



Excellent peripheries for a strong
European Research Area

D1.3 European Universities Best practices catalogue

Grant Agreement n°. 101071329



Funded by
the European Union

Version History			
Ver.	Date	Comments/Changes	Authors
0.1	19/09/2023	First version sent to the SC for review	Michelle Perello, Víctor Ricardo Martínez, Ómar González
1.0	28/09/2023	Deliverable submitted to the EC	Michelle Perello, Víctor Ricardo Martínez, Ómar González

Deliverable information		
Project Acronym	EXPER	
Project Title	Excellent peripheries for a strong European Research Area	
Type of action	HORIZON Coordination and Support Actions	
Topic	HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05-01	
Call	HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05	
Granting authority	European Research Executive Agency	
Project Start Date	01/10/2022	
Project end date	31/03/2025	
Project duration	30 months	
Work Package	WP1 – Regional ecosystems assessment and cooperation models	
Deliverable	D1.3 European Universities Best practices catalogue	
Due Date	30/09/2023	
Submission date	28/09/2023	
Dissemination Level	PUB - Public	
Responsible	Consulta Europa (CE)	
Version	1	
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Acronyms & Abbreviations

D	Deliverable
DoA	Description of the Action
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUA	European Universities Alliance
EUI	European Universities Initiative
GA	Grant Agreement
HEI	Higher Education Institution
R&I	Research & Innovation
PC	Project Coordinator
PO	Project Officer
SC	Steering Committee
WP	Work Package

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The European University Alliances (EUA) Best Practices Catalogue presents a comprehensive overview of valuable insights derived from existing EUA, focusing on the integration of research, innovation, education, and training dimensions.

Under Task 1.5, coordinated by Consulta Europa (CE), the consortium collected and analysed data to identify best practices from funded EUAs. This selection was based on the needs, challenges, and opportunities outlined in Task 1.1's assessment. These findings are intended to inform the development of the EXPER strategy and facilitate the creation of new EUAs.

This deliverable's primary objective is to pinpoint replicable and adaptable best practices from existing alliances for integration into the modernization strategies of the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC) and the University of the Azores (UAC). Initial efforts involved compiling a comprehensive list of existing alliances and their contact information. The study drew upon document analysis and online interviews, which included European Commission communications, Council of the European Union and European Council resolutions, studies on the European Universities Initiative and Alliances, mission statements, and alliances' web content.

This deliverable, labelled Deliverable 1.3, is an integral part of Task 1.5, which involves collecting good practices through desk research and interviews. The selected practices align with the assessment tasks' identified needs, challenges, and opportunities, supporting the EXPER strategy's development and the preparation of a long-term EXPER European University Alliance project. Ongoing EUAs' cooperation models have been analysed, and interviews with EUA's project partners were conducted to explore potential replication of these models. A public workshop at M12 facilitated networking among EXPER project representatives and other European universities.

The workshop harmonises with Task 6.4's goal of establishing a forum for peripheral universities. This task entails mapping and engaging with peripheral universities in Widening and other European countries. It aimed to exchange information on challenges, obstacles, and best practices related to higher education institution modernization, research excellence, international cooperation, regional knowledge, and innovation-based development. The forum can now serve as a platform to identify potential partners for a broader EUA encompassing other peripheral universities.

2. INTRODUCTION

The EXPER project aims at supporting the institutional transformation of ULPGC and UAC through capacity-building activities and through international cooperation with the leading universities of the project University of Rostock in Germany and the University of Calabria in Italy.

The project aims at the same time at setting the basis for a European University Alliance that realises an integrated cooperation between the research and innovation dimension and the education and training dimension. During the project implementation, the ULPGC has been invited to join an existing alliance, the ERUA (European Reform University Alliance). Despite this having affected one of the final expected outcomes of the project, both the ULPGC and the UAC can learn from the experiences of the existing European Alliances and draw inspiration from specific practices and structures that can be included in their modernization strategy.

For this reason, under task 1.5, the consortium, Consulta Europa, has been collecting information and analysing the good practices of the funded EUAs currently in place. A selection of good practices has been performed based on the needs, challenges, and opportunities identified in the assessment performed under Task 1.1 of the project. The result of this analysis on Good Practices, presented in this deliverable, will serve to feed the development of the EXPER strategy and support the preparation of new European university alliances.

3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to identify good practices among the existing university alliances that could be replicated or embedded in the modernization strategy of ULPGC and the UAC. Initially, the whole list of existing alliances has been compiled along with their webpage and contact details (see Annex 1).

Document analysis and online interviews were the two key sources of evidence used in this study. The document analysis included communications from the European Commission, conclusions and resolutions from the Council of the European Union and European Council, studies and papers on the European Universities Initiative and EUAs, the mission statements of the alliances, as well as other information included in the Alliances webpages.

The document analysis informed an understanding of the policy, legal, and institutional frameworks guiding the European Universities Initiative and shed light on the objectives of each alliance, the governance, and the activities implemented.

The information collected and analysed through the desk research has been summarised in **Chapters 6, 7 and 8**.

The objective of the analysis was to identify good practices relevant to the specific needs identified in the assessment of the two widening universities performed in Task 1.2.

Within the framework of the EXPER project, the main objective of work package one (WP1. Regional ecosystems assessment and cooperation models) has been to assess the regional ecosystems of the HEI widening partners (ULPGC and UAC) to identify barriers at the institutional, regional, and national levels that could hamper HEIs' potential role as drivers of regional development and competitiveness.

As described in Task 1.1 Methodology for Assessment and Task 1.2 Widening Universities Assessment of the Project, this assessment should identify challenges and opportunities for cooperation between widening universities and their ecosystems. Through the common methodology implemented in Task 1.1, an internal assessment of UAC and ULPGC has been accomplished, involving internal members of each organisation with the aim of understanding in depth the strengths, weaknesses, and operational capabilities of both universities in terms of scientific excellence, talent attraction and retention, and knowledge and technology transfer.

In addition, the feedback provided by stakeholders to the universities has been integrated into this work, which was obtained by conducting interviews with these external agents.

In general terms, the assessment highlighted the lack of a unified strategy aimed at optimising the resources of the institution and its environment in order to reach common objectives such as advancing impactful research, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, or engaging with local communities. The analysis also highlighted a general lack of effective internal communication systems, which hampers cooperation between departments and the alignment of actions undertaken with the institution's objectives.

On the other hand, the lack of financial resources is another of the difficulties identified in both institutions, so an improvement in the available resources would favour the support of research, digital transformation, and infrastructure development.

It is also worth highlighting the difficulty that both the UAC and the ULPGC have in recruiting and attracting talent, a difficulty that is mainly linked to the lack of conditions for staff career development, uncompetitive salaries, or competition with other prominent universities.

Finally, the interviews held with diverse stakeholders in both archipelagos, the Azores and

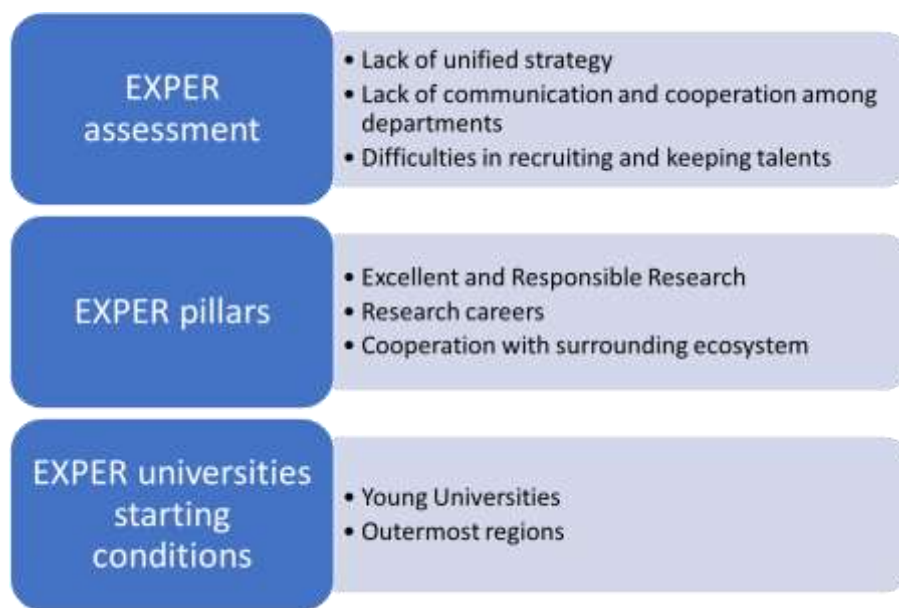
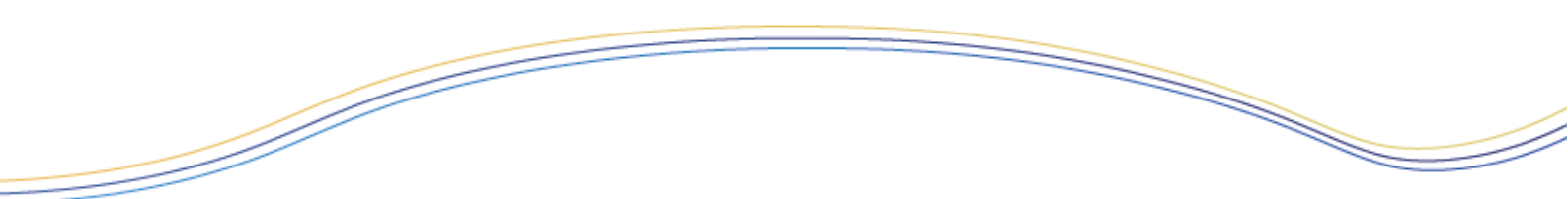


Figure 1. Criteria for selection of good practices

the Canary Islands, suggested that both universities share the need to improve collaboration and communication with stakeholders in their respective ecosystems and also to work on the optimisation of bureaucratic procedures and general management issues.



The analysis of good practices of European University Alliances has thus been framed, focusing on one side on the needs and shortcomings highlighted by the report, the objectives of EXPER on one side, and the starting conditions of the EXPER Widening organisations as illustrated in the graph above. Since the Widening Universities of EXPER are younger universities suffering from disadvantages due to their ultraperipheral conditions, it has been considered relevant to identify good practices from Universities Alliances where at least some members would experience the same conditions.

Out of the good practices identified from **Chapter 4** onwards, five have been selected to be presented in an online workshop that was held on September 20th, 2023 under the Forum of Peripheral Universities from Task 6.4.

Prior to the realisation of the workshop, online interviews have been held with the representatives of the good practices (project coordinators or project managers) to deepen the information collected through the document analysis and identify other relevant practices or aspects of the alliances to be included in the study.

Finally, the workshop allowed us to identify key successful elements of European university alliances. The conclusion of the workshop is available in **Chapter 10**.

4. THE CONCEPT OF EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCES

European university alliances are a novel phenomenon that builds on a long-standing idea of creating university networks within Europe. The European Universities Initiative (EUI) is a flagship initiative of the European strategy for universities that sets the ambition to support 60 European universities involving more than 500 higher education institutions by mid-2024. EUI builds on the Bologna Process and Lisbon strategy to develop 'unprecedented levels of institutionalised cooperation, making it systemic, structural, and sustainable' (European Commission, 2020a).

The purpose of the first pilot phase of the EUI was to support the establishment of alliances to 'test different innovative and structural models' (European Commission, 2018b) and pave the way for the future of higher education in the European Union. These transnational alliances are to serve as role models for higher education institutions in the EU for years, with the ambitious objective of formalising the existence of European universities by 2025 (European Commission, 2020b).

With four overall calls launched in 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2023 to support the establishment of new alliances and the expansion of existing ones, there are nowadays 50 European universities involving more than 430 higher education institutions in both capital cities and remote regions of 35 countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, the Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, and Turkey, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.

The European Universities are able to be change agents and bring innovation to Europe's regions by collaborating with around 1,700 linked partners ranging from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), corporations, cities, and local and regional governments.

An overview of the 50 European University Alliances and their composition is enclosed in Annex 1.

5. BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF TRANSNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Universities have been collaborating for some decades, and transnational collaboration has proven to provide many advantages. As reported in the study committed by the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education¹, in comparison to national partnerships or no partnerships at all, the ten most frequently cited advantages of transnational partnerships among higher education institutions are according to a study: improved internationalisation, improved student skills, improved and diversified educational offerings, increased staff mobility, improved student employability, increased numbers of foreign students, an increased level of scientific excellence, more interdisciplinary research, and improved capacity of teaching staff.

Even if these benefits have been identified by stakeholders involved in the study, other researchers have pointed out "positive links between transnational cooperation in higher education and various economic and non-economic benefits (Craciun and Orosz, 2018).

Figure 2, presents the results of a systemic literature review conducted by Craciun and Orosz.

Regional/national benefits	Institutional benefits	Individual benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and better patents • Economies of scale • Positive attitudes towards open borders and democracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened research and teaching capacity • More and better scientific output • Attractiveness to foreign academics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher likelihood of employment at home and abroad • Better foreign language proficiency • Increased mobility • More and better publications

Figure 2. Benefits of transnational cooperation from Craciun and Orosz

Also, the 2021 release of U-Multirank² confirms the importance of transnational collaboration among Universities, highlighting how those universities that have

¹ University of Twente-CHEPS, Daniela CRACIUN, Frans KAISER, Andrea KOTTMANN, Barend van der MEULEN , The European Universities Initiative: first lessons, main challenges and perspectives, 2023

² U-Multirank is a multidimensional, user-driven approach to the international ranking of higher education institutions. It compares the performances of higher education institutions – in short: universities – in the five dimensions of university activity: (1) teaching and learning, (2) research, (3) knowledge transfer, (4) international orientation and (5) regional engagement. The U-Multirank web tool enables comparisons at the level of the university as a whole and at the level of specific

established such institutional cooperation outperform those that have not. International cooperation has favourable effects on numerous performance aspects, such as:

- 🌐 On-time graduation rates, which are as high as 82% for MA students in highly collaborative HEIs and 73% for other HEIs;
- 🌐 Research production is measured by the size-normalized publication output of highly competitive HEIs, which is approximately twice that of other HEIs;
- 🌐 Graduates starting businesses are indicated by 32 enterprises per 1000 graduates at highly cooperative HEIs, compared to 17 per 1000 graduates at other HEIs.

Despite the evidence of benefits generated by establishing and participating in transnational partnerships, HEIs encounter significant difficulties and obstacles to collaboration, mostly related to governance, funding, and policy (Craciun and Orosz, 2018). International partnerships frequently lack long-term funding, face administrative and legal challenges, struggle with complex funding instruments, lack the resources to respond to numerous calls annually and provide incentives for the university staff involved, lack common accreditation standards, struggle with working with various academic calendars, or support student visas in comparison to national partnerships (Karvounaraki, Subramaniam et al., 2018).

Qualitative investigations indicate that some significant issues would still exist even if the obstacles related to funding and policy were resolved or abolished by adequate policy instruments or interventions. Building symmetrical connections between partners and resolving divergent points of view regarding the objectives, pedagogy, and quality of higher education in a way that results in the best possible outcomes for all parties are the main problems, according to Craciun and Orosz (2018). The European Universities Initiative's structure has the potential to overcome these difficulties because it requires partners to propose a joint long-term strategy for the alliance as part of the application criteria (encouraging alliance members to negotiate different viewpoints in advance) and provides external funding to potentially set up symmetric relationships between members (avoiding a dynamic where some alliance members are funders and others are funded).

However, governance is also a key challenge faced by EUAs that threatens their long-term sustainability, as indicated in the report committed by the European Parliament. For this reason, the present study has devoted special attention to understanding how governance is organised within the Alliance and identifying good practices to be replicated by future alliances.



study programmes. Based on empirical data, U-Multirank compares institutions with similar institutional profiles ('like-with-like') and allows users to develop their own personalised rankings by selecting indicators in terms of their own preferences.

6. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

EUAs have been described as 'format builders' and expected to innovate their traditional governance structures beyond the project management infrastructure that is needed for the three-year pilot phase of the project (Estermann, Bennetot Pruvot and Stoyanova, 2021³). Due to the freedom of developing fit-for-purpose governance arrangements in a bottom-up way, complex governance structures have emerged (Gunnarson and Swartz, 2021; Estermann, Bennetot Pruvot and Stoyanova, 2021; Charret and Chankseliani, 2022).

On the other side, the COVID-19 pandemic's obligations obliged universities to modify their cooperation plans and governance structures (European Commission, 2020). For instance, this has necessitated the formation of alliances to hasten the creation of infrastructure for virtual mobility and the pooling of educational resources among alliance members (European Commission, 2020; Ivanciu et al., 2021).

Organisational structures and governance are dynamic and differ from alliance to alliance. The governance structure of the 50 alliances observed can be grouped into the following two generic types:

-  Consensus model, where decisions are taken by agreement of all or most members of the alliance and agreements are reached through discussion, which ensures that each partner feels ownership of and responsibility for decisions;
-  Top-down model where the governing board, followed by the management committee or team, is coupled with the secretariat, and finally the project officers below. In this model, the secretary general is the central component of the governance structure around which the rest is organised. Above the Secretary General is the Governing Board, composed of rectors or vicerectors of the university members, which sets the policies of the alliance and develops the strategic orientations. Below, the management committee is meant to be an operational body.

The involvement of students in governance emerged as one of the key differences between the governance structures of the alliances. Associating students was considered by some of the alliance interviews to be one of the most challenging parts due to the different traditions of student involvement in the HEIs making up the alliance. The degree and modalities of student involvement in the decision-making of the alliance vary significantly across the alliances. In a few

³ Estermann, Bennetot Pruvot and Stoyanova, European University Association, The governance models of the European University Alliances - Evolving models of university governance, 2021

cases, the student board was included in the governance structure (for instance, in the case of EUGLOH). Also, official inclusion does not entail the real capacity to influence the governance process.

The governing bodies created in accordance with the Erasmus+ call project logic can be distinguished from European universities' ambitious long-term vision, which aims to develop improved and sustainable cooperation at multiple levels. Most coalitions use a step-by-step approach, experimenting with various contexts, organisational setups, and operational models while searching for a long-term solution beyond the EUI project's three-year time frame.

Independently of the type of governance model (consensus vs. top-down), three levels of governance can be observed in most alliances, as described in the study of the European University Association: 1) Strategic development and oversight 2) Steering and coordination 3) Management and implementation A fourth element was, in some cases, foreseen to involve students, external experts, or other stakeholders.

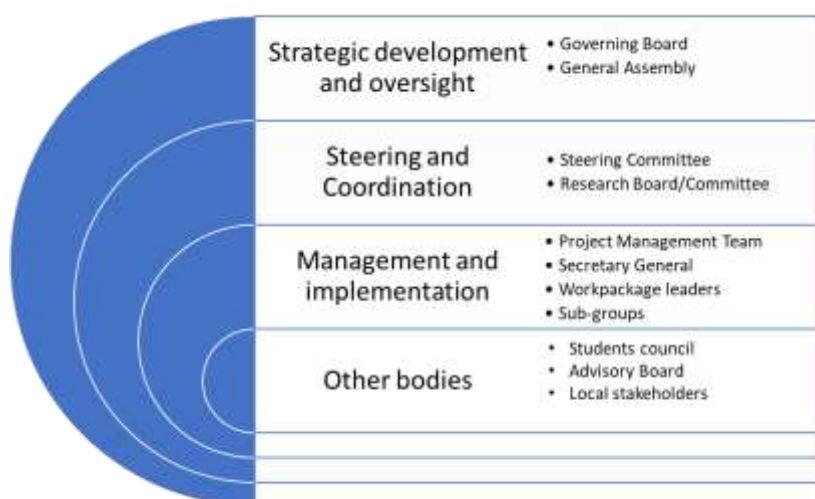


Figure 3. EUAs governance structure - own elaboration based on European University Association study and literature review

A long-term strategic development and oversight committee that is in charge of creating the overarching policy, long-term strategies, and policy priorities is often included in the governance structure, while a steering and coordinating group is more focused on making progress. Because governing organisations frequently have responsibilities relating to both while focusing on one of the two, it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between the two. On the other side, for those alliances that received funding under Horizon 2020, Swafs called for an

additional body to define the joint research strategy of the alliance and plan collaborative activities on research and innovation.

The daily management of the alliance and project execution are frequently handled by a designated management team or a Secretary General. The management team and secretary general usually interact with several working groups and, depending on the complexity of the activities foreseen, with sub-working groups.

Despite this complexity, experts asserted that the initial governance models created by alliances did not satisfactorily incorporate the involvement of staff and students. They contend that it is only now, as a result of intervention by the European Commission, that the majority of governance models have become more democratic and incorporate staff and student representatives. Typically, student representatives have advisory roles in government systems. These bodies seldom have voting privileges. When students become aware of how student engagement is structured in various institutions and nations, this participation offers many learning possibilities for them.

The bottom-up approach to developing a governance structure for transnational collaboration is considered a good one by most EUAs since it creates ownership of the alliances among member institutions. Experts did, however, highlight a few crucial factors about governance-related difficulties. One of those is the creation of governance models following a project logic instead of an institutional logic capable of realising the long-term alliance ambition. According to the authors of the present study, this is due on one side to the fact that Alliance was created in response to a call for proposals and has been conceived since the beginning following a project management approach. On the other side, the continuous search for funding to sustain their activities and their sustainability leads Alliance to perpetuate the project logic instead of the long-term vision. Given the current situation, it is necessary to strike a compromise between the competing logics of alliance sustainability and governance complexity. Alliances are conscious of the fact that "a sound governance structure is the key success factor for a functioning institution" (Feiel et al., 2021, not paged).

Based on the challenges identified and the practices observed, the authorities have selected three cases as good practices: **EURECA-PRO**, **CHARM-EU**, and **FORTHEM**.

To balance sustainability and complexity, some alliances like EURECA-PRO have proceeded to develop both short-term and long-term governance structures: 'The long-term plan foresees a four-phase development plan until 2040, when the

vision is complete, intertwining all participating institutions to become a supra-institution' (Feiel et al., 2021, not paged).

The importance of governance is highly recognised by most alliances. Some of those, such as CHARM-EU, have developed guidance documents supporting not only their members but also other HEIs willing to establish or participate in a future alliance.

The FORTHEM project has put into practice one of the recommendations of CHARM-EU: introducing a rotatory approach to their strategic boards and delegating, on a rotatory basis, to members of the Alliance a governing role, as in the case of the FORTHEM project.

EURECA-PRO

The EURECA-PRO Alliance consists of Montanuniversität Leoben (Austria), Technische Universität Bergakademie Freiberg (Germany), Technical University of Crete (Greece), Universidad de León (Spain), Silesian University of Technology (Poland), University of Petrosani (Romania), University of Applied Sciences Mittweida (Germany), Hasselt University (Belgium), and the University of Lorraine (France).

These nine partners joined forces to enable students and staff to study, teach, and research in the field of responsible consumption and production, with the long-term goal of a joint virtual and integrated European campus until 2040.

To make EURECA-PRO inclusive, authentic, and pertinent, external stakeholders such as students, society, business, and others are included in the development of the governance and administration structures as well as of the bodies responsible for the production of contents.

First, a project management board—a framework for coordinating projects—is developed. It makes sure that the project is carried out properly, that the roles and duties are assigned, that there is internal and external communication, that the deliverables are reported on and documented, that meeting times are set, and that the budget and timetable are controlled.

Since EURECA-PRO also has a research "sister" project funded under H2020, a Research Task Force has been appointed as the coordinator of an interuniversity research partnership. A shared knowledge of the sustainability frameworks used is ensured by multidisciplinary and cross-institutional research teams.

In order to address the evolving demands of EURECA-PRO and maintain the alliance's long-term survival, a 4-stage governance system will be in place until

2040. It has boards that are pertinent and interaction guidelines. As described by Gorsky and Waligora (2021), the Alliance identifies four crucial turning points between the start of the project's realisation and the creation of a completely independent European university. The implementation of each phase should be aided by specially crafted governance models that enable a smooth transition from total dependency on the founding universities to independence within a predetermined framework.

This developing governance system, which ensures the consortium's long-term viability, is built on four stages:

- Phase I: Establishment of EU Virtual Faculties, 2020–2023 (see Figure 4). In this phase, the consortium created a Project Management Board, supported by the Board of Rectors, and an External Advisory Board, involving representatives of external stakeholders (enterprises, NGOs, authorities, etc.). The bodies responsible for project implementation are the Education Council, supported by the Research Task Force, and a student-centred co-creation group. As an important content activity, during this phase, virtual faculties are created by the members of the Alliance.



Figure 4. EURECA-PRO Governance Phase 1. Source: Gorsky, Waligora, 2021

- Phase II: Introduction to Virtual Administration, 2024–30 (Figure 5), foresees the establishment of self-sealing virtual administrative units responsible for management, finances, recruitment, etc. Governance is additionally supported by a Transversal Skills Council that ensures the integration of these skills all along the way. The project management board will be replaced by an implementation management board.



Figure 5. EURECA-PRO Phase 2 - Source: Gorsky, Waligora, 2021

Phase III: Deep demonstration of structures (2031–2040) Phase III is meant as the period of the creation of stable and self-sustainable virtual administration and student services. The Implementation Management Board will be replaced by the Supervisory Board, which indicates that the real governing entity shall be set independently by EURECA-PRO University, electing its own Rector and running its own policy in terms of financing, infrastructure, students' admission, etc.



Figure 6. EURECA-PRO Project Governance Phase III (Source: Gorsky, Waligora, 2021)

Phase IV: Beyond 2040 (Figure 6) foresees the establishment of a self-sustaining virtual European university with its own joint council and executive board of deans and directors, still linked with

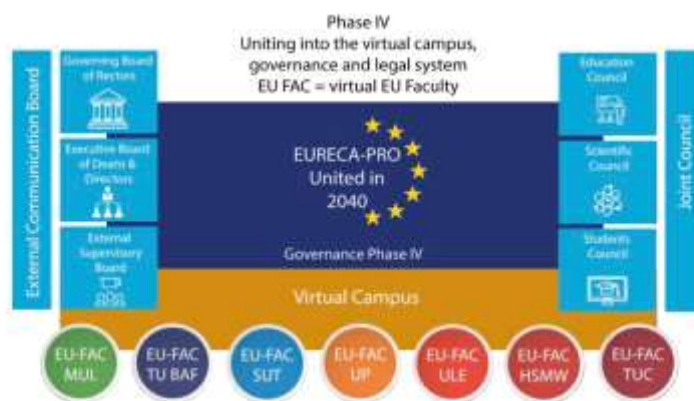


Figure 7. EURECA-PRO Project - Governance Phase IV (Source: Gorsky, Waligora, 2021)

CHARM-EU

The project has published several documents addressing practical and policy aspects of governance. The Handbook on CHARM-EU's governance and management describes in detail the model implemented as the governance of CHARM-EU. The handbook presents the challenges faced by CHARM-EU when thinking about and building shared governance and the solutions and areas of improvement identified by the Governance WP team.

In their White Paper on the Governance of European Universities, the project analyses the legal implications, content, and scope of a possible future model of separate legal entities for European universities and the alliances derived from the European Universities Initiative. Finally, in their deliverable "First steps towards an innovative governance and management model for a new type of alliance: Concepts, challenges, and lessons learned from the higher education sector and beyond", they offer creative suggestions and lessons learned on how other strategic alliances respond to the challenges of governance in a diverse and multicentric environment. The document presents the results of a benchmark in the areas of higher learning, research, and innovation centres on three strategic partnerships (Eucor, U4Society Network, and EIT Health) and formulates six important suggestions to guide the development of CHARM-EU's future governance and management model:

1. Improve the alliance's member institutions' current governance. Although the majority of coalitions favour rotating the presidency among the institutions that make up their membership, it is crucial that such terms are not too brief in order to provide a basic level of continuity. The participation of the members' governing bodies, in addition to political leadership, is essential to provide democratic legitimacy and increase awareness among member institutions.

2. Use a "living strategy" technique. Successful alliances must allow their members to test out novel ideas on a small scale at first and learn from these pilot initiatives. This calls for the ability to specify realistic objectives and transparent oversight procedures. Long-term goals are crucial, but unreachable objectives can cause dissatisfaction and ineffective resource use.
3. Expand on the partners' complementary backgrounds and skill sets. When planning and carrying out collaborative initiatives, unique operational skills and specialised expertise that each partner may bring to the table matter more than geographic or historical identity.
4. Carefully strike a balance between inclusivity and adaptability. For alliance initiatives to be implemented successfully, some degree of flexibility is essential. A strategic alliance's members must not be burdened by it. As a result, not every partner must participate in a project in the same manner.
5. To secure long-term success, put an emphasis on financial stability. Successful strategic alliances cannot solely rely on external money to ensure long-term viability and the commitment of member institutions. The majority of strategic alliances set membership dues that change depending on the size of each institution that joins.
6. Promote networking between the communities and the assistance services of the member institutions. Although strong political leadership at the top is essential for an alliance to succeed, the benchmark also highlights how crucial it is to involve members of the member institutions in cooperative projects and activities.

FORTHEM

Since its beginning, FORTHEM has put in place an inclusive governance structure that incorporates the decision-making and monitoring processes of Alliance members from each area of the universities, academics, administrative personnel, and students. In this approach, all levels of Alliance universities are efficiently communicating and progressing towards shared goals under the coordination of a management system. For the practical operation of the Alliance projects, the governance structure consists of the Presidency, Steering Committee, Student Council, Coordination Commission, five Mission Boards, and General Secretariat.

The link between the Alliance and local services is provided through FORTHEM offices. To assist and direct the Alliance, frequent consultations with internal and external advisory councils are held. All of the Alliance's projects—both ongoing and upcoming—are components of one of its five current missions.

In the second phase of the Alliance, FORTHEM decided to have rotating chairs for the Presidency, Steering Committee, and Coordination Commission. The change will take place every year in January. This will give each university the opportunity to lead the alliance and provide representation at the highest levels.

A centralised administration, called the General Secretariat, has been set up, which will make the transfer of knowledge, information, and best practices easier, support alliance-wide decision-making, centralise certain services, such as communication, IT, and law, for the whole alliance, and increase the visibility of FORTHEM beyond the alliance.

In this way, FORTHEM has managed to overcome the project logic approach in setting its governance structure and ensuring inclusivity.

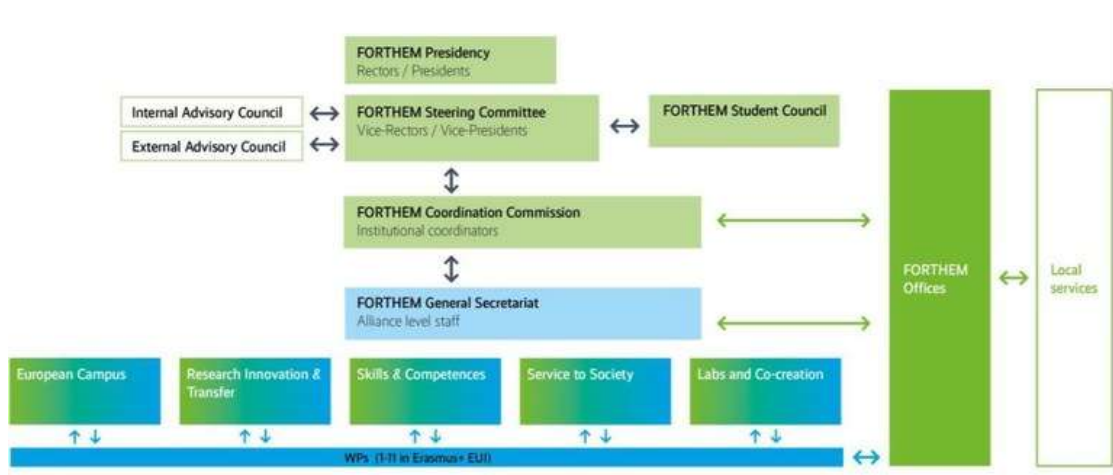









Figure 8. FORTHEM Governance structure (Source: FORTHEM website)

7. RESEARCH DIMENSION OF THE ALLIANCES

In its November 2021 Council conclusions on the governance of the new European Research Area (ERA), the Council called for actions to empower higher education institutions to develop in line with the ERA and in synergy with the European Education Area. This is being pursued through ERA Action 13 of the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024, with the objective of raising excellence in science and value creation in the university sector and aligning Member States efforts to increase the sector's global visibility and competitiveness.

Complementing the Erasmus+ action, the Horizon 2020 Science with and for Society (SwafS) Coordination and Support Action IBA-SwafS-Support-1-2020 aimed to link the European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area by supporting the modernization of universities and other research and innovation (R&I) organisations. The key objective was to use the 'European Universities' pilot as a testbed for (1) exploring support for institutional transformation in universities' research and innovation dimensions in synergy with their education mission and (2) implementing seamless and effective content synergies between Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe.

This coordination and support action required the first 17 European university alliances to develop an institutional transformation agenda. An indicative list of institutional transformation modules in the field of research and innovation was provided in the call guidance as follows:




-  Developing a common R&I agenda and action plan
-  Sharing resources and infrastructure
-  Strengthening human capital (including balanced brain circulation and a gender dimension)
-  Reinforcing cooperation with non-academic sectors (especially academia-business collaboration)
-  Mainstreaming open science practices
-  Engaging citizens and society
-  Exploring joint structures for common barriers and best practices

Additionally, the alliances have been supported to share infrastructure and capacities in research and innovation and develop critical mass to implement common research and innovation agendas. The first generation of 17 alliances supported by H2020 reached its midterm before the end of 2022. The projects and their policy briefs have been evaluated by the European Research Executive

Agency (REA), with the support of a team of independent experts⁴. The report addresses the challenges faced by the alliances with cooperation, identifies good practices and tangible progress made in implementing transformational changes, and proposes recommendations for the various transformation modules. The seven modules aim to:

- (1) develop a common research and innovation agenda;
- (2) strengthen human capital;
- (3) share research infrastructures;
- (4) engage non-academic actors;
- (5) mainstream open science;
- (6) engage citizens and society; and
- (7) explore joint university structures.

The report broadly assessed whether the inclusive and integrated cooperation approach of the alliances has thus far helped accelerate the institutional change of all alliance partners. Among the general observations and conclusions of the report, the following aspects appear to be the most relevant for the purpose of this study:

-  The selection and prioritisation of transformation modules varied across the alliances, leading to differences in scope and implementation in the first reporting period. In the future, a more selective approach might contribute to more accelerated and sustainable change, whereby alliances could select those transformation modules that focus on their own priorities, needs, and ambitions within their own regional and international ecosystems;
-  Renewed efforts by university alliances and national and regional authorities are needed to resolve the difficulties that arise in the pursuit of transnational cooperation. Diverse institutional organisational models and strategies, in combination with the distinctive local and national cultural, societal, political, and legal environments in which the alliances operate, present sometimes insurmountable challenges;
-  Alliance institutions need to step more outside of their academic silos and ensure that they are well embedded in their own regional research and innovation ecosystems. Universities are strong regional actors in the

⁴ Gareth O'Neill and Helena Acheson for European Commission, Progress of University Alliance Projects, Projects funded under Horizon 2020 IBA-SwafS-Support-1-2020 Call – Pilot

context of Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3), and it is somewhat surprising that no reference is made by the alliances to being involved or engaged with other regional non-academic actors in these activities.

As mentioned before, the report of the European Commission report abouted results, good practices and barriers and difficulties encountered by the Alliances across seven modules. For the purpose of this study, the seven modules have been related to the three pillars of EXPER, as shown in **Figure 9**.

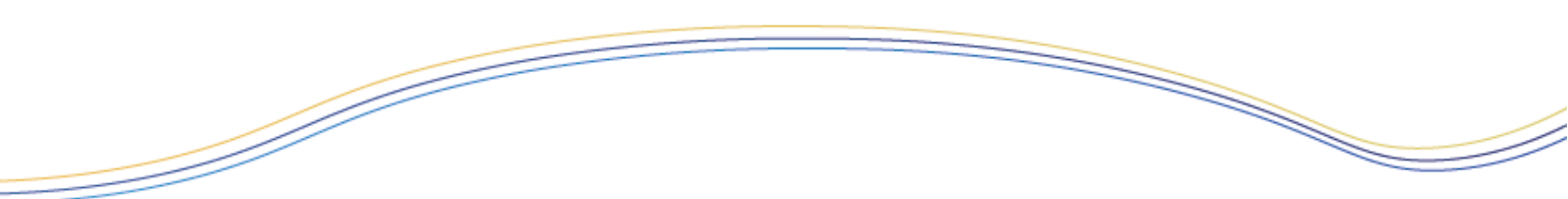


Figure 9. Relation between EXPER pillars and recommendation of REA report on research dimension of the EUAs

7.1 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AND COOPERATION IN RESEARCH

EXPER Widening Universities aim to improve excellence in research and innovation through the establishment of European Universities Alliances. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, one benefit of international cooperation is indeed an increase in the production of excellent research and research skills. To achieve this, members of the Alliances need to overcome the barriers and challenges described and address several elements of research excellence. Out of the 50 alliances funded by the Erasmus+ programme, only 17 have established a research dimension thanks to the Horizon 2020 funding. For the purpose of this study, the author has selected several best practices related to different elements of research excellence.

- 🌐 Building a research agenda and research governance
- 🌐 Sharing research infrastructure
- 🌐 Open Science Practice



European university alliances aim to create a shared research and innovation agenda and action plan to focus institutions on specific research and innovation areas and promote cooperation among researchers. However, challenges include differences in legal and financial frameworks, research culture and organisation, and alignment of concepts and priorities across institutions. A flexible approach is needed to accommodate these differences and ensure communication and collaboration between support staff and researchers. Researchers may also lack involvement in alliance collaboration due to a lack of awareness, incentives, or experience in international collaboration. To address these issues, researchers should be made aware of their options and supported through digital platforms and tools. Developing a common research and innovation agenda is a long-term task that requires time and resources for scoping exercises, feedback gathering, and iterative discussions. The process involves researchers, research managers, leaders, and support staff, and alliances need time to devise and implement new agendas and action plans.

To effectively interact with and include their administrative and research communities, **CIVICA** Research has developed an effective governance and management structure. The objective is to gather delegates who act as important points of contact for their communities. The structure consists of two groups: a Research Managing Team made up of senior management staff who support the implementation and supervision of project activities, and a Permanent Design Team composed of vice presidents for research, senior faculty, and leaders of four thematic groups. Administrative teams and theme groups of researchers that provide direction and input support the two organisations.

In addition to creating a shared research and innovation agenda and action plan to concentrate institutions on specific research and innovation areas, universities in the Alliance are expected to share existing resources, such as research infrastructure. Sharing research infrastructure is complex due to the diversity in size, scope, structure, management, and cost among institutions. An initial mapping and analysis of infrastructures is necessary to determine their availability and specifications. Feasibility studies should be conducted before setting up the sharing of infrastructure. A common protocol and platform for sharing research infrastructure among alliance members is needed, specifying legal agreements for sharing and financing. An open digital platform should be created for members to access available infrastructure. Integration of information systems for sharing research resources is also necessary, with metadata provided following alliance standards and shared catalogues. However, the integration of such systems can be complex and costly, making it more feasible for institutions to adopt existing solutions rather than develop new ones.

EU-CONEXUS-RFS has developed an access policy based on the European Charter for Access to Research Infrastructures. The charter sets out non-regulatory principles and guidelines to be used as a reference when defining access policies for research infrastructure and related services. The term 'access' here refers to the legitimate and authorised physical, remote, and virtual admission to and interactions with and use of research infrastructures and to services offered by research infrastructures to users. Adopting such a common reference framework facilitates alignment within the alliances.

EUGLOHRIA has mapped and created an inventory of research platforms and infrastructures that are available among the partners of the alliance. The alliance has then prepared a joint Memorandum of Understanding on the basic legal and financial aspects of the common use of these facilities, which will support the sharing of platforms and infrastructure in the alliance.

For the alliance's research infrastructures' use, accessibility, and openness, **RIS4CIVIS** has established a set of shared standards. These guidelines have been integrated into the alliance's charter for access to and usage of its research facilities. A long-term plan has also been developed to create and design a brand for a CIVIS research infrastructure label, where acceptance of the guiding principles (such as the ability to show transparency in the management, quality of practices, and openness of the infrastructures) can result in the label being given to an alliance infrastructure.

Research excellence relies on researchers' capacity to communicate results and make information available to the research community. The European Commission (EC) promotes open science practices in the European Research Agenda (ERA), but several issues hinder its implementation. National contexts, legal frameworks, and differing levels of implementation make it difficult for university alliances to adopt a common approach. Universities may be in different stages of development, with some being more advanced and others at the beginning. In general, researchers show a lack of awareness of the benefits of open science for their research and careers due to limited awareness-raising, training, and support activities. This is further complicated by different interpretations and practices across scientific fields. Within alliances, a specific challenge is represented by the fact that each university alliance must come to a common agreement on the definition and main practices of open science.

Several projects have made progress in implementing Open Science, such as mapping policies and practices among member institutions, developing action plans, identifying good practices, developing a researcher assessment framework, raising awareness among staff and researchers, developing training

courses, and creating an open access metadata portal. These initiatives aim to improve research excellence and promote open science practices across member institutions. For the purpose of this study, the following good practices have been selected:

EPICUR has linked open science practices with rewarding practices for researchers. In particular, EPICUR-Research has created a framework for evaluating researchers based on their open science practices and activities. Open science is thus a major criterion for the evaluation of researchers' research and careers in the EPICUR Qualitative Researcher's Assessment Framework (EPIQAssess). As a result, academics affiliated with the EPICUR university partnership are encouraged to incorporate it into their work.

To enable researchers to find research outputs from member institutions, **EUTOPIA-TRAIN** has developed an open-access metadata portal. To create the EUTOPIA Open Research Portal, the university coalition and OpenAIRE have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The portal collects and disseminates metadata about research output and ensures that this metadata is compatible with information systems both inside and outside the alliance.

For academics working at member institutions as well as anyone else interested in open science, **YUFERING** has created the Open Science Calendar 2022. Each month's Open Science topic is covered in the calendar, and each month's topic is linked to policies, procedures, projects, events, and instructional videos via a QR code. The calendar can be printed or used digitally to make it easier for researchers to learn about open science.

7.2 RESEARCHERS CAREERS

Improving researchers careers is by far the most commonly mentioned objective of the EUAS. Researchers careers actually involve addressing many different institutional activities, and improving current conditions is still a challenge for many universities. One of the first problems that shows up at both the institutional and personal levels, according to most reports, is resistance to change both at the institutional level and within the research community itself. On the one hand, modifications to national rules and potentially legislation are a long and difficult process; on the other hand, researchers themselves might be reluctant to modify their practices and accept new rules. This is especially relevant to research evaluation, awards, and open science.

For this reason, it is frequently stated that developing best practices is difficult due to the diversity of human resources policies and the various statuses of researchers across institutions. In this sense, EUAs often take a pragmatic

approach, gathering case studies from each institution and comparing them to find common best practices across situations. For the case of EXPER, the following good practices are considered particularly relevant:

The SEA-EU Alliance and the reSEArch-EU project have created a virtual training platform that provides researchers with learning materials to enhance both their soft and hard skills in order to better understand and adapt to new trends in remote research, innovation, and sustainability.

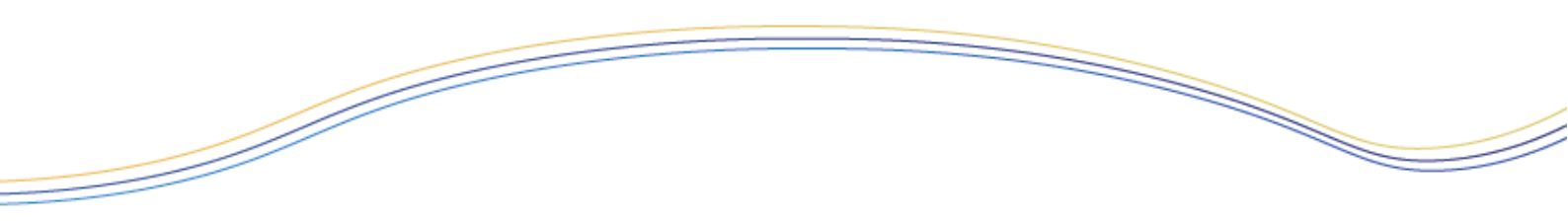
CIVICA Research has put in place Excellence Tours, during which researchers learn from one another through mentoring or training in transferrable skills. The tours involve top academics giving talks and/or taking part in workshops at a select group of CIVICA Research institutes, as well as early-career researchers providing talks and developing their networks. This activity has two advantages: it highlights CIVICA Research's research identity and capacity on a worldwide scale and helps institutions that are less knowledgeable about a certain subject get access to top researchers and benefit from their views.

Practically all university alliance programmes aim to encourage early- and mid-career researchers' geographic mobility and international experience in order to develop career trajectories and promote talent circulation. Overall, the exhaustive mapping and analytical operations carried out by all coalitions in the first reporting period have made considerable progress. Alliances affirm that progress can only be made through respectful communication between member universities and their academic and administrative employees. Alliances say that resistance can be overcome, in some cases quite successfully, via the use of various types of communication and involvement.

As demonstrated by FIT FORTHEM, where a customised work package on intercultural sensitization and professionalisation in R&I management proved to be crucial for addressing difficulties related to various academic cultures, working conditions (including pay and salary schemes), approaches to funding strategies, project portfolios, and proposal writing, the alliances can benefit from specialised responses.

The production of excellent research is strictly linked to the capacity of universities to assess research and build researchers capacities. In addition to best practices, general recommendations can be formulated based on the experience of the alliances and the report on their activities:

- 🌐 Reform research assessment to consider other elements in addition to publications (in high-impact journals) and bibliometrics (such as the H index). Those elements include other research and education activities



and outputs (including data, software, peer review, teaching resources, supervision, and outreach). Quantitative metrics should also be complemented by qualitative criteria (such as the use of narrative CVs).

- 🌍 In general, alliances should further strategically engage and align with the new Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (COARA).
- 🌍 Alliance should offer training and support institutions to do open science. This should include raising awareness, creating and providing skill opportunities and resources, as well as dedicated services. The focus should not only be on early-career researchers but also on senior researchers, who should be targeted for training and support. Communities of trainers could hereby be created and supported for mutual learning.

8. ENGAGING WITH SOCIETY

All EUAs include activities to reinforce cooperation with non-academic actors, especially academia-business cooperation, even if with different intensity and ambitions. Differences in the way alliances engage with society reflect cultural differences among the alliances and their members and the developmental pathways each alliance has gone through.

Disparities among European territories and regions impact the relationships that universities can shape with local or regional ecosystems. Some regions have a weak business environment, which might restrict collaboration with universities. Institutional policies and resource allocation affect the organisational structures and priorities of universities. Alliances have to deal with this diversity of situations, and most of them expressed how communication is essential to building on the foundation of trust and mutual benefit within and outside the alliances.

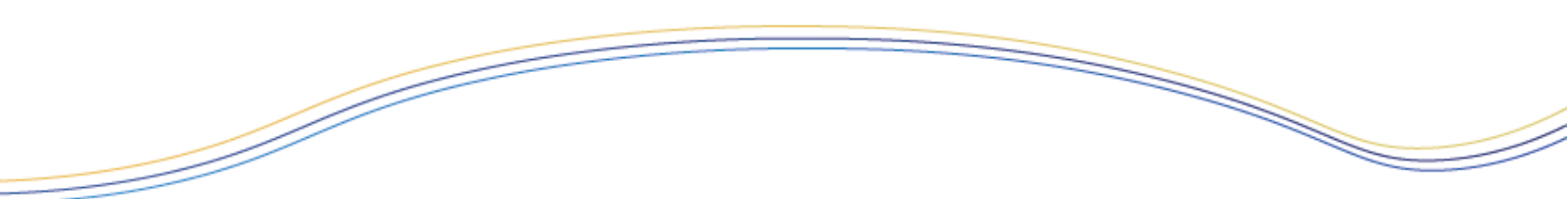
When it comes to knowledge transfer, differences in approaches and processes among universities require that the functions of R&I management personnel be better defined and more consistently applied.

Also, the lack of regulation on stakeholder participation and engagement does not help universities shape common stakeholder engagement policies. More support is claimed both in terms of funding and regulation, in particular with regard to cooperation with commercial partners or companies (in the sense of technology transfer and other business-related activities).

Despite difficulties, many alliances have managed to successfully engage with local actors in many different ways. Engagement with society has indeed been addressed with a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach, introducing innovative knowledge transfer mechanisms or supporting entrepreneurship and citizen science initiatives, among others.

CIVICA Research is developing a Rapid Policy Response Mechanism, which is intended to be an expert database capable of structuring and institutionalising across the CIVICA Research network the pool of research activities and results that can immediately be translated into proposals and information for policymakers, journalists, and the wider public. The aim of this mechanism is to serve as a European transdisciplinary knowledge pool that facilitates access to researchers and the use of research findings and other outcomes (such as tools and best practices).

The YUFE Alliance has, for instance, set up a set of activities fostering citizens capacities in science and research but also entrepreneurship and making them



collaborate with researchers and companies. The YUFE Challenge Teams are international and multidisciplinary teams established in response to a call to propose an innovative solution to a challenge that benefits European citizens and regions.

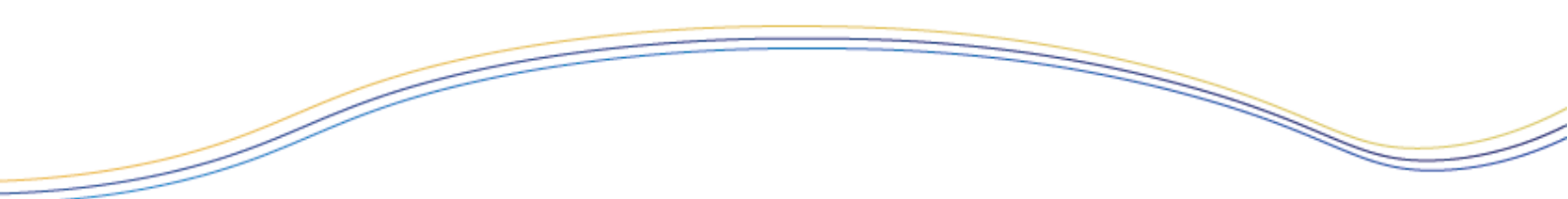
The teams are built around students, researchers, public and private experts, and citizens who will deliver solutions with and for our citizens through a bottom-up model, training and mentoring activities for both staff of the Alliances and citizens. The YUFE Entrepreneurial Training Programme, on the other hand, provides online training and support to YUFE students, staff, and citizens in activities in order to boost their entrepreneurial skills and abilities (courses, MOOCs, talk shows, YUFETHON). The YUFE Incubation Programme aims to give initial support to entrepreneurs in the development of their business ideas with strong, innovative content, providing a set of services and resources.

YUFERING, the research dimension of YUFE, is piloting the ambitious and challenging concept of flipped knowledge transfer (FKT), which requires partners to adopt an innovative approach and implement new formats for knowledge and technology transfer. Following the quadruple helix approach, the FKT concept is based on a systematic approach to collaboration with societal-business actors (SBAs). After having mapped the knowledge transfer practices of all members, the Alliance developed their YUFE vision and transformation strategy towards flipped knowledge transfer, which identified three pilot use cases of innovation ecosystems to be conducted.

They have then created the YUFE Knowledge Transfer Expert Network (FKTN), consisting of 29 experts on knowledge transfer from all 10 universities. The FKTN meets regularly for the experts to exchange knowledge, best practices, and advice on difficult valuation cases. The communication and collaboration of this network have also led to identifying potential project calls the universities could apply to, leading to new successful projects and hence continued collaboration.

The input of the YUFE Knowledge Transfer Expert Network will also be beneficial to creating an interdisciplinary profile and career development path for knowledge transfer professionals at the 10 institutions. Finally, under FKT, training opportunities will be available for researchers. The training will be done online to maximise the reach of the large research groups and will focus, among others, on soft-skills development and co-creation fundamentals.

The ERUA Alliance has devoted a whole work package to connecting and engaging all the campuses in the partnership and the ERUA Alliance with the outside world (stakeholders, shareholders, partnerships, networks, etc.). The




strategy developed is structured around three flagship initiatives. The 1st Flagship connects all the digital activities (digital mobility, creative digital partnerships, and sustained engagements with regions and societies) with a focus on societal engagement. The second flagship connects all activities related to the sustainability of the alliance to societal engagement, while the third flagship is still under construction and aims to connect the two other flagships with the New European Bauhaus Initiative for green and digital connectivity through Arts and Culture for Social Change. For the 1st and 2nd flagships, two roadmaps have been produced, ERUA working teams have been constructed, and several bilateral and board meetings have been organised in order to learn from each other and find out the best way to work together.

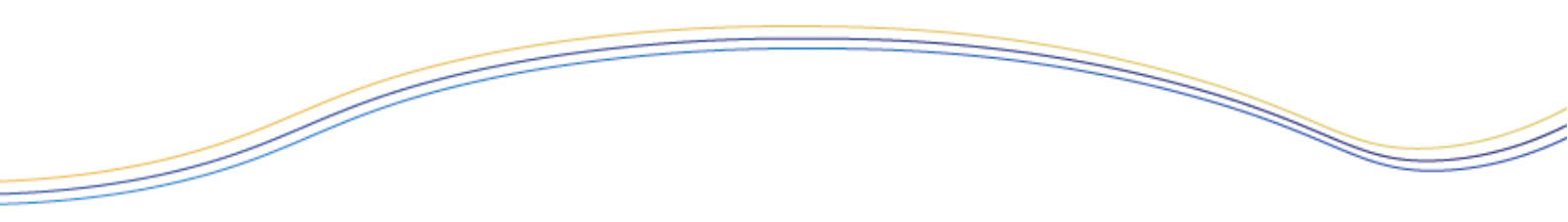
The re-ERUA project, the research arm of ERUA, has developed an open interregional platform to connect ERUA universities with their regions and societies, solving problems, challenging ideas and solutions, sharing values, knowledge, experience, and resources, and establishing cooperative synergies with policymakers, business, industry, and societal actors based on social responsibility research values.

As ERUA, SMART-ER, the research arm of the ECIU Alliance, devoted one of its three main pillars to the active engagement of citizens, civil society, local and regional communities, and public and city authorities in all stages of the R&I process. In this case, ECIU has set up twelve local partnership arenas. In the Arenas, societal challenges are identified, discussed, refined, and eventually posted as defined challenge-based learning opportunities for ECIU University learners and teachers. The challenges are later published on the ECIU University challenge platform for participants to apply to and engage in.



The Local Partnership Arenas are built in quadruple-helix settings, involving private, public, as well as civic partners, and academia. An ECIU University Challenge Partner is thus not only the supplier of the challenge but is also actively involved in the progress of the work or as an adopter of results. Up to today, the design, co-creation, and implementation of three citizen science pilots run by multi-disciplinary teams have been completed, and monitoring and evaluation of these pilots is underway to experiment further with joint challenge-based research efforts aiming to create direct impact through the SMART-ER project.

Based on the practices analysed, general recommendations can be formulated for potential new alliances when it comes to societal engagement:

-  Foresee the creation of structures, such as Science Communication Offices or online platforms, devoted to science communication to amplify



the potential impact and outreach of scientific activities of the Alliance but also to reach further the different actors of society;

-  Provide researchers with skills and training opportunities on communication and stakeholder engagement. Support researchers get out of the science/research box;
-  Adopt a life-cycle approach when thinking of societal engagement. Local actors are fundamental since the design of research challenges the adoption of research results or the application of knowledge produced.

9. WORKSHOP ON EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCES' BEST PRACTICES

Under the auspices of the EXPER project, a Forum of Peripheral Universities was convened through a webinar on September 20th 2023, featuring a two-session workshop with representatives from European University Alliances (EUAs). This event proved to be highly beneficial not only to project participants but also to our target audience, comprising organisations, universities, and students from various regions across the European Union and creating synergies among EU-funded Projects and relevant organisations.

Programme Overview:

Session 1:

11:00 AM–11:10 AM: The session commenced with a presentation of the EXPER project by Prof. Sebastian Lopez, the Director for Research and Innovation at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

11:10 AM–11:20 AM: Dr. Michelle Perello, representing Consulta Europa Projects and Innovation, provided insights into the EXPER report on Good Practices of European Universities Alliances.

11:20 AM–12:30 PM: The first workshop session delved into the collaborative efforts of EUAs in nurturing the researchers of the future, enhancing the attractiveness of researchers' careers, promoting researcher mobility, and retaining talent. It also explored the establishment of joint research and innovation (R&I) programmes and the facilitation of joint R&I projects. This session featured contributions from the following EUAs:

- EELISA, represented by Isabel Salgueiro and Simona Gallerani
- CIVIS, presented by Julie Hyzewicz
- FORTHEM, with insights from Dr. Nicole Birkle

Session 2:

12:00 PM–12:40 PM: The second workshop session centred on the European universities' commitment to community engagement and societal impact. It discussed how EUAs collaborate with stakeholders in the surrounding ecosystems of their universities, the outcomes of such collaborations, and methodologies for measuring their impact. Contributions were made by:

- ERUA, featuring Claire Douet
- YUFE, represented by Maria José Herrero Villa

Wrap-up:

12:40 PM–1:00 PM: The workshop concluded with a group picture, symbolising the collective commitment to fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among peripheral universities and EUAs.

The workshop's attendees hailed from countries such as the Czech Republic, Portugal, Spain, Croatia, Romania, Malta, Cyprus, Ireland, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Austria and the United Kingdom. Their active participation exemplified a collective commitment to advancing European higher education and innovation.

Notable institutions, European Universities Alliances, and projects involved in this collaborative endeavour included the ULPGC, UAC, University of Zagreb, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal, MCAST, The Cyprus Institute, University of La Réunion, University of La Laguna, Tsenov Academy of Economics, University of Groningen, Rostock University, University of Bucharest, University of Glasgow, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, University of Bucharest, and many others.

The Forum provided a platform to explore best practices from EUAs, facilitate knowledge exchange, and enable the forging of valuable connections. Participants delved into strategies and approaches that have proven successful within these alliances, fostering collaboration and innovation in the European higher education landscape.

Among the EU-funded projects and initiatives represented were BETTER Life, EELISA, IPS – E³UDRES² Ent-r-e-Novators, aUPaEU, InnoCORE, SECURE, AeroSTREAM, STARS EU Alliance, CIVIS European University Alliance, and more. These diverse projects showcased their dedication to advancing education, research, and innovation on a European scale.

The Forum of Peripheral Universities, held within the EXPER project **gathered 81 participants across the EU** and not only facilitated valuable discussions among participants but also reinforced the project's mission of enhancing collaboration, innovation, and research excellence in the European higher education landscape. This gathering served as a testament to the collaborative spirit that drives progress and transformation in peripheral regions across the European Union.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



The aim of this report is to present good practices and formulate recommendations for the EXPER universities to engage in or create a new European University Alliance. Nonetheless, the best practices identified are suitable to be adopted and replicated by existing alliances.

Some of the practices presented have already been discussed and presented in other reports on the progress of the alliances. Those reports also highlighted strong factors in forming alliances: the similarity of institutional profiles among members of the alliance and the existence of previous cooperation experiences. Also, the sharing of similar values and goals with regard to social inclusion, sustainability, or other societal challenges has been identified as a success element of the alliances. When it comes to disciplinary profiles, sharing the same focus was an important criterion in the building phase of some alliances, while others reported that the multi-disciplinary composition of their members has been key to achieving research excellence. 18%

The diversity of the members of each alliance reflects the diversity of each alliance as well. This goes in line with the aim of the European Universities initiative: as the Commission indicated in its original communication about the initiative, there would 'be no one-size-fits-all model, and one of the aims of the initiative was to promote the diversity of these alliances and reflect the diversity of the HE landscape within the European Union.

For this reason, the best practices presented belong to alliances, which differ both in terms of their vision and mission, disciplinary focus, and governance structure. Adopting a flexible approach is fundamental to shaping and leading an alliance. Each alliance will, in fact, have the capacity for change. In the long run, alliances must remain relevant and respond to the evolving needs of their members. In turn, this means that alliances have to continuously change to achieve collectively desired goals.

Another important recommendation is to devote efforts to frequent communication between the alliance leadership and member universities. Communication has in fact been evoked as a key element for the good functioning of an alliance.

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12. ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Mapping of existing EUAs



Acronym	Name of European University	Organisations involved as full partners
1CORE	4EU+ European University Alliance	4EU+ European University Alliance E.V. Charles University Copenhagen University Heidelberg University Milano University Sorbonne University University of Warsaw
ARQUS II	Arqus European University	Graz University Leipzig University University Lyon 1 Claude Bernard University of Granada University of Minho University of Padova University of Vilnius University of Wroclaw
ATHENA	Advanced Technology Higher Education Network Alliance	Hellenic Mediterranean University University Niccolo Cusano Polytechnic Institute of Porto University of Maribor University of Orleans University of Siegen Vilnius Gediminas Technical University

Aurora	Aurora European University	<p>Copenhagen Business School Free University Amsterdam Universita degli studi di Napoli Federico II Universitaet Duisburg-Essen Universitaet Innsburck Universitat Rovira i Virgili Universite Paris XII Val de Marne University of Iceland Univerzita Palackeho V Olomouci</p>
CHARM-EIGHT ^{∞*}	Challenge-Driven, Accessible, Research-based and Mobile European University	<p>Abo Academy Eotvos Lorand University Hochschule Ruhr West Julius-Maximilians-University Wurzburg Trinity College Dublin University of Barcelona University of Montpellier Utrecht University</p>
Circle U.	Circle U. European University Alliance	<p>Aarhys Universitet Circle U. Aisbl Humboldt-Universit Aet Zu Berlin Universita di Pisa Universitat Wien Universite Catholique de Louvain Universite Paris Cite Universitetet I Oslo Univerzitet U Beogradu</p>
CIVICA	The European University of Social Sciences	<p>Bocconi University CEU Central European University European University Institute Hertie School of Governance IE University Institute of Political Sciences Paris National University of Political Studies and Public Administration SGH Warsaw School of Economics Stockholm School of Economics</p>

<p>CIVIS 2*</p>	<p>CIVIS - a European Civic University</p>	<p>Autonomous University of Madrid Free University of Brussels - ULB National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Paris Lodron University Salzburg Sapienza University of Rome University Eberhard Karls of Tübingen University of Aix-Marseille University of Bucarest University of Stockholm</p>
<p>COLOURS*</p>	<p>COLlaborative innOvative sUustainable Regional UniverSities</p>	<p>Jan Dlugosz University in Czaestochowa Josip Juraja Strossm Ayer University of Osijek Kristianast Ad University Universidad de Castilla - La Mancha Universita degli studi di Ferrara Universitaet Paderborn Universite du Mans University St Liment Ohridski Bitola Ventspils University of applied sciences</p>
<p>E3UDRES2</p>	<p>Engaged and Entrepeneurial European University as Driver for European Smart and Sustainable Regions</p>	<p>Fachhochschule St. Polten GMBH Hochschule Fulda-University of Applied Sciences Hungarian University of Agriculture and Applied Sciences Insituto Politecnico de Setubal Jyvaskylan University of Applied Sciences Saxion University of Applied Sciences Universitatea Politehnica Timisoara University college Leuven University college Limburg Vidzemes University of Applied Sciences</p>

EC2U	European Campus of City-Universities	<p>Friederich-Schiller-Universität Jena Universidad de Salamanca Universidade de Coimbra Università degli studi di Pavia Universität Linz Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza Din Iasi Université de Poitiers University of Turku</p>
ECIU+	ECIU University	<p>Autonomous University of Barcelona Dublin City University European Consortium of Innovative Universities - legal entity Hamburg University of Technology Kaunas University of Technology Linköping University Lodz University of Technology National Institute of Applied Sciences in Toulouse Tampere University University of Aveiro University of Stavanger University of Trento University of Twente</p>
EDUC	European Digital UniverCity	<p>Jaume I University Masaryk University Paris Nanterre University University of Cagliari University of Pecs University of Postdam University of Rennes I University of South-Eastern Norway</p>

EELISA	European Engineering Learning Innovation and Science Alliance	<p>Budapest University of Technology and Economics Ecole Nationale Des Ponts et Chaussees Friederich-Alexander-Universitaet Erlangen-Nuernberg Istanbul Teknik Universitesi Scuola Normale Superiore Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di perfezionamento Sanna Universidad politecnica de Madrid Universitatea Politehnica Din Bucuresti Universite Paris Sciences et Lettres</p>
ENGAGE.EU	The European University Engaged in Societal Change	<p>Hanken School of Economics Luiss Libera Universita Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli Norwegian school of Economics Tilburg University Universitaet Mannheim Universitat Ramon Llull Fundacio Universite Toulouse Capitale University of National and World Economy Wirtschaftsuniversitat Wien</p>
ENHANCE	European Universities of Technology Alliance	<p>Chalmerstekniska Hogskola AB Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet Ntnu Politechnika Gdanska Politechnika Warszawska Politecnico di Milano Rheinisch-Westfaelische Technische Hochschule Aachen Technische Universiteit Delft Universitat Politecnica de Valencia</p>

<p>ENLIGHT</p>	<p>ENLIGHT European university Network to promote equitable quality of Life, sustainability and Global engagement through Higher education Transformation</p>	<p>Georg-August-Universität Göttingen Stiftung Öffentlichen Rechts National University of Ireland Galway Rijksuniversiteit Groningen Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea Université de Bordeaux Universiteit Gent University of Tartu Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave Uppsala Universitet</p>
<p>EPICUR-SHAPE-IT*</p>	<p>European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions</p>	<p>Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Karlsruhe Institute of Technology University Adam Mickiewicz of Poznan University of Amsterdam University of Freiburg University of Haute-Alsace University of Natural resources and life sciences Vienna University of Strasbourg University of Southern Denmark</p>
<p>ERUA</p>	<p>European Reform University Alliance</p>	<p>Mykolo Romerio Universitetas New Bulgarian University Stiftung Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) Swps University of Social Sciences and Humanities Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria Università degli studi di Macerata Université Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis University of the Aegean</p>

<p>EU GREEN</p>	<p>European University alliance for sustainability: responsible GRowth, inclusive Education and ENvironment</p>	<p>Institute of Technology Carlow Otto von Guericke University of Magdeburg University of Angers University of Évora University of Extremadura University of Gävle University of Oradea University of Parma Wroclaw University of Environment and Life Sciences</p>
<p>EU-CONEXUS Plus*</p>	<p>European University for Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability</p>	<p>Agricultural University of Athens Catholic University of Valencia EU-CONEXA – legal entity Frederick University Klaipeda University La Rochelle University Rostock University Technical University of Civil engineering Bucharest University of Zadar Waterford Institute of Technology</p>
<p>EU4DUAL</p>	<p>European Dual Studies University</p>	<p>Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University Stuttgart ESTIA School of Advanced Industrial Technologies FH JOANNEUM University of Applied Sciences John von Neumann University Malta College of Arts Science and Technology PAR Visoka Poslovna University College Polytechnic University of Koszalin Savonia University of Applied Sciences University of Mondragon</p>

EUGLOH 2.0*	European University Alliance for Global Health	Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich Lund University Paris-Saclay University The Arctic University of Norway University of Alcalá University of Hamburg University of Novi Sad University of Porto University of Szeged
EULIST	European Universities Linking Society and Technology	Brno University of Technology Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Universitaet Hannover Institut Mines-Telecom Jönköping University Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology National Technical University of Athens Slovenska Technicka Univerzita V Bratislave Technische Universitaet Wien Universidad Rey Juan Carlos Universita degli Studi dell'Aquila
EUNICE	EUNICE European University for Customised Education	Brandenburgische Technische Universitat Cottbus-Senftenberg Eunice Aisbl Instituto Politecnico de Viseu Karlstads Universitet Politechnika Poznanska Universidad de Cantabria Universita degli Studi di Catania Universite de Mons Universite Polytechnique Hauts-de-France University of Peloponnese University of Vaasa

EUniWell	EUniWell - European University for Well-Being	<p>Institut National Des Langues et Civilisations Orientales Linneuniversitetet Nantes Universite Semmelweis University Universidad de Murcia Universidad de Santiago de Compostola Universita degli studi di Firenze Universitat Konstanz Universitat Zu Kolm</p>
EUPeace	European University for Peace, Justice and Inclusive Societies	<p>Justus-Liebig-Universitaet Giessen Philipps Universitat Aet Marburg Universidad Pontificia Comillas Universita della Calabria Universite de Limoges University of Cukurova University of Mostar University of West Bohemia</p>
EURECA-PRO	European University on Responsible Consumption and Production	<p>Hoschschule Mittweida (FH) Montanuniversitaet Leoben Silesian University of Technology Technical University of Crete Technische Universitaet Bergakademiefreiberg Universidad de Leon Universitatea Din Petrosani Universite de Lorraine Universiteit Hasselt</p>
EuroTeQ	EuroTeQ Engineering University	<p>Czech Technical University in Prague Danmarkstekniske Universitet Ecole Polytechnique Etablissement D'Enseignement Superieur Consulaire Hautes Etudes Commerciales de Paris Tallinn University of Technology Tehnikaülikool Technische Universitaet Muenchen Technische Universiteit Eindhoven Universidad de Navarra</p>

Eut+	European University of Technology	<p>Cyprus University of Technology Hochschule Darmstadt (University of Applied Sciences H-DA) Rigas Tehniska Universitate Technical University of Sofia Technological University Dublin Universidad Politecnica de Cartagena Universitatea Tehnica Cluj-Napoca Universite de Technologie de Troyes</p>
EUTOPIA MORE*	European Universities Transforming to an Open Inclusive Academy	<p>Babes Bolyai University of Cluj Ca' Foscari University of Venice CY Cergy Paris University Free University of Brussels - VUB Nova University Lisbon Pompeu Fabra University Barcelona Technical University of Dresden University of Göteborg University of Ljubljana</p>
FilmEU	European Universities Alliance for Film and Media Arts	<p>Dun Laoghaire Insitutue of Art, Design & Technology FilmEU Association Lietuvos Muzikosir Teatro Akademija Luca School of Arts Natzionalna Akademiya Za Teatrlno I Filmovo Izkustvo (Natfiz) Tallinn University Universidade Lusófona Via University College Vysoka Skola Muzických Umeni V Bratislave</p>
FORTHEM	Fostering Outreach within European Regions, Transnational Higher Education and Mobility	<p>Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu University Dijon Bourgogne University of Agder University of Jyvaskyla University of Latvia University of Opole University of Palermo University of Valencia</p>

<p>IN.TUNE</p>	<p>IN.TUNE - Innovative Universities in Music & Arts in Europe</p>	<p>Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique et de Dance de Paris Fundacio Privada per A L'Escola Superior de Musica de Catalunya Norges Musikkhogskole Uniarts Helsinki Universitat Fur Musik Und Darstellende Kunst Wien Universitatea Nationala de Muzica Bucuresti University of the Arts The Hague Univerzitet Umetnosti U Beogradu</p>
<p>INGENIUM</p>	<p>INGENIUM – European University</p>	<p>Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences Medical University Sofia Munster Technological University Oviedo University Rouen Normandy University Southeast Finland University of Applied Sciences Technical University Gheorghe Asachi of Iasi University G. d'Annunzio Chieti-Pescara University of Crete University of Skövde</p>
<p>INVEST</p>	<p>INnoVations of Regional Sustainability: European University Alliance</p>	<p>Karelia University of Applied Sciences Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra Universidad de Cordoba Università degli studi di Milano-Bicocca Universite de Reims Champagne-Ardenne University of Agribusiness and Rural Development - Plovdiv University of Thessaly</p>

NEOLAiA	NEOLAiA - Transforming Regions for an Inclusive Europe	Orebro University Ostravska Univerzita Siauliu Valstybine Kolegija Universidad de Jaen Università degli studi di Salerno Universitaet Bielefeld Universitatea Stefan Cel Mare Din Suceava Universite de Tours University of Nicosia
NeurotechEU	European University of Brain and Technology	Bogazici Universitesi Karolinska Institutet Reykjavik University Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitat Bonn Radboud Universiteit Universidad Miguel Hernandez de Elche Universitatea de Medicina Si Farmacie Iuliu Hatieganu Cluk-Napoca Universite de Lille
RUN-EU	Regional University Network - European University	Fachhochschule Voralberg Gmbh Hame University of Applied Sciences Howest University of Applied Sciences Instituto Politecnico De Leiria Instituto Politecnico Do Cavado e Do Ave NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences Technological University of The Shannon: Midlandsmidwest Universidad de Burgos
SEA-EU 2.0*	The European University of the Seas Alliance	Christian-Albrechts University of Kiel Nord University University of Algarve University of Cádiz University of Gdańsk University of Malta University of Naples Parthenope University of Split University of Western Brittany




STARS EU	Strategic Alliance for Regional TranSition-STARS European University	Hanzehogeschool Groningen University of Applied Sciences Hochschule Bremen Instituto Politecnico de Braganca Politechnika Krakowska Silesian University in Opava University West Universidad de la Laguna Universite de Franche-Comte Universiteti Aleksander Moisiu Durres
T4EU	Transform4Europe T4EU: The European University for Knowledge Entrepreneurs	Eesti Kunstiakadeemia Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski Universidad de Alicante Universidade Catolica Portuguesa Universita degli studi di Trieste Universitat Des Saarlandes Universite Jean Monnet Saint-Etienne Univerzana Primoerskem Universita del Litorale Uniwersytet Slaski W Katowicach Vytauto Didziojo Universitetas
ULYSSEUS	Ulysseus European University	Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences Javna Ustanova Univerzitet Crne Gore Podgorica MCI Management Center Innsbruck Internationale Hochschule Technicka Univerzita V Kosiciach Universidad de Sevilla Universita degli studi di Genova Universite Cote D'Azur Westfaelische Wilhelms-Universitaet Muenster

UNA. Universitas	Una Europa	Catholic University of Leuven Complutense University Madrid Free University of Berlin Jagiellonian University Krakow Leiden University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University Una Europa vzw - legal entity University of Bologna University of Helsinki
UNIC	The European University of Cities in Post-Industrial Transition	Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam Koc University Malmo Universitet Rhur-Universitaet Bochum University of Zagreb Universidad de la Iglesia de Deusto Entidad Religiosa Universite de Liege University College Cork-National University of Ireland, Cork University of Oulo Uniwersytet Lodzki
UNIGreen	The Green European University	Agricultural University – Plovdiv Almeria University Higher Institute of biotechnologies of Paris Higher Education Institution of the Province of Liège University of Modena and Reggio Emilia Agricultural University of Iceland Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra Warsaw University of Life Sciences

UNITA	UNITA Universitat Montium	<p>Insituto Politecnico da Guarda Universidad de Zaragoza Universidad Publica de Navarra Universidade da Beira Interior Universita degli studi di Brescia Universita degli studi di Torino Universitas Montium (UNITA)-GEIE Universitatea de Vest din Timisoara Universitatea Transilvania Din Brasov Universite de Pau et des Pays de L'adour Univeriste Savoie Mont Blanc</p>
Unite	Unite! University Network for Innovation, Technology and Engineering	<p>Aalto University Graz Technical University Grenoble Institute of Technology KTH Royal Institute of Technology Polytechnic University of Catalonia Polytechnic University of Turin Technical University of Darmstadt University of Lisbon Wroclaw University of Science and Technology</p>
UNIVERS EH	European University for Earth and Humanity	<p>Agh University Krakow Heinrich-Heine-Universitaet Duesseldorf Lulea Tekniska Universitet Universita degli studi di Roma Tor Vegata Universite de Namur Universite de Toulouse Universite du Luxembourg</p>
UREKA SHIFT	Urban Research and Education Knowledge Alliance	<p>Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences Hogeschool Gent Hogeschool Van Amsterdam Instituto Politecnico de Lisboa Metropolia University of Applied Sciences VSB - Technocal University of Ostrava</p>

YUFE 2030*	Young Universities for the Future of Europe Alliance	Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun University Carlos III of Madrid University of Antwerp University of Bremen University of Cyprus University of Eastern Finland University of Maastricht University of Rijeka
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Annex 2 – Average of participants

Total	Total (failed) throughout the years	Total (new one 2023)	Countries with most Universities	Average number of countries	Average number of partners
52 Universities (2023)	2 1Europe EU4ART	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Germany (52)  France (51)  Spain (45) 	35 countries total with an average of 12,6 universities per country	8,6 partners per alliance



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



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