

Annual Report

The voice of Europe's universities

2021

European University Association

Universities without walls

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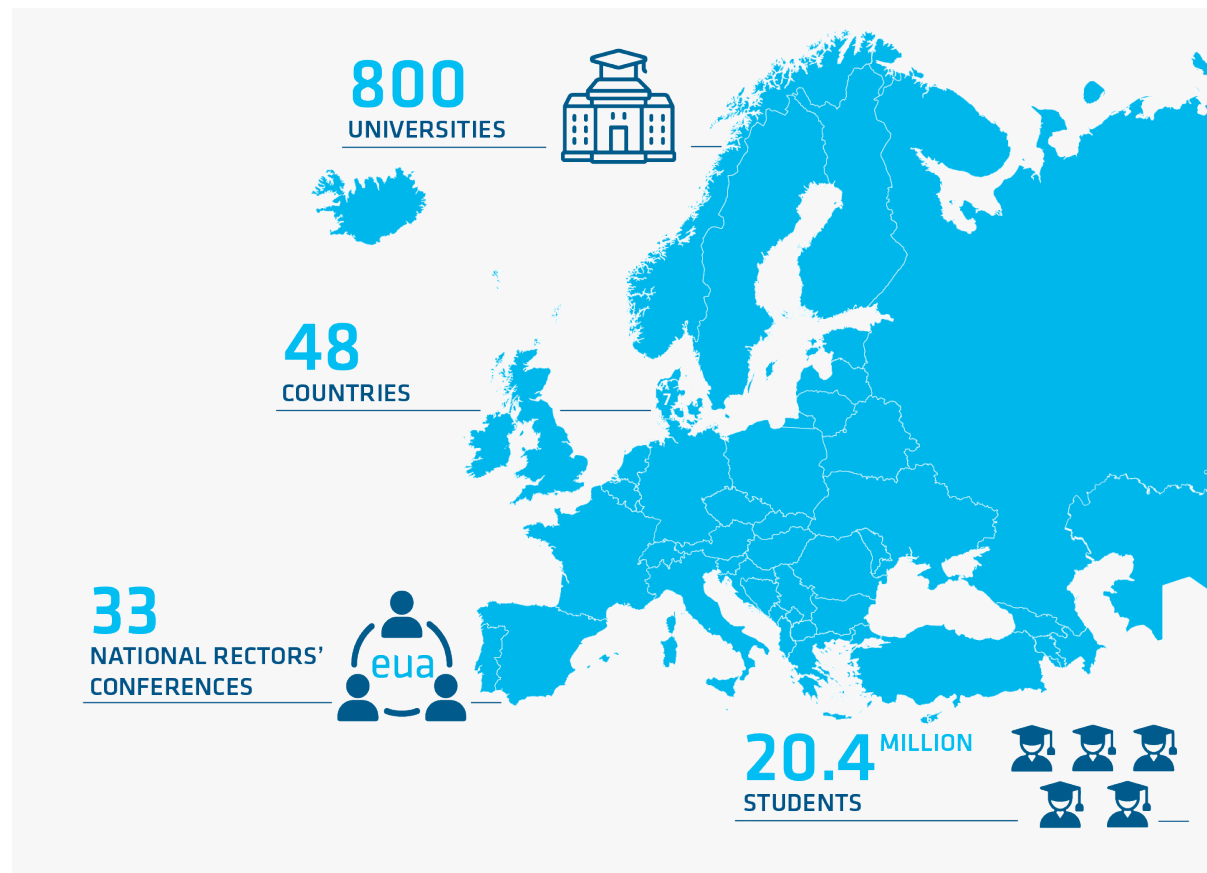
2021 Annual Report

The past year again unfolded against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and the instability of a rapidly changing world challenged by the digital and green transitions. This scenario impacted the way we work and live, but it also brought an opportunity to reflect on the lessons learnt and to envision a sustainable path forward. In 2021, EUA published “Universities without walls - a vision for 2030”.

This Annual Report demonstrates the Association’s efforts throughout the year in shaping the future of Europe’s universities – notably through European policies and initiatives affecting higher education and research. It also demonstrates the unrivalled opportunities offered to members to engage, through projects, events and other mutual-learning activities, in issues at the heart of the sector.

EUA and its members are

- Connecting a unique community
- Influencing decision making
- Enhancing institutional development
- Boosting global visibility



The voice of Europe’s universities

The European University Association (EUA) is the largest and most extensive association of European universities. It provides a forum for leaders to share expertise, as well as contribute to Europe-wide studies that benefit individual universities and the sector as a whole.

EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Through continuous interaction with policy makers and partners at all levels, EUA ensures that the independent voice of European universities is heard.

A vision for 2030

In 2021, EUA launched a seminal document on the future of Europe's universities. "[Universities without walls – A vision for 2030](#)" is the result of extensive consultations with EUA members, experts and partners. It sets out a vision of open and engaged universities, serving Europe's societies towards a better future.

"Universities without walls" came at a crucial moment as the world continued to grapple with the impact of Covid-19, along with the ongoing climate crisis, technology-driven transformations, labour market changes and the pressure Europe's political systems are currently experiencing. The document was the result of an ambitious debate about the path universities must take to remain resilient and relevant. It was also at the heart of discussions at the 2021 EUA Annual Conference (p. 22).

Universities 2030

Open, transformative and transnational

Sustainable, diverse and engaged

Strong, autonomous and accountable

Universities as described in the vision will build on their capacity to evolve and will become engines of societal change. They will provide an open, transformative space for common knowledge production through research, education, innovation and culture. Together with other societal stakeholders, they will shape the future of a knowledge-driven society.



Michael Murphy,
EUA President

"When we say 'universities without walls', we mean universities that are open and engaged in society while retaining their core values. To give our best contribution towards solving the challenges before us, Europe's universities must be free, with diverse institutional profiles, but united in their finely balanced missions of learning and teaching, research, innovation and culture in service to society."

Key insights

- ◆ Building universities without walls requires priorities, such as reforming academic careers, promoting interdisciplinarity and strengthening the civic role of Europe's universities.
- ◆ Openness and respect for knowledge and evidence are fundamental. Universities must continue to support Europe's open, pluralistic and democratic societies.
- ◆ The nature and structure of universities will be hybrid. Physical and digital learning and research environments must be designed in a holistic way to accommodate the different needs of a diverse university community.
- ◆ Differentiation and institutional profiling are key features that will help universities to best serve society as we head to 2030.

Turning the vision into reality

“[Universities without walls](#)” sets out a vision of resilient and effective universities. It supports the development of the European Education Area and the European Research Area and provides useful guidance as universities refresh their institutional strategies in the context of European higher education in a rapidly changing world. In particular, it focuses on sustainability, the importance of openness, the role of university missions and how to turn this vision into a reality.

To face the challenges of this decade and drive positive change, it is critical that Europe’s universities are equipped to make decisions in line with their institutional profiles about the paths they want to pursue in order to best fulfil their missions in service to society.

Factors for success

Enabling frameworks

Adequate investments

Strong leadership

Priorities for action

Reform academic careers

Promote disciplinary

Strengthen civic engagement



Amanda Crowfoot,
EUA Secretary General

“Universities, by nature, are geared to tackle the unknown. However, the tools we have available must be improved. To position universities as open learning communities engaged in the creation of a sustainable global society, we must safeguard academic freedom and institutional autonomy, we must ensure sufficient and sustainable funding, and we must have strong leadership.”

Pathways to the future

Also in 2021, [EUA published a follow-up](#) to “Universities without walls – A vision for 2030”, that focuses on geopolitical changes, digitalisation and artificial intelligence, as well as the course of democracy, and how they might impact Europe’s universities. It outlined possible scenarios for future developments, as well as pathways for universities to pursue common goals.

It was meant to serve as inspiration for university leaders and communities in developing strategies and priorities for action, taking account of their specific circumstances. The publication was also at the heart of [a series of EUA events](#) in late 2021.

Celebrating 20 years of European university collaboration

In 2021, EUA united members in a year-long celebration of its 20th anniversary. With more than 800 universities and 33 national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries, the Association has grown over the years to become one of the largest higher education representative bodies in the world.

History

Two decades ago, members of the Association of European Universities (CRE) and the Confederation of European Union Rectors' Conferences joined forces to create a single representative body in Europe for universities and their national associations. EUA was born from this vision. The decision itself was adopted during the Constitutive General Assembly of Salamanca on 29-30 March 2001, which means that 2021 marked EUA's 20th anniversary.



Celebrating throughout 2021

To celebrate this anniversary, EUA invited members to share short video messages and written letters from rectors, presidents and vice-chancellors. EUA shared these throughout the year through [its website](#) and social media channels using [#EUA20years](#). The anniversary celebration was also a highlight at the 2021 EUA Annual Conference – an occasion for the community to discuss how to build on a history of accomplishments in order to realise the 2030 vision of “Universities without walls”.

“

“Being a member of such an organisation inspires us and allows us to feel that we are on the right path of development. We are also thankful that, through your support, we can build collaborations and partnerships, and share good practice and solutions with member universities.”

UNIVERSITY OF ŁÓDŹ
Prof. Elżbieta Żądzińska

eua20 2001-21

“Thank you for having shared with us practices, for having opened a common path in higher education, research and innovation, for having provided us with a unique opportunity to shape mutual policies and a truly European identity.”

Prof. Ferruccio Resta, Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI)

Thank you for sharing a common vision and mission, for meeting the great challenges of the education system together, and for the opportunity for us to build bridges as an open, transnational, autonomous, sustainable and committed university. Happy anniversary!”

Prof. Krasimir Nedyalkov, Varna Free University
“Chernorizets Hrabar”, Bulgaria

“EUA has really become a driver in many senses, especially in the field of higher education management, in creating instruments on how to improve our education.”

Prof. George Sharvashidze, Ivane Javakhishvili
Tbilisi State University

EU advocacy priorities

EUA is a well-established actor in informing and influencing European policies on higher education, research and innovation. In 2021, the Association paid close attention to the EU's overarching ambitions in these areas, notably against a complex backdrop marked by the pandemic, increased geopolitical tensions and the challenges presented by climate change and digitalisation. In this scenario, EUA's advocacy work focused on envisioning pathways forward for the sector and safeguarding common opportunities. It also closely followed the preparations for a European Strategy for Universities.

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

Briefing from Europe's universities to the EU Council Presidency Trio – France, Czech Republic, Sweden

14 Dec 2021 | Briefing

Setting out the priorities that EUA would like the EU Council Presidency trio commencing in January 2022 to work on, this briefing focuses on the European Education Area, the European Research Area, global cooperation and the digital transformation.

✓ 1.

Association of Switzerland to Horizon Europe and Erasmus+: safeguarding our common opportunities

10 December 2021 | Statement

This statement urges that Swiss association to EU programmes must be disentangled from the larger issues of Switzerland's future relation to the European Single Market as proposed under the abandoned Framework Agreement.

✓ 1.



Strategic priorities

In accordance with the [EUA Strategic Plan](#), the Association worked in 2021 to serve Europe's universities through activities designed to fulfil its four strategic priorities:

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance

NextGenerationEU: What do National Recovery and Resilience Plans hold for universities?

06 October 2021 | Briefing

Outlining opportunities for universities in contributing to the objectives of the national recovery plans, this briefing also details what type of support can they expect and for which activities.

Universities after Brexit: An update on EU-UK relations

14 July 2021 | Briefing

Focusing on the EU programmes, trade in services, data and travel, this EUA briefing provides an overview of the new relationship and how universities on both sides of the Channel can continue to work together.

Towards an EU strategy in support of universities

30 June 2021 | Policy input

The policy input outlines how EUA sees the EU strategy for universities, describing where such a strategy can have added value, what it should refrain from and the elements it should consider.

University funding towards 2030: increasing firepower in the post-pandemic phase

20 May 2021 | Webinar

Analysing data from across Europe, gathered through the EUA Public Funding Observatory, participants discussed the next era of university funding, sharing both broad and strategic insights, as well as focused and practical approaches.

Knowledge, science and democracy

12 March 2021 | Online event (organised by Euractiv)

This event looked at how politics, civil society and the science community can overcome the challenge of polarised societies and vocal scepticism towards science. It also addressed how universities can contribute and whether it is possible to achieve the perfect balance of being research organisations, learning spaces and societal actors.

✓ 1.

✓ 4.

✓ 2.

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✓ 1.

✓ 4.

✓ 1.

✓ 4.

Universities without walls – A vision for 2030

4 February 2021 | Position

Universities without walls is the common vision of universities for the next decade. It outlines the ambitions of Europe's universities to be open and engaged and analyses how these ambitions will influence university missions. The document also sets out the factors needed for the successful realisation of the vision.

✓ 1.

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✓ 4.

EU-UK relations after Brexit: what the deal means for universities

1 February 2021 | Briefing

This briefing outlines the main consequences for universities of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, including issues such as UK participation in the Horizon Europe Programme, recognition, mobility and data transfers.

✓ 2.

✓ 3.

In focus

A European Strategy for Universities

Throughout 2021, EUA worked to give input to the development of the European Commission's Strategy for Universities. This included participation in the stakeholder group on the European Strategy for Universities and the future of the European Universities Initiative organised by the European Commission. It also included intense dialogue with the main stakeholders. In this context, EUA's "Universities without walls – A vision for 2030" served as a foundation for EUA's input. The [Strategy for Universities](#) was released in early 2022.

European policy processes and the global context

EUA contributes to the development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through active participation in the Bologna Process. The Association is also heavily engaged in discussions surrounding the EU's European Education Area, including the European Universities Initiative, and it plays an active role in supporting the renewed European Research Area (ERA). Notably in 2021, EUA closely followed the EU's global approach to research, innovation and education. Moreover, the Association consistently participates in dialogue and cooperation initiatives with international partner organisations, often sharing the European experience.

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

Universities as key contributors to sustainable innovation ecosystems

10 Nov 2021 | Conference | Brussels

Policy makers, university leaders and other research and innovation actors discussed the findings of the EUA survey on innovation at European universities. They also discussed EUA's key recommendations to enhance universities' contribution to European innovation ecosystems with Commissioner Mariya Gabriel.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Innovation ecosystems for a sustainable Europe: How to enhance the contribution of universities

10 November 2021 | Position

Outlining the preliminary findings of a major study on innovation at European universities, this position captures the different levels of innovation capacity at universities and informs the future European Commission Communication on innovation.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance

A new world?

7 October, 3 November, 9 December 2021 | Webinar series

This three-part webinar series looked at how geopolitical changes are affecting universities, concretely by discussing the EU's global approach to research and innovation.

Webinar I: Universities in changing international relations

Webinar II: Transatlantic relations

Webinar III: Risk assessment for international partnerships Area.

Pathways to the future - A follow-up to "Universities without walls - A vision for 2030"

22 September 2021 | Report

Building on "Universities without walls", this report looks at possible scenarios for the near future and how these scenarios can impact on the realisation of the vision.

Research and innovation as drivers of open international cooperation

15 June 2021 | Policy input

This is a response to the Commission communication on a global approach for research and innovation. It welcomes the Commission's commitment to open cooperation and differentiated approach towards different world regions.

✓ 2.

✓ 2.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

Developing pathways to achieve the vision

12 February, 25 March, 21 April 2021 | Leadership workshop series

University leaders met in three online workshops to discuss future challenges and to gather input for the report "Pathways to the future".

Workshop I: Changing geopolitics

Workshop II: Artificial intelligence and changing labour markets

Workshop III: The course of democracy in Europe

✓ 2.

A global approach to research, innovation, education and youth

16 March 2021 | Policy input

Providing input to the European Commission's global approach for research and innovation, this document argues for keeping international cooperation open to the world as well as for Europe to invest and strengthen its capacity in research and innovation.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

Ensuring fair and transparent recognition procedures through Bologna Process tools

28 January 2021 | EUA, Nuffic, HRK, CRUE webinar

In the context of the Erasmus+ co-funded "[Spotlight on recognition](#)" project, webinar participants examined Bologna Process tools and discussed good practice in using them in recognition procedures.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Process Key Commitments (MICROBOL)

Throughout 2021 | Project

The MICROBOL project allows ministries and stakeholders to explore, within the Bologna Process, whether and how the existing Bologna tools can be used for or adapted to micro-credentials. EUA is a partner in this project and contributed to all its activities including the [Joint Document with Recommendations](#) for the European Commission's proposal for a Council recommendation on micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability.

Support and promotion for higher education reform experts (SPHERE)

Throughout 2021 | Project

This continued engagement with EU Neighbouring countries came to an end in December. Notably, 2021 saw the publication "[Structural impact of Erasmus+ Capacity Building projects on Higher Education Systems in Partner Countries](#)" and the final conference "[Looking back, looking forward: Perspectives on Higher Education Reform](#)".

✓ 1.

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✓ 4.

In focus

The voice of European universities

Throughout 2021, EUA served as a consultative member in the Bologna Process, participating in various groups and in the Bologna Follow-Up Group. It also closely monitored Erasmus+ programme developments and contributed to expert groups on graduate tracking and the MSCA Green Charter. In addition, it contributed to the European Commission working groups on higher education and adult education.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.



Higher education

Establishing a European dimension in higher education learning and teaching is at the heart of many EUA initiatives – as is enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education provision. In its higher education policy work, the Association underlines the importance of learning and teaching as a core mission of universities, and advocates for activities to be geared towards student learning and success, as well as for the recognition of teaching as a central part of the academic profession. In 2021, this work also focused on the lessons learnt from the pandemic as EUA broadened its scope to the topic of digitally enhanced learning and teaching. The [EUA Learning & Teaching Steering Committee](#) guides these many efforts.

As a leading voice on quality assurance, EUA maintains dialogue with policy makers and other key stakeholder organisations, specifically its E4 Group partners [ENQA](#), [ESU](#) and [EURASHE](#), and supports the operations of [EQAR](#).

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

“Spotlight on recognition” Focus Group II: The potential of digitally facilitated recognition procedures

29-30 November 2021 | EUA, Nuffic, HRK and CRUE online focus group

Participants discussed recent progress in the digitalisation of recognition procedures and to what degree their own institutions are ready to make a permanent move towards digitally facilitated recognition procedures. Participants also tested a self-assessment tool for institutional staff developed within the “Spotlight on recognition” project

✓ 2.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

2021 European Quality Assurance Forum

Building trust and enhancement: from information to evidence

18-19 November 2021 | Online conference

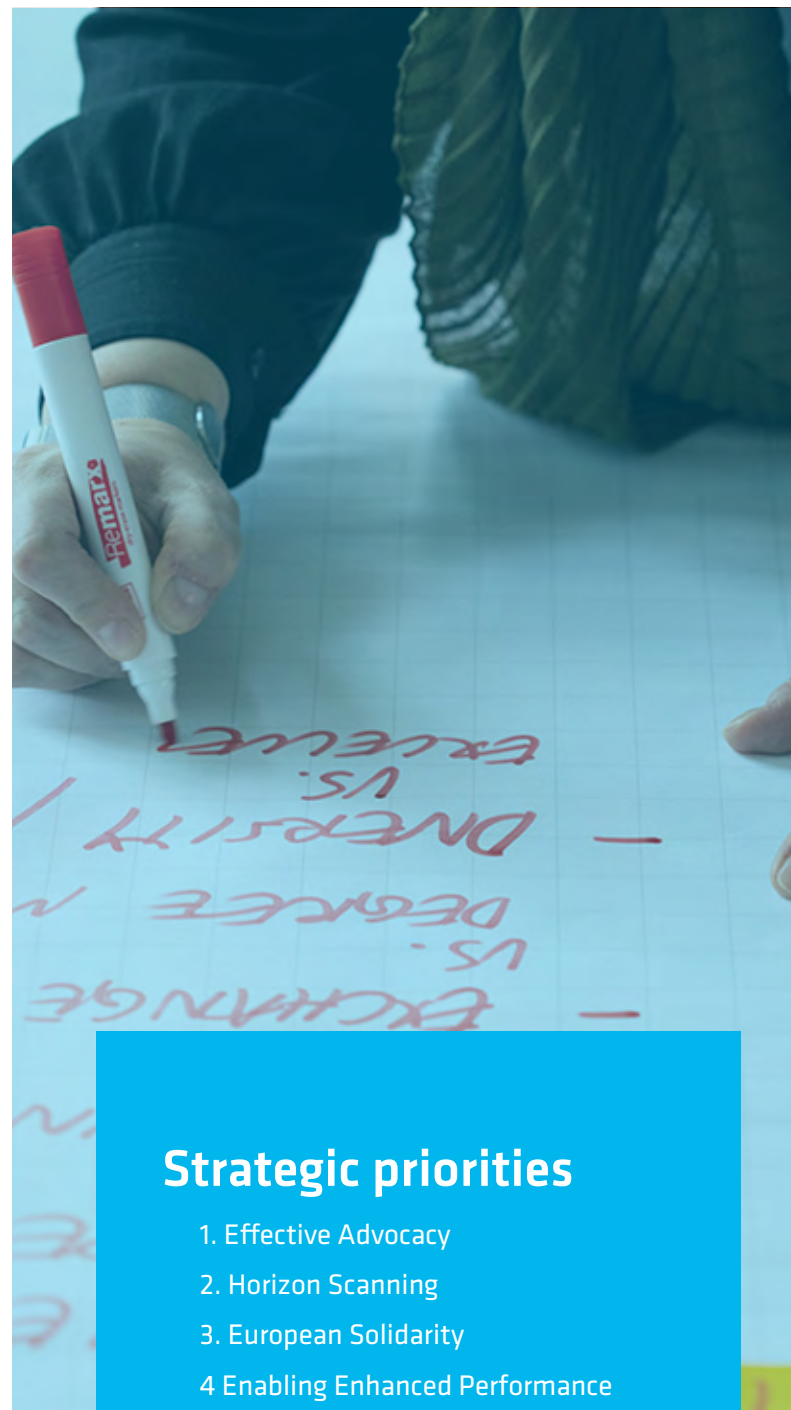
This flagship event combined online sessions about European policies and trends, research, and practical case examples related to the Forum theme and more generally about current developments in quality assurance.

✓ 1.

✓ 4.

Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance



The impact of Covid-19 on European higher education

17 November 2021 | Briefing

EUA conducted a snapshot survey of its national rectors' conference members to create an overview of the continued impact of the pandemic on higher education institutions at the beginning of the academic year 2021/22. The survey focussed on education provision and practices regarding vaccination and testing.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

European Policy Dialogue on supporting the enhancement of learning and teaching

25-26 October 2021 | Event

A part of the [LOTUS](#) project, this event explored how national- and European-level action can best promote and support the enhancement of learning and teaching, in collaboration with autonomous higher education institutions.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Developing a high-performance digital education ecosystem: strategy and organisational culture

19 October 2021 | Online workshop

Aimed at supporting institutions in assessing their achievements and opportunities in digitally enhanced learning and teaching, this online workshop, organised within the [DIGI-HE](#) project, focused on institutional strategy and organisational culture.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

"Spotlight on recognition" Focus Group I: Which differences are really substantial?

19 October 2021 | EUA, Nuffic, HRK and CRUE online focus group

Participants shared how their institutions define substantial differences and approach the topic in practice. The event was also an opportunity to test a self-assessment tool for institutional staff developed within the "[Spotlight on recognition](#)" project.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Greening in European higher education institutions

16 September 2021 | Report

This report gathers evidence from across the EHEA on institutions' diverse activities on, and approaches to, greening. It collects good practices and serves as inspiration in identifying opportunities and challenges, as well as exploring the scope for collective action and policy advocacy.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

Adult skills - Individual Learning Accounts: a tool to improve access to training

15 Jul 2021 | Policy input

With the EU exploring individual learning accounts as a tool to support up- and reskilling of working age adults, this policy input underlines the interest of the sector in individual learning accounts and, broadly, in a more comprehensive European agenda for lifelong learning.

✓ 1.

Micro-credentials supporting flexible higher education and lifelong learning

9 July 2021 | Policy input

The present policy input comprises EUA's key messages for the European Commission's public consultation on micro-credentials in the summer of 2021.

✓ 1.

Recognition of professional qualifications

16 Jun 2021 | Briefing

This briefing on the recognition of professionals covers EU policy frameworks, the Professional Qualifications Directive, developments in the regulated professions, features of the European Education Area and the new EU-UK relationship.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

Greening in European higher education institutions

31 May, 3 June, 4 June | EUA webinar series

In light of the findings of a major EUA study on greening in higher education institutions, this three-part webinar series focused on an array of aspects on the topic.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

Webinar I: Environmental sustainability and the future of mobility and internationalisation

Webinar II: The environmental sustainability of learning and teaching

Webinar III: University strategies and actions for environmental sustainability

Information provision on recognition of qualifications: A practical guide for higher education institutions

25 May 2021 | CIMEA and EUA publication

In the context of the Thematic Peer Group on the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in EHEA countries project, this guide offers recommendations, practical tips and a short list of self-assessment questions on how to provide relevant, accurate and targeted information on the recognition of qualifications.

✓ 1.

✓ 4.

Covid-19 and internal quality assurance: lessons learnt and what's to come

20 May 2021 | EUA webinar

Focusing on how internal quality assurance had responded to the changes brought by the crisis and what had been done to support university communities in addressing key challenges, this webinar highlighted the findings of the EUA report "[Internal Quality Assurance in times of Covid-19](#)".

✓ 1.

✓ 4.

Smooth recognition of academic qualifications: The role of quality assurance

29 April 2021 | EUA, Nuffic, HRK and CRUE webinar

In the context of the Erasmus+ co-funded "[Spotlight on recognition](#)" project, this webinar explored how to make the quality assurance of recognition effective, in a way that keeps the administrative burden on institutional staff at a minimum.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Internal quality assurance in times of Covid-19

March 2021 | Report

This report draws on the experiences of a focus group from EUA member institutions. It examines the key challenges faced, the role internal quality assurance played in ensuring that quality standards were maintained during the crisis and how quality assurance practices supported university communities in their work.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

✓ 4.

EUA Learning & Teaching Thematic Peer Group reports

March 2021 | Reports

The results of the groups' work, these reports focus on [environmental sustainability of learning and teaching](#), [meeting skills and employability demands](#), and [approaches in learning and teaching to promoting equity and inclusion](#).

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

2021 European Learning & Teaching Forum Embedding and facilitating sustainability

18-19 February 2021 | Online conference

This flagship event offered a platform to explore how learning and teaching ensures access to the knowledge and skills needed to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals and accomplish the transformations that our societies and economies require. The event was also an opportunity to present the work of the [2020 EUA Learning & Teaching Thematic Peer Groups](#).

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Internal quality assurance in times of Covid-19

1-2 February 2021 | Online focus group

This online focus group examined how internal quality assurance practices had adapted to the changes brought by the Covid-19 crisis, what challenges had arisen from the quality perspective, and what role internal quality assurance had assumed in supporting institutions in managing the crisis.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

✓ 4.

A strategic reflection on digitalisation in higher education

5 February and 26 January 2021 | DIGI-HE webinar series

The aim of this two-part webinar series, organised as part of the [European Learning & Teaching pre-Forum activities](#), was to present the results of the desk research phase of the [DIGI-HE](#) project.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

✓ 4.

Webinar I: [Developing a high-performing digital education ecosystem: institutional self-assessment instruments](#)

Webinar II: [Results of the survey report "Digitally enhanced learning and teaching in European higher education institutions"](#)

Digitally enhanced learning and teaching in European higher education institutions

21 January 2021 | Report

This report maps the situation regarding digitally enhanced learning and teaching at European higher education institutions over the past seven years – a timely topic given the changes brought by the pandemic. It is part of the Erasmus+ co-funded [DIGI-HE](#) project.

Developing a high performance digital education system

21 January 2021 | Report

This report presents a review of 20 instruments from around the globe designed for self-assessment of digitally enhanced learning and teaching at higher education institutions. It comes in the light of changes brought by the pandemic and is part of the [DIGI-HE](#) project.

Recognition of professional qualifications

21 Jan 2021 | Briefing

In the context of the Covid-19 crisis, the transition to a digital and green economy, tensions over the rule of law and growing fragility among multilateral institutions, this briefing brings clarity to the current landscape surrounding the recognition of professional qualifications.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.



In focus

Greening in higher education

The higher education sector is well placed to address the environmental challenges facing the planet, and to support the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals, the green transition and the European Union's Green Deal initiative. Many higher education institutions are actively involved in a range of forward-thinking activities in the area of environmental sustainability, both to green their own footprint and to contribute to their surrounding communities as responsible societal actors. Throughout 2021, EUA focused on this topic – notably through its survey report on [“Greening in European higher education institutions”](#) and related webinar series.

Universities and values

The missions and work of universities are underpinned by fundamental values. Throughout 2021, discussions in this space have tended to focus on academic freedom and institutional autonomy in view of recent or more long-standing pressures on universities globally, in EHEA countries and in the EU. EUA continued to monitor and react to political and legislative developments impacting academic freedom and institutional autonomy and represented university views in the relevant committees on fundamental values, including the Bologna Follow-Up Group Working Group on Fundamental Values, the European Coordinating Committee for Academic Freedom Advocacy convened by Scholars at Risk, and the Global Observatory on Academic Freedom, a Central European University initiative. At the same time, the Association is maintaining its broad perspective on values, addressing a range of issues including diversity and inclusion, sustainable development and research ethics and integrity, as many activities highlighted in this report show.

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

Academic freedom in Europe

9 November 2021 | EUA and STOA online event

Organised with the European Parliament's Panel for the Future of Science and Technology (STOA), this online event aimed to clarify the definition of academic freedom, to frame the challenges in the EU and to identify options for addressing them.

Higher education diversity strategies for migrant and refugee inclusion: The UNI(di)VERSITY atlas of inclusion

November 2021 | Report

This report aims to map concrete examples of support measures for students in a refugee(-like) situation across Europe, and analyse how these are linked to university strategies and overarching approaches towards diversity and inclusion. It is part of the **UNI(di)VERSITY** project, funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

European Universities 2030. Vision and Values

25 March 2021 | EUA and Magna Charta Observatory webinar

More than 600 participants from 76 countries joined this webinar to share different perspectives from around the world on academic freedom and institutional autonomy. The discussion was underpinned by the EUA vision "Universities without walls".

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✓ 2.

✓ 3.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

✓ 3.

Initiative to Support, Promote and Integrate Researchers at Risk in Europe (InSPIREurope)

Throughout 2021 | Project

This Europe-wide initiative aims to support researchers who are at risk due to discrimination, persecution, suffering or violence. Funded under the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, it is hosted at Maynooth University and coordinated by Scholars at Risk Europe. Throughout 2021, EUA continued its commitment to the project through awareness-raising activities including webinars, stakeholder fora and regional outreach workshops.

✓ 1.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance

Research and innovation

One of EUA's main activities is promoting the pivotal role of universities in research and innovation. In these efforts, the Association actively supports universities in the transition to Open Science. EUA takes a comprehensive view to Open Science by gathering information on the current situation in Europe and building a forward-looking dialogue between universities and other main stakeholders. Priority areas include Open Access to scholarly outputs and FAIR research data. The Association also advocates for more accurate, transparent and responsible research assessment practices. Notably, in late 2021, EUA joined an initiative led by the European Commission on reforming research assessment. In addition, it addressed how the quality and impact of academic activities and careers in general are evaluated. The [Expert Group on Science 2.0/Open Science](#) guides EUA's work on Open Science. All of EUA's policy work in research and innovation is supported by the [Research Policy Working Group](#).

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

Good Practices in FAIR Competence Education

31 Dec 2021 | Report

This collection of case studies and practices, compiled within the [FAIRsFAIR](#) project, provides universities with points of inspiration on how fellow institutions and organisations addressed the need for more RDM and FAIR data-related skills to be taught at different levels.

✓ 4.

Open Science in university approaches to academic assessment

16 December 2021 | Report

This is a follow-up report to the 2020-21 EUA Open Science Survey results. It offers the perspective of European universities on the state of play and potential paths forward for responsible academic assessment.

✓ 1.

✓ 2.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.



Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance

The new university Open Access checklist

25 October 2021 | Report

This checklist is a guide for universities that wish to further develop their Open Access activities. It offers an *à la carte* approach whereby institutions can consider the goals and actions that make most sense in their particular situations.

Practical implementation of FAIR-related content in university curricula and teaching

12 October 2021 | EUA and University of Göttingen online workshop

Participants at this [FAIRsFAIR](#) project workshop worked together to develop practical guidance on how to implement FAIR research data management topics in teaching.

Training the trainers: Data management and FAIR data principles in university curricula

15 September 2021 | EUA and University of Amsterdam online workshop

This [FAIRsFAIR](#) project workshop addressed the needs and challenges encountered by teachers and trainers of research data management and FAIR principles in higher education institutions.

From principles to practices: Open Science at Europe's universities

08 July 2021 | Webinar

Participants at this webinar had the opportunity to discuss the results and recommendations of the [2020-2021 EUA Open Science Survey Report](#).

From principles to practices: Open Science at Europe's universities 2020-2021 EUA Open Science Survey results

5 July 2021 | Report

This report presents the findings of the 2020-2021 EUA Open Science Survey and provides evidence-based recommendations for institutions, researchers, research funders and policy makers on the transition towards Open Science.

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Joint workshop on engaging young entrepreneurs in shaping future EU research and innovation policy

09 June 2021 | EUA and European Commission online workshop

In preparation for the 2021 European Research and Innovation Days, young entrepreneurs from EUA member universities met to share insights on how to shape European research and innovation policy to accelerate the green transition.

Universities and the future of scholarly publishing

18 and 25 May, 8 and 15 June 2021 | Webinar series

This webinar series addressed the role of universities in determining the future of scholarly publishing – in particular in developing an Open Access publishing system. The fourth event was in partnership with [Coalition S](#).

Webinar I: Into the unknown: most likely futures for Open Access publishing

Webinar II: Universities and the promises of scholar-led publishing

Webinar III: Quo vadis, transformative agreements?

Webinar IV: Let's get practical: aligning institutional action with Plan S

FAIR data competences in doctoral education programmes

26-27 May 2021 | EUA and University of Minho online workshop

This [FAIRsFAIR](#) project event, supported by EUA Council for Doctoral Education, addressed the specific needs and challenges of research data management competences and skills at the doctoral level.

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National policy and support actions for research data skills - impact and experiences

28 April 2021 | EUA and Open AIRE online workshop

Organised in the context of the [FAIRsFAIR](#) project, this event focused on the role of national-level initiatives in advancing skills development for research data management.

Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change

25 February 2021 | EUA, DORA and SPARC Europe webinar

Participants at this joint webinar discussed practical steps in reimagining academic career assessment. These institutional- and national-level initiatives serve to imagine and identify emerging pathways of change.

Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change

14 January 2021 | Report

This report brings together and analyses case studies in responsible academic career assessment gathered by EUA, DORA and SPARC Europe. The case studies are as a source of inspiration for universities and other actors.

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In focus

The new university Open Access checklist

On 25 October 2021, EUA published a [checklist](#) to support universities in further developing their Open Access activities. The checklist offers an à la carte approach whereby institutions can consider the goals and actions that make most sense in their particular situation.

The checklist covers three main goals:

1. Empowerment, through high-level policies and strategies
2. Capacity building, through libraries and negotiating consortia
3. Reinforcement of existing structures, through academic community-driven infrastructures

Each goal includes a variety of possible actions, their respective rationale, proposed activities, expected impact and potential pitfalls.

System benchmarking

Universities across Europe operate against diverse regulatory, financial and societal backdrops that are changing at an increasingly fast pace. Important insights can be gained through the comparative analysis of different frameworks across Europe – often leading to their further development and revision. In 2021, EUA's work on system benchmarking focused on funding at national and European levels. The Association published the results of the Public Funding Observatory and analysed opportunities for the university sector as part of the NextGenerationEU national recovery and resilience plans. Ahead of a complete update of its Autonomy Scorecard in 2022, EUA also analysed the regulatory frameworks of Western Balkan countries involved in the STAND project.

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

Public Funding Observatory 2020/2021: part 2

14 April 2021 | Report

This report provides a detailed analysis of long-term funding trends from 2008 to 2019 and offers an overview of the latest public funding developments in 2019 and 2020. It also focuses on the new generation of EU funding programmes (2021-2027) and the EU recovery package.

✓ 1.

EUA Public Funding Observatory 2020/2021: country sheets

14 April 2021 | Report

The Public Funding Observatory report is accompanied by individual country sheets with specific data on 32 higher education systems. The sheets offer an overview of each system, including funding inflation, and student and staff numbers.

✓ 1.

Strengthening university autonomy and increasing accountability and transparency of Western Balkan universities

2021-2024 | Project

The STAND project seeks to enhance the modernisation of governance in Western Balkan universities through capacity building, experience exchange and upgraded infrastructure. It also aims at improving university autonomy through empowering national- and university-level regulations and structures. EUA steered the assessment of institutional autonomy in Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, on the basis of the EUA Autonomy Scorecard.

✓ 3.

✓ 4.

Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance

Leadership, governance and management

EUA is highly engaged in supporting universities in their efforts to make successful decisions on the issues affecting them. In 2021, the Association focused on the importance of capacity-building for higher education leaders as an enabler to support the post-pandemic institutional adaptation and transformation. In this context, EUA further explored the topic of greening at universities. The Association also examined the governance of European University Alliances in a fast-evolving European higher education landscape.

The following are EUA's key contributions in this area:

Greening: a governance, funding and efficiency perspective

15 December 2021 | Policy input

This policy input focuses on areas through which sustainability and greening can be addressed at higher education institutions. It analyses national financing models and European initiatives, such as NextGenerationEU, how green procurement can be a game changer, which efficiency measures can benefit the green agenda and how leadership can be instrumental in driving implementation.

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✓ 4.

Institutional transformation and leadership development at universities. A mapping exercise

21 October 2021 | Report

This report, from the Innovative Leadership and Change Management in Higher Education project ([NEWLEAD](#)), aims to provide a comprehensive picture on leadership development and institutional transformation in higher education systems across Europe.

✓ 4.

Information security strategies for higher education institutions

06 MAY 2021 | EUA and EUNIS webinar

EUA and the European University Information Systems (EUNIS) partnered to organise this webinar on information security strategies for higher education institutions. For non-specialist decision-makers within European universities, the webinar provided a general understanding of the issues at stake and a basis to take informed decisions at the leadership level.

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The governance models of the European University Alliances

18 March 2021 | Briefing

This publication explores the governance set-up of the European University Alliances. It highlights challenges to their governance sustainability and draws attention to the conditions needed to sustain financial capacity and ensure increased collaboration and better alignment with institutional strategic priorities.

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✓ 4.

Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance

EUA Council for Doctoral Education

The EUA Council for Doctoral Education is an integral part of the Association, as well as a leading voice in doctoral education in Europe. It is the largest European network in this field, covering more than 260 universities and institutions working on issues related to doctoral education and research training in 36 countries. Launched in 2008, EUA-CDE works with its members to strengthen their doctoral research capacity.

The community is guided by the EUA-CDE Steering Committee, which welcomed two new members in 2021. Andrei Terian-Dan from the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu in Romania and Irma Grdzeldze from Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University in Georgia joined in April.

In 2021, EUA-CDE's key contributions were:

EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop

Artificial intelligence, data management and the digital world of doctoral education

21-22 January 2021 | Online Thematic Workshop

The 2021 EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop explored emerging issues related to digitalisation from the perspective of doctoral education. This event addressed the role of doctoral education in the context of rapid technological and conceptual changes such as digitalisation or artificial intelligence, how doctoral schools are influenced and how they can make efficient use of emerging digital technologies.

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Strategic priorities

1. Effective Advocacy
2. Horizon Scanning
3. European Solidarity
4. Enabling Enhanced Performance



2021 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

Preparing doctoral education for a post-pandemic world
13-15 September 2021 | Online conference

The EUA-CDE community came together to address the key challenges facing doctoral education in the fallout of the Covid-19 crisis. Participants also discussed collaboration in doctoral education, the importance of academic freedom and the skills needs and development of doctoral candidates. The event hosted speakers from five continents and also addressed the global dimension of doctoral education.

Global meeting on doctoral education and Covid-19

13 January 2021 | Online meeting

This global meeting on doctoral education and the Covid-19 pandemic involved doctoral education leaders from 12 countries. The group discussed the global effect of the pandemic, identified topics of common interest, and exchanged strategies and approaches on how best to tackle the challenges that lie ahead.

EUA-CDE survey on current developments in doctoral education

Summer 2021 | Survey launch

EUA-CDE launched an ambitious survey in 2021 with the aim of providing an overview of the most important developments in doctoral education in recent years. The survey addressed institutional priorities, skills training, the situation of postdoctoral researchers and the current and long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report will be published in March 2022.

EUA-CDE Thematic Peer Group on "Co-tutelles and Joint Doctorates"

January-December 2021 | Second edition

EUA-CDE members representing 23 universities from 15 countries addressed the importance of co-tutelles, steps leading to the co-tutelle agreement, key challenges faced by universities when implementing these agreements, and how they can cope with them. A dedicated report will be published in the spring of 2022.

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Connect with EUA-CDE

www.eua-cde.org
@EUACDE

Follow The Doctoral Debate
Sign up for the newsletter

- * Exchange good practices
- * Strengthen your network
- * Gain access to expertise on doctoral school development
- * Enhance your doctoral research capacity
- * Speak with a strong voice

Institutional Evaluation Programme

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) has served more than 440 higher education institutions in 50 countries. It aims to support higher education institutions and systems in developing their strategic leadership and capacity to manage change through voluntary institutional evaluations.

IEP is registered as an external quality assurance agency on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). It is led by a dedicated [Steering Committee](#).

In 2021, IEP's key contributions were:

Online site visits – a historic approach

In 2021, IEP continued with a new approach adopted at the beginning of the pandemic, namely conducting site visits online. This allowed the service to provide support for institutions in challenging circumstances. IEP also carried out its first evaluations based on the online site visits.

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New guidelines for online evaluations

Given the success of the online approach, the IEP Steering Committee endorsed guidelines for online evaluations and they continued to be used throughout 2021.

✓ 4.

IEP INSTITUTIONAL
EVALUATION
PROGRAMME

www.iep-qaa.org
info@iep-qaa.org

What to expect from an IEP evaluation

- * Context-driven approach reflecting your mission and goals
- * Independent evaluation that complies with the ESG
- * Focus on the institution as a whole
- * Peer review by European experts
- * The IEP evaluation seal

#iepqa

EUA Solutions

EUA Solutions is a tailored service created to assist higher education institutions and stakeholders with their unique challenges. Designed to complement EUA's membership services, EUA Solutions is based on a flexible, on-demand approach to specific requests from universities, decision-makers and national authorities seeking support for change processes and policy development.

In 2021, EUA Solutions' key contributions were:

The National Framework for Doctoral Education in Ireland: Report on its Implementation by Irish Higher Education Institutions

March 2021 | EUA Solutions report

A team of international experts commissioned by EUA Solutions conducted a [study](#) into the implementation of the Irish National Framework for Doctoral Education on behalf of QQI, HEA, IUA and THEA.

✓ 4.

euasolutions

www.eua-solutions.org
info@eua-solutions.org

- * In-depth sector knowledge
- * Peer-to-peer approach
- * European perspective
- * Flexible, on-demand methodology

The Presidency

EUA is governed by the Presidency, the Board, the Council and the General Assembly.

The Presidency is comprised of the president and the two vice-presidents. Michael Murphy is the current president and Martine Rahier and Paul Boyle are the vice-presidents. The president holds office for four years and is not eligible for re-election. The vice-presidents deputise for the president in his or her absence.

The EUA Board

The [EUA Board](#) is comprised of the president and eight members, including the two vice-presidents, all of whom are current or former rectors. The Board is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the Association's policy and the planning of its activities. In 2021, it met four times. One meeting was held in person and three were held online due to the pandemic.

EUA also conducted Board elections in 2021. One member was re-elected to a second term and two new members were elected to replace outgoing members. The members are elected for four-year terms.

- * Michael Murphy, EUA President, University College Cork, Ireland
- * Martine Rahier, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland
- * Paul Boyle, Swansea University, United Kingdom (re-elected)
- * Josep Garrell, University Ramon Llull, Spain
- * Patrick Lévy, University Grenoble-Alpes, France
- * Anne Lequy, Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, Germany (elected)
- * Marcin Pałys, University of Warsaw, Poland
- * Ivanka Popović, University of Belgrade, Serbia (elected)
- * Franceso Ubertini, University of Bologna, Italy
- * Hana Machková, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic (term ended)
- * Mari Sundli Tveit, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway (resigned)



Michael Murphy



Martine Rahier



Paul Boyle



Josep M. Garrell



Patrick Lévy



Anne Lequy



Marcin Pałys



Ivanka Popović



Franceso Ubertini



Hana Machková



Mari Sundli Tveit

The EUA Council

The [EUA Council](#) is comprised of the president, the members of the Board and the chairperson or nominated representative of each national rectors' conference. The Council meets to discuss and define EUA's priorities and to endorse various policy positions and statements. In 2021, it met three times online.

The EUA General Assembly

The EUA General Assembly is comprised of all full and associate members, although only full members are entitled to vote. The General Assembly determines the strategic direction of the Association. It also elects the president and Board. In April 2021, the 23rd EUA General Assembly was held online for the second time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is traditionally held on the occasion of the EUA Annual Conference.

The EUA Secretariat

The [EUA Secretariat](#) is based in Brussels and Geneva. Secretary General Amanda Crowfoot is responsible for the Secretariat, which ensures the daily management and implementation of all EUA activities.

The EUA Secretariat also collaborates with [working groups](#) and [steering committees](#) to guide its initiatives in specific areas where high-level expertise is needed.



Universities 2030: From vision to reality

The [2021 EUA Annual Conference](#) “Universities 2030: From vision to reality” took place online in April. On the backdrop of the climate crisis, technological advances, labour market changes and pressure on Europe’s political systems, the event was an opportunity for an honest and ambitious debate about the path universities must take to remain resilient and relevant.

In EUA's vision for this path, “[Universities without walls – A vision for 2030](#)” (p. 4-5), Europe’s universities are open learning communities engaged in the creation of a sustainable global society, as well as autonomous and accountable entities striving for continuous improvement. The 2021 EUA Annual Conference provided a forum for discussion on some of the key actions needed to realise this vision.

Conference topics

The 2021 EUA Annual Conference featured sessions of various formats, including interactive audience participation, encouraging a rich exchange of experiences and good practices. It hosted university leaders, policy makers and other stakeholders in higher education, research and innovation.

The session themes were:

- * The future of Europe and its universities
- * Hybrid campuses: How to make it work after Covid-19
- * Recognition and rewards of academic career profiles
- * The end of disciplines?
- * Universities as places of culture: Luxury or necessity?
- * Partners in success
- * Nurturing global partnerships through education and research



Theme in focus

The official opening of the event featured a video message by Charles Michel, President of the European Council. The session focused on the future of Europe and its universities, setting the scene for the conference by discussing the path ahead based on the European Union’s ambitions for research and higher education and EUA's vision for 2030.

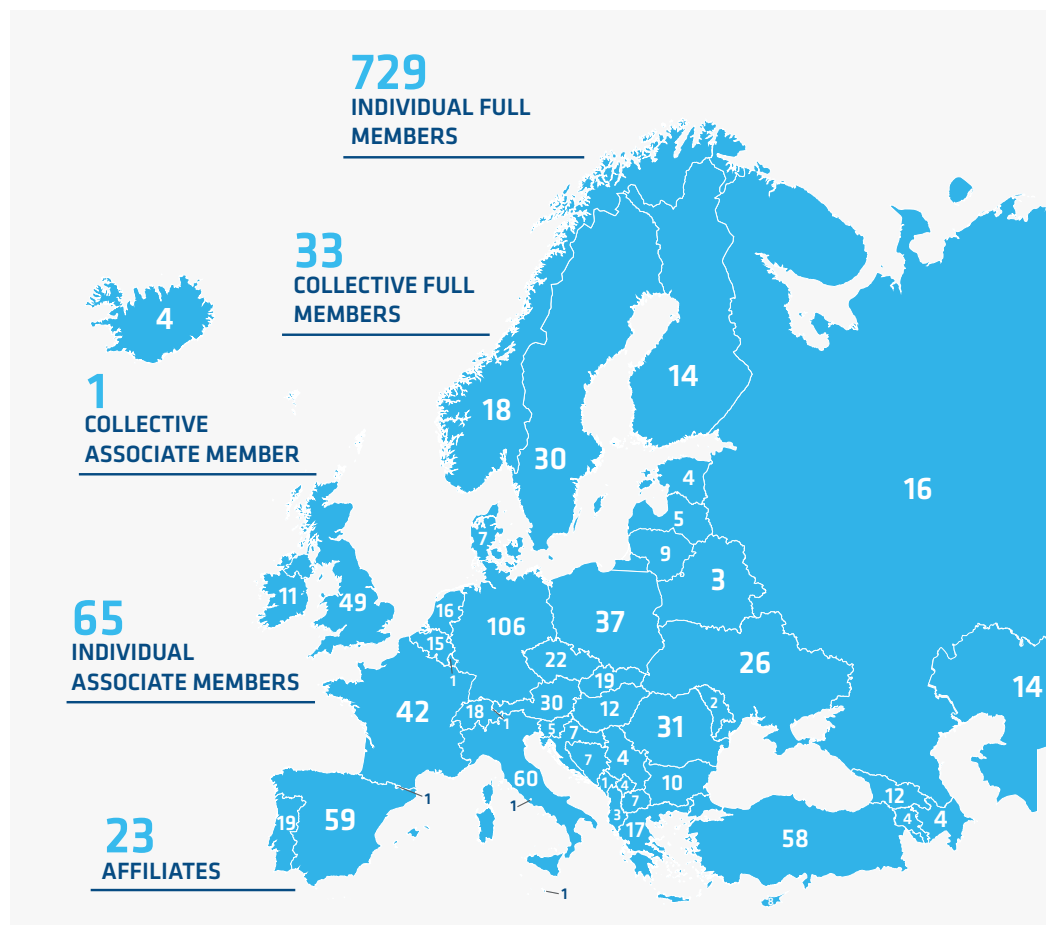
New members

In 2021, EUA welcomed 33 new members and reached a total of 851 members in 48 European countries. [EUA members](#) have access to unique opportunities to participate in projects, events and other mutual-learning activities. They also work with EUA to shape European policies and initiatives affecting higher education and research.

Joined in 2021

AAB College (Kosovo)
Astana IT University (Kazakhstan)
Azerbaijan University (Azerbaijan)
Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest (Romania)
Caucasus University (Georgia)
COMUE University Bourgogne Franche-Comté (France)
East European University (Georgia)
European University (Georgia)
European University Cyprus (Cyprus)
Financial University (Russia)
Grigore T. Popa University of Medicine and Pharmacy (Romania)
IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca (Italy)
J. Selye University (Slovakia)
Kore University of Enna (Italy)
Kutaisi University (Georgia)
Lokman Hekim University (Turkey)
National Technical University of Athens (Greece)
Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

Neapolis University Pafos (Cyprus)
Nebrija University (Spain)
Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (Turkey)
Tbilisi Medical Academy (Georgia)
UBT – Higher Education Institution (Kosovo)
University “Fehmi Agani” Gjakove (Kosovo)
University North (Croatia)
University of A Coruña (Spain)
University of Applied Sciences Burgenland (Austria)
University of Gdansk (Poland)
University of Miskolc (Hungary)
University of South-Eastern Norway (Norway)
Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences (Poland)
WSB University (Poland)
Yerevan “Haybusak” University (Armenia)



EUA members

- * Share expertise
- * Contribute to Europe-wide studies
- * Participate in peer learning and events
- * Influence policy decisions

Types of members

Individual Full Members

Higher education institutions that conduct research, provide degree programmes in two of the three study cycles and receive direct public funding.

Collective Full Members

National rectors' conferences representing the universities of a country.

Individual Associate Members

Higher education institutions that award degrees at the first and second cycle level, but do not meet the research criteria as set for individual full members.

Collective Associate Members

European networks of universities or other higher education institutions that demonstrate a broad European representation.

Affiliates

European or other organisations with an interest in European cooperation in higher education.



How to apply

EUA provides candidates with an application form and detailed information on the process and membership categories. All applications are reviewed by the EUA Secretariat and then approved by the EUA Council. EUA takes into account the economic strength of the country and the number of students enrolled at the institution when calculating member fees. Thus, joining EUA is affordable for universities in different countries and of different sizes.

For more information, write to:

membership@eua.eu

Website



1.8+ million
pageviews

Newsletters



27,700+
subscribers

Publications



36,000+
downloads

Press



1000+
mentions

Social Media

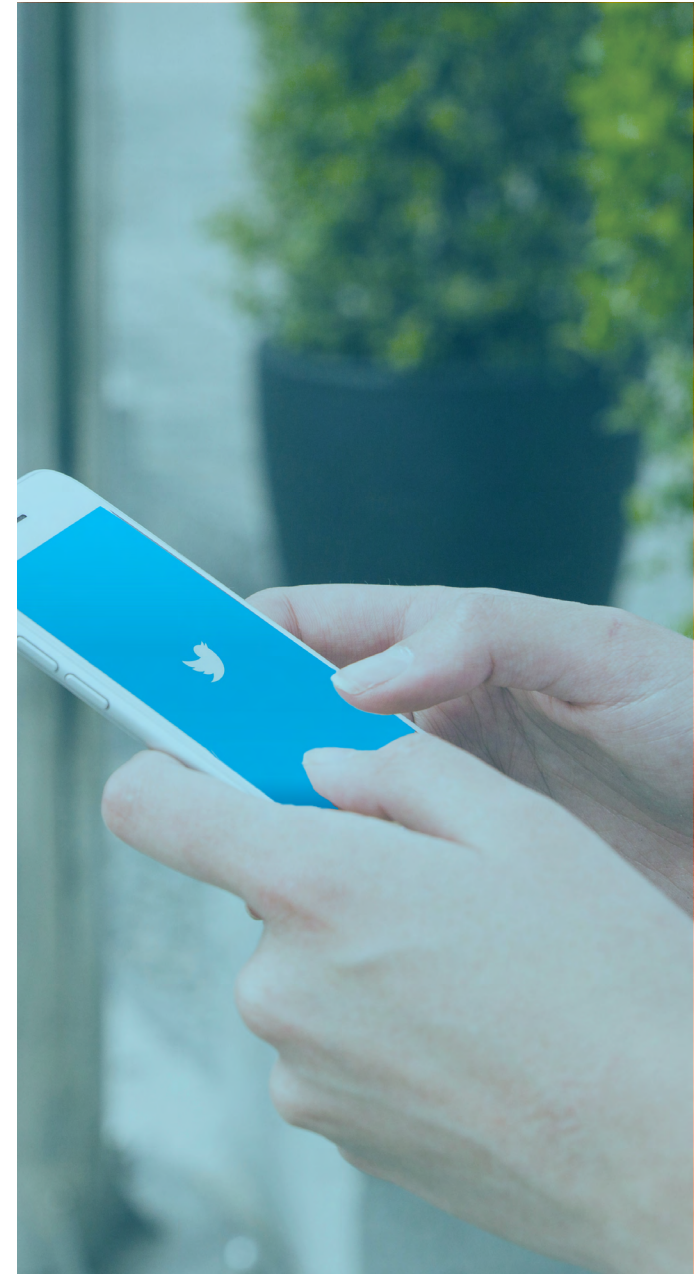


30,400+
followers

Videos

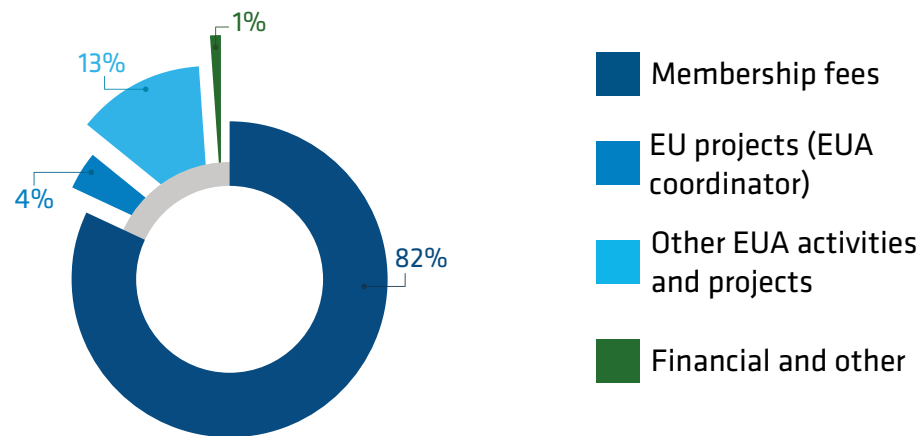


27,600+
views

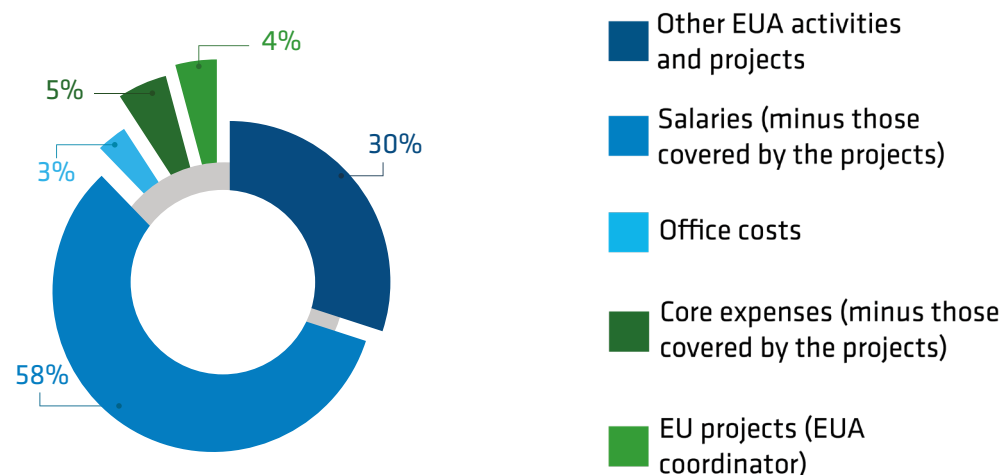


EUA is funded by its wide membership, as well as by projects and other activities. In 2021, the Association's income was more than five million euros. With this funding, EUA sustained its work, offering members the many events, publications and projects cited in this report. It also covered the expenses related to EUA's offices and its more than forty-person strong staff.

EUA funding sources in 2021



EUA expenditures in 2021



2021 in numbers



- * 34 publications
- * 51 Expert Voices articles
- * 16 projects
- * 1 presential event
- * 6 online events
- * 43 webinars and online meetings

Where to search ...



- * EUA Events
- * EUA Publications
- * Expert Voices
- * EUA Projects

Where to follow ...



Where we are



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Case postale 3174
1211 Geneva 3, Switzerland
+41 22 552 02 94



EUA in detail

2021

The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of universities and national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Thanks to its interaction with a range of other European and international organisations, EUA ensures that the voice of European universities is heard wherever decisions are being taken that will impact their activities.

The Association provides unique expertise in higher education and research as well as a forum for exchange of ideas and good practice among universities. The results of EUA's work are made available to members and stakeholders through conferences, seminars, websites and publications.

www.eua.eu

