staff are assigned a certain number of ECTS credits to teach, which may mean less than ten hours of weekly contact with students, deductible for research workloads derived from their position or management workloads; teaching staff in the EHEA have a teaching load comparable to that of secondary school teachers, with some nuances: CSM in Vigo and CSMMC in Seville have 18 contact hours. The ESMUC assigns teaching depending on the type of subjects: 11 contact hours plus 6 hours of attention to students in the subjects of creation, thought, applied techniques and ensembles that require previous adaptations; 14 contact hours plus 3 hours of attention in individual subjects and instrumental or vocal ensembles.

As far as research incentives are concerned, university staff salaries are linked to individual merits in terms of teaching activity and dedication, research, technological development, knowledge transfer and management, as assessed by the corresponding quality agencies. None of the three higher education institutions studied establishes this link.

3.2.2 Doctoral studies and staff requirements

University and EHEA degrees correspond to the same MECES level 2, but have different requirements in terms of the profile of the teaching staff. For university degrees, 50% of the teaching staff must hold a doctorate, and for degrees in Higher Education there is no requirement at all. As for Master's degrees, MECES 3 for both studies, the university degrees have a requirement of 70% doctoral staff and the EHEAs have a requirement of 15%.

In spite of this diversity of requirements, the three higher education institutions studied have doctoral teaching staff to a greater extent than their requirement for Master's degrees: CSM Vigo and ESMUC (with a Master's programme) have 30% and 27%, respectively, and CSMMC in Seville (without a Master's programme) 17.5%. Table 2 illustrates these percentages and details the number of teaching staff:

Table 2. Teaching staff with doctoral studies and percentage of hours taught in the centres studied.

	ESMUC		CSMMC of Seville		CSM of Vigo	
	Teaching staff	Teaching hours	Teaching staff	Teaching hours	Teaching staff	Teaching hours
PhD	40	27%	25	17,50%	21	30%
Doctorate in progress		7%	0	0	0	0
Master's degree access to doctorate		16%	95	65%	44	65%
No official master's degree		50%	25	17,50%		5%
Total teaching staff	230	100%	145	100,00%	69	100%

3.2.3 Promotion of research in the centres of EE.AA.SS.

The two higher education institutions studied which are managed directly by their Education Departments, despite having high percentages of doctorate teachers, have not developed policies to encourage research.

The only centre with management autonomy (ESMUC) has developed measures to promote research: in 2014, the establishment of research groups was encouraged 2014 SGR 1382 of *Research and musical creation* (with renewed recognition in the following call 2017 SGR 788); recently, research has been included as one of its objectives and activities in the new statutes of the Foundation approved in May 2021 and, also recently, the position of Head of Research, Quality and Innovation (included in the management structure) has been created in 2021.

3.3 Equity

Passing the entrance exam to Higher Music Education requires prior preparation through Special Regime educational structures. This particularity, in an environment of low implementation of music education in comparison with EU countries (EMU, 2022), sociologically defines a student profile: it favours those who have enjoyed family accompaniment and excludes students who have not had access to this prior preparation.

The under-representation of social diversity in specialised music education is one of the issues addressed in relation to forms of teaching and learning (Richerme, 2021), schooled music's (Bates, 2017) and arts education policies (Bates, 2021) as well as the under-representation of teachers with diverse social backgrounds (Hess, 2017).

In addition to these system-wide factors of inequality, there are others that are unique to Higher Education, which are described below.

3.3.1 Scholarships

The Secretary of State for Education publishes an annual resolution announcing grants for the entire university and non-university education system. This resolution implements the regulations of two Royal Decrees: *RD 1721/2007* and *RD 688/2020*. University students have access to the enrolment grant (a subsidy of the total amount of the price of the credit of the public university of the corresponding autonomous community), while students in the higher education system only have access to the basic grant (from €300 to €350).

The impact of this inequality in the centres studied is quite clear: the basic grant covers 81.3% of the cost of studies at CSMMC in Seville, 74.78% at CSM in Vigo and 21.08% at ESMUC. Table 3 illustrates this coverage while comparing the public prices of the centres studied with the universities in the same city.

Table 3. Coverage of grants to the EE.AA.SS. centres studied (academic year 2021-2022)

	Barcelona		Seville		Vigo	
University	27,67 €	1.660 €	12,68 €	760 €	13,93	835 €
Conservatory / public high school	27,67 €	1.660 €	7,17 €	430 €	7,80 €	468 €
Coverage of scholarships for conservatories / public high schools	21,08%		81,30%		74,78%	

In relation to international mobility grants, all students have access to the Erasmus+ grants offered by the Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of Studies (SEPIE). In some cases, university students also have access to a grant that supplements the Erasmus+ grants offered by their autonomous community. Galicia and Andalusia include EE.AA.SS. students in this supplement, but Catalonia does not. However, the Generalist of Catalonia offers a third grant, the *Beques Equitat*, which is specifically applicable to university studies.

It should be noted that the international mobility grants promoted by the EU provide equal treatment between the two types of university studies and Higher Education Institutions.

3.3.2 Territorial distribution

The territorial distribution of university studies is greater than that of the Autonomous Regions. Andalusia has a public university in each province and only 5 higher conservatories in Seville, Malaga, Cordoba, Granada and Jaen. Galicia has 3 public universities, spread over several campuses (Santiago de Compostela, 2 campuses; Vigo 3 campuses and Coruña 2 campuses), and two higher conservatories. Catalonia, although it has an extensive public university system with universities in each province, concentrates both public and private provision of higher education. -Music in Barcelona. This asymmetry is another factor of inequality with greater impact in Catalonia.

3.4 European perspective

In this comparison between the university system and the SS.A.S., it is essential to look at the countries around us. In this comparison between the university system and the Spanish Higher Education Area, it is essential to look at the countries around us. While the study by Grau (2018) analyses the 260 centres that make up the *European League of Institutes of Arts* (ELIA), of which 90 are in music, this study categorises the 256 AEC member centres, which illustrate the development of higher music education institutions in terms of *academisation* (Gies, 2019). The AEC centres are 179 colleges or conservatories, 60 universities and 17 institutes. This categorisation exhibits two traditions (Southern and North-Central European) and two developments (conservatoires and universities).

France, Italy and Spain continue to segregate EHEA-Music institutions from the university system (they offer bachelor and master studies and only offer doctorates through university agreements). -Music from the university system (they offer bachelor and master studies and only implement doctoral studies through agreements with the university). The importance of research in the conservatoires of Paris and Lyon, which develop doctoral studies in alliance with the university, should be highlighted.

Central European countries are developing a gradual process of transforming their music colleges into university centres. Germany with one centre for every 3 million inhabitants, the Netherlands for every 2 million and Austria, highly decentralised and fully university-based, for every million.

In the Nordic countries, different models coexist: all institutions in Finland are universities and none in Denmark. In Sweden and Norway, we find independent institutions, Universities of the Arts and Faculties of Arts in generalist universities. Regardless of their insertion in the university system, all institutions exhibit a high research orientation, especially in artistic research. In terms of territorial distribution, Denmark has one centre for every 1.3 million inhabitants, Sweden for every million, Finland for every 687,000 inhabitants and Norway for every 500,000 inhabitants.

4. Discussion, proposals and conclusions

The article has presented the factors of inequality suffered by the students, teaching staff and the EE. -Music compared to the same agents in the Spanish university system. These factors of inequality have their origin in the lack of institutional autonomy, the lack of incorporation of research in the profile of the teaching staff and the inequality of the student body in terms of access to and development of these studies with respect to their university counterparts. Two types of institutions (EHEA and university) offer degrees at the same MECES level 2 and 3. Interestingly, only the EU recognises their full membership of the EHEA, as only the Erasmus+ grants are equal for both types of students.

Given that competences in education are transferred to the Autonomous Regions, three centres have been studied (ESMUC, Barcelona, CSM, Vigo and CSMMC, Seville) and the inequalities mentioned are comparable.

The article is written at a decisive moment: on the one hand, the LOMLOE commits the State Government to present a regulatory proposal for the EE.AA.SS. before December 2022 and, at the same time, the drafting of a new law regulating the university system is underway. Thus, a window of opportunity is opening up to resolve the inequalities described above.

One of the central questions of the discussion is how to overcome the inequality of rights without jeopardising the uniqueness of the Arts and, in particular, of music teaching. The article has not addressed the difference between university ratios (1/25, *RD 640/2021, Article 7.4*) and the ratios of teaching in performance and composition (internationally recognised as individual and still so in the international centres that have become universities) because it was not the object of study. The article suggests that the insertion of the EE.AA.SS. into the university system would resolve all the factors of inequality. Some of the critical aspects regarding the integration of the EHEAs into the university are:

- The need to generalise the implementation of the IACS (such as the CSM of Vigo and the ESMUC) in all the centres, in parallel with the legal personality.
- Entrance tests that combine the general university entrance tests with the appropriate specific test that meets the needs of aptitude detection.
- The duplication of studies: Musicology and Sonology in the case of Music, but also other subjects in the plastic arts, design and conservation. In addition to this duplication, there is another critical aspect in the case of plastic arts and design: the coexistence of MECES 1 in the same centre and teaching staff.
- The transformation of teaching staff into teaching and research staff through a system of incentives to stimulate an increase in the percentage of PhDs, a research policy (through the constitution of research groups), accreditation adapted to the need to attract professionals without PhDs who maintain the link with the interpretive professionalism, the modification of student contact hours to bring them closer to the university profile -evaluating and planning the increase in the necessary budget allocation-, the homologation of doctorates in the Arts obtained in the Anglo-Saxon context and the incorporation of artistic research despite not being recognised in the Frascati Manual (OECD, 2015).
- The need to guarantee equity by including students from the E.A.SS. in enrolment grants and in those complemented by the Autonomous Regions through an increase in the budget allocation, as well as by deploying inclusive policies in Arts Education

from an early age throughout the territory in order to generate greater social diversity in access to the E.A.SS.

- The preliminary draft of the LOSU does not explicitly prevent the creation of sectorial universities, but it is made more difficult by *RD 640/2021*, which requires universities to offer three of the four main branches of knowledge. In order to promote universities of the Arts, the LOSU should include this possibility while determining the conditions for the gradual integration of the Arts into the university system in terms of ratios and material conditions for teaching, accreditation of teaching and research staff. In turn, the regulations governing Artistic Education, insofar as they must also regulate Professional Education, must also determine that the Arts should form part of the university system.

Having analysed the main aspects related to the capacity of the centres and the administration to deal with them, the adequacy of the legislation and the added value that would be involved in the insertion of the EHEAs in the university system, it remains to be defined whether this incorporation should be channelled through University Faculties or Universities of the Arts. Zaldívar (2005) appeals to the cultural and territorial plurality of the State, which should be the one to choose between the available options with the necessary asymmetry to provide the appropriate local response. This decision by the Autonomous Regions should take into account the duplication of studies, the needs of territorial deployment (as in the case of Austria) and the necessary increase in places to correspond to the standards of the other fields of knowledge of the university system.

Several agents can facilitate the transformation: ACESEA can return to the proactivity it exhibited until 2010; the Higher Council for Artistic Education (CSEA) can define the needs for an increase in artistic education throughout the territory that will bring Spain closer to European standards; the educational centres can promote research that favours their growth in relation to their forms of teaching and learning and to the generation and transfer of new knowledge. In this way, facing the tension between social commitment and artistic excellence (Gaunt *et al.*, 2021), the dimensions of the curriculum in terms of the place of research in the content (Healey, 2005), as well as the need to overcome the sociological bias (Bull, 2019), will guarantee an optimal level of equity not only in terms of access to these studies, but also in terms of their development.

Future research could assess the impact of the proposed transformation on equity, artistic production or knowledge transfer.

For all the conclusions that have been reached to become a reality, policy change is required; however, it would be naïve to think that the transformation will reside only in (new) legislation. It will only provide the legal framework from which to deploy public policies. This article defines the problem, sets out the critical issues and presents alternatives that follow the path traced by European countries. Now is the time to guarantee a system that promotes the transfer of artistic knowledge, necessary to ensure a transformation of the entire sector, which contributes to placing it at the level of training it deserves and requires in order to achieve the social and professional recognition that it has so far been denied in our context.

Note: this text is an automatic translation from Spanish to English. Some errors may have crept into this translation. We apologise for this.

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