



Annual Report

The Voice of Europe's Universities

2025

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The European University Association (EUA) is the collective voice of the universities of Europe, institutions that have shaped our world for a millennium



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Delivering on strategic priorities for universities

As work continued on a new Strategic Plan for EUA during 2025 and the Association looked ahead to celebrating a quarter of a century in operation in 2026, wide-ranging activities continued to fulfil the four existing strategic priorities – effective advocacy, horizon scanning, European solidarity and enabling enhanced performance – throughout the year.

PRIORITY 1

Effective Advocacy

Impact on public policy



PRIORITY 2

Horizon Scanning

Alert, responsive, resilient



PRIORITY 3

European Solidarity

A fundamental value



PRIORITY 4

Enabling Enhanced Performance

Excellence in all endeavours



In addition to a packed 12 months of EU policy advocacy and continuous engagement through the Bologna Process on behalf of its members, EUA continued to speak on behalf of universities on the international stage, including through its engagement with its counterparts in the Global University Associations Forum.

In 2025, EUA shared original research on the state of play for university finances, governance and sustainability, as well as doctoral education – 20 years after the adoption of the Salzburg Principles. In the meantime, a group of experts from EUA member universities guided the Association's year-long work programme on artificial intelligence.

Notable 2025 milestones in EUA's work to support its members included the publication of principles and guidelines to support universities as central actors in the protection and promotion of academic freedom, a strategic framework for the Association's learning and teaching activities up until 2030, and its vision for a reform of academic careers – complemented by EUA-led activities to make progress across the sector on career assessment and staff development in learning and teaching.

“As we approach EUA's 25th anniversary it is an excellent moment to stop and reflect about where we come from, where we want to go, and how we want to get there – not least in a global context that has changed so drastically since five years ago.”

*Josep M. Garrell,
EUA President*



Universities at the heart of Europe's competitiveness

As the EU's main institutions settled into a new mandate and embarked on a new policy agenda, EUA consolidated its relationships with key policy makers and made the case for higher education and research's pivotal role during a formative year for the policies that matter most to universities.

In particular, in 2025 the European Commission published the first proposals for the EU's next long-term budget, or multiannual financial framework (MFF), for 2028-2034, as well the Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ programmes.

As the next MFF started to take shape, EUA advocated for the safeguarding of independent programmes with ambitious funding that maximises universities' contribution.

Throughout the year, EUA also continued its engagement with policy makers and stakeholders on the European Universities Initiative, advocating for certainty and durable funding so that alliances can strengthen their capacity to benefit the entire university sector.

In 2025, EUA engaged in numerous policy processes on emerging EU priorities, providing expert input to help shape:

- A Union of Skills that invests in lifelong learning
- A European strategy for AI in science that fosters equitable access to infrastructure, data and skills
- A European Research Area Act that progresses towards the full achievement of the ERA and the fifth freedom
- An Innovation Act that centres interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral partnership, entrepreneurial skills and diverse career paths
- A European Affordable Housing Plan that addresses the impact of housing insecurity on higher education and research



“The next generation of EU programmes must provide the right incentives to foster international cooperation and inclusivity, as well as adequate investment.”

“By strengthening higher education and research mobility, capacity building and collaboration, Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe play a pivotal role in boosting Europe's competitiveness, resilience and prosperity.”

*Amanda Crowfoot,
EUA Secretary General*



Following EUA's extensive input to several public consultations on the future MFF, the Association welcomed the Commission's proposals in July, highlighting that education, research and innovation are a strategic investment in Europe's future.

In the following months, EUA published research on the use and impact of the Erasmus+ programme across Europe. The Association also conducted a comprehensive analysis of the Horizon Europe proposal and joined forces with partners in the sector to put forward a joint set of proposed amendments.

Underlying much of EUA's policy work in 2025 was competitiveness, which has become a central tenet of the second von der Leyen Commission's political agenda.

To this end, EUA proposed a partnership for competitiveness, to bring together the stakeholders and sectors that form Europe's knowledge base and the policy makers that can create the framework to further develop and leverage it.

A research, education and innovation partnership for Europe's competitiveness

Download



Strategic foresight for the EU's new policy paradigm

To help universities to define their role and respond to the political drive for competitiveness, EUA published the report 'Universities and competitiveness – A big picture view on the EU's new policy paradigm and the implications for universities' in October.

The report gives an overview of the present discourse and policies in the EU, and presents three different forecasts set in the Europe of 2035:

- Europe's resurrection
- Tech oligarchy under US hegemony
- Fragmented society

In addition, the report summarises feedback from university leaders to inform its findings on how European universities can strategically position themselves in the coming years, as well as the framework conditions they need to contribute to Europe's competitiveness.

What does Europe's competitiveness mean for universities?



Spotlight on Sustainability

At the 2025 EUA Annual Conference – on the theme of ‘Connecting the dots on sustainability and resilience’ – the Association kicked off a series of activities to shine a ‘Spotlight on Sustainability’.

To date, this campaign has fostered the sharing of information and experiences between universities in Europe and beyond on how they approach sustainability, while highlighting the essential role that universities play in achieving the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

[Learn about EUA's work on sustainability](#)



The results of an EUA survey that gathered 400 responses from institutions in 43 countries, summarised in a report on ‘Sustainability and greening in European higher education’ published in November, captures a wide range of perceptions and approaches among universities across Europe.

Sustainability and greening in European higher education

EUA survey report

[Download](#)



The main takeaways

- Since 2021, university engagement for sustainability and greening has increased, both regarding the number of active institutions and also the intensity of their actions.
- European universities have become increasingly strategic about sustainability and greening. There has been a shift towards institutional policies and more mainstreamed approaches.
- Sustainability and greening brings multifaceted benefits for universities, from campus life, R&I opportunities and ‘real life’ learning and teaching to staff and student recruitment and partnerships with wider society, not to mention the economic benefits and cost savings.
- Most initiatives are based on voluntary commitment and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Compulsory measures are relatively uncommon.
- When asked what is needed to overcome the barriers they face in implementing sustainability and greening measures, enhanced national and European funding is universities’ biggest ask.
- Regarding the SDGs, many universities take a comprehensive approach that goes beyond climate and environmental issues. Moreover, most universities have increased their commitment towards the SDGs over the past five years and expect to do the same in the next five.



The year in conferences

2025 European Learning & Teaching Forum

2030 and beyond: towards responsive and adaptable higher education

27-28 February | Cork, IE

2025 EUA Annual Conference

Connecting the dots on sustainability and resilience

10-11 April | Riga, LV

2025 EUA AI Conference

How universities are shaping the era of artificial intelligence

22-23 May | Online

2025 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

20 years of progress - Celebrating the achievements and shaping the future of doctoral education in Europe

4-6 June | Lausanne, CH

2025 European Quality Assurance Forum

QA in times of crises – Ensuring stability, autonomy and international cooperation in higher education

12-14 November | Budapest, HU



As AI-powered tools proliferate, how can universities successfully and responsibly manage the leap from experimentation to systematic integration?

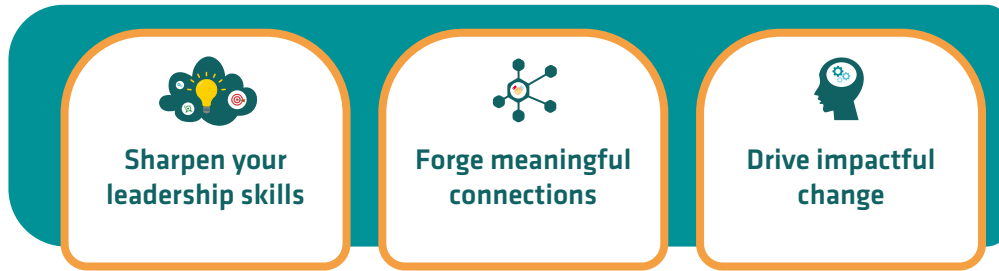
During this online conference, EUA showcased practices in the adoption of AI at its member universities across Europe and throughout the global higher education and research sector, with expert input on:

- the political and regulatory backdrop
- the ethical considerations surrounding the integration of new technologies
- the effectiveness of policies and frameworks in guiding implementation and setting boundaries
- the importance of training
- the role of leadership, educators and learners in determining where AI does and does not bring benefits



Empowering university leaders

In 2025, a dynamic group of senior professionals from universities in Europe embarked on the pilot edition of EUA's Leadership Development Programme.



A new initiative, the programme is designed to support university leaders from across Europe, equipping them with the skills, networks and strategic insights to navigate the evolving higher education landscape. This first cohort brought together a group of 24 senior professionals from EUA member universities in 16 European countries, representing a wide range of professional profiles, types of institution and geographic regions, who:

- benefited from exchanges with experts and European policy makers
- learned from the lived experiences of university leaders
- gained insights into the latest developments in European higher education policy
- explored strategic communication, foresight, governance, funding and shared leadership through practical exercises
- and worked in action learning groups to tackle real-world cases and complex dilemmas, fostering peer learning and sharing of diverse perspectives.



Simultaneously, EUA prepared for a second cohort to enter the programme in 2026 and laid the way for future editions, building on the lessons learned from the successful pilot.

[Learn more about EUA's Leadership Development Programme](#)



Effective advocacy

Throughout 2025, EUA carried out numerous activities to advance its strategic priority of effective advocacy for the benefit of our members. These included making the case for research, innovation and education's role in the EU's competitiveness agenda, advocating for an ambitiously funded and stand-alone tenth EU R&I framework programme and publishing an in-depth study on the current Erasmus+ programme and the lessons learned for its successor.

-  **Council of the EU sets priorities for next 18 months**
7 January | Universities of the future
-  **EUA meets with Commission Executive Vice-President Roxana Minzatu**
9 January | Erasmus+, European Universities alliances
-  **Stable research, innovation and education programmes are needed to build a competitive Europe**
6 February | EU R&I programmes, Erasmus+
-  **Research and innovation sector calls for key actions to strengthen Europe's R&I leadership**
12 February | EU R&I programmes
-  **Presidents of university networks call on EU leaders to secure a stand-alone, ambitious FP10**
6 March | EU R&I programmes
-  **Universities welcome member states' and European Parliament's united call for a stand-alone FP10**
13 March | EU R&I programmes
-  **A research, education and innovation partnership for Europe's competitiveness**
26 March | Position | Universities of the future

Impact on public policy

Addressing Europe's higher education and research needs

Defining the future of universities

Emerging opportunities and threats to our society

Transformational role of universities in society

Armed with persuasive evidence



Skills and education for Europe's competitiveness

Response to the European Commission's Communication on the Union of Skills

24 April | Policy input | European Education Area

Responding to the European Commission's Communication on the Union of Skills, EUA highlighted the urgent need for a strategic and enduring approach to enhance Europe's lifelong and continued learning capacities.

As such, the Association called for the establishment of a flagship EU initiative for lifelong learning, which would align with Europe's economic and societal needs and ongoing transformations, be attractive for European and international talent and send a strong, positive signal towards the EU's global partners and competitors.



 **The European Universities Initiative's next chapter must dismantle barriers to cooperation for all**

8 April | European Universities alliances

 **The EU's next long-term budget must support ambitious and independent programmes for education, research and innovation**

6 May | EU R&I programmes, Erasmus+

 **Council of the EU approves vision for a European degree label, EUA welcomes step-by-step approach**

15 May | European Education Area, Bologna Process & EHEA

 **EUA discusses EU budget, competitiveness and future of European research with Commissioner Zaharieva**

15 May | EU R&I programmes

 **Entering a new chapter for the European Research Area: the second ERA Policy Agenda 2025–2027**

A new ERA for universities (VIII)

27 May | Webinar | European Research Area

 **The role of universities in the European Union's ambitions for AI Response to the European Commission's call for evidence on a European strategy for AI in science**

3 June | Policy input | Artificial intelligence

 **Use and impact of the Erasmus+ programme (2021-27) at higher education institutions**

Survey report and recommendations

20 May | Report | Erasmus+


This report analyses the responses of 500 higher education institutions in 49 Erasmus+ programme and partner countries to a survey on their experience with the programme. As such, it provides a comprehensive evidence base and concrete recommendations to inform the further enhancement of the programme, including the ongoing development of the next generation of Erasmus+, to be launched in 2028.

Overall, EUA's findings highlight that Erasmus+ is a programme of high added value and strengthening it is vital to Europe's competitiveness and global standing. Indeed, continuing the success of Erasmus+, through improvement of the programme and increasing its budget, is of key importance for the goals set out in the EU's Competitiveness Compass and Union of Skills. Doing so will also foster the global visibility and attractiveness of Europe's higher education and research sector.

 **Council of the EU endorses new ERA Policy Agenda, EUA expresses support and readiness to contribute**


23 May | European Research Area



 **European Education Area: business as usual is no longer an option**
4 June | European Education Area, European Universities alliances

 **Research community urges the EU to preserve MSCA's bottom-up approach**
24 June | EU R&I programmes


 **Research organisations call for EU to preserve early-stage collaborative R&I in the next framework programme**
11 July | EU R&I programmes


 **EUA welcomes commitment to education, research and innovation in proposal for EU's next long-term budget**
18 July | EU R&I programmes, Erasmus+

 **EUA's recommendations to increase the European Research Area's impact and achieve the fifth freedom**
12 September | European Research Area

 **Horizon Europe 2028-2034**
EUA analysis of the European Commission's proposal
29 September | Policy input | EU R&I programmes

In this policy input, EUA presented its in-depth analysis of the legislative proposal for Horizon Europe (2028-2034) and its links to the newly proposed European Competitiveness Fund (ECF). Welcoming the decision to safeguard it as a stand-alone programme and increase its budget, the paper also highlights areas of concern for universities – to ultimately ensure that Horizon Europe remains focused on excellent research, including collaborative research, rather than being repurposed as a tool to deliver on short-term political objectives.

 **The EU's Innovation Act can address hurdles to innovation and boost Europe's competitiveness**
3 October | Innovation

 **European Affordable Housing Plan must address the impact of housing insecurity on higher education**
20 October | Erasmus+, European Education Area

 **Erasmus+ 2028-2034**
EUA response to the European Commission's public consultation on the EU's next long-term budget (MFF)
25 November | Policy input | Erasmus+

 **Shared vision, unified voice: Universities and research institutes in Europe propose joint FP10 amendments**
1 December | EU R&I programmes



Horizon scanning

In 2025, EUA conducted broad horizon scanning, including numerous strategic foresight activities, on behalf of its members. This included a conference on how to develop future-ready learning and teaching, new findings on how universities can strengthen their financial resilience and analysis of the evolving landscape of university governance across Europe.



STAFF-DEV: Staff development in learning and teaching: the state of play

21 January | Webinar, Learning & Teaching | Academic careers



EU experiments with European degree and 'institutionalised cooperation instruments'

28 January | European Education Area



Staff development in learning and teaching at European universities

Results from the STAFF-DEV survey

9 January | Report | Universities of the future



New report highlights uneven implementation of reforms towards deeper and more effective transnational cooperation

24 February | Bologna Process & EHEA, European Universities alliances



Staff development in learning and teaching at European universities

Results from the STAFF-DEV focus groups

19 March | Report | Learning & Teaching, Academic careers

*Alert,
responsive,
resilient,
flexible and
agile*

Early detection of
impending change
and astute planning

Identifying
trends and
developments
across the
sector

**Consulting
regularly
with peer
associations
and relevant
bodies in other
global regions**

Monitoring
the impact of
digitalisation,
artificial intelligence
and Big Data

*Engaging
continuously
with our
external
stakeholders*



2025 European Learning & Teaching Forum

2030 and beyond: towards responsive and adaptable higher education

27-28 February | Cork, IE | Learning & Teaching

As building agility for unknown challenges emerges as a key issue for the higher education sector, how can we prepare our students, teachers and institutions for the path ahead?

Participants in this future-gazing edition of the L&T Forum discussed strategies to develop future-readiness in and through learning and teaching. Key questions included how higher education can safeguard its relevance through capacity for adaptation and how graduates can be equipped with responsive and adaptable mindsets.



Learning and teaching to empower students

27 March | Report | Learning & Teaching

Exploring strategies for institutions to leverage the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

4 April | Report | Learning & Teaching

Learning and teaching in situations of crisis: needs and support provision

12 May | Report | Learning & Teaching

In 2025, EUA published the outcomes of three L&T Thematic Peer Groups, comprised of EUA member universities, that took place in 2024. Meanwhile, three newly formed groups commenced work on:

- Staff development and transnational collaboration
- Ensuring the quality and impact of staff development in teaching
- Enhancing teacher engagement and expanding staff development opportunities

Financially sustainable universities: State of play and strategies for future resilience

3 April | Briefing | Funding

Drawing on findings from a large-scale survey on the financial sustainability of universities, this briefing describes the state of university finances in Europe.

In addition, it elaborates on how universities can take action to strengthen their financial resilience through comprehensive strategies that integrate income diversification, efficiency measures, internal capacity building and strategic prioritisation of activities, as well as the development of leadership and management capacity.

Horizon Europe work programme 2025: new funding opportunities for universities

16 May | EU R&I programmes

2025 EUA AI Conference

How universities are shaping the era of artificial intelligence

22-23 May | Online conference | Artificial intelligence





Competitiveness, preparedness and sustainable prosperity – Universities' role in Europe's new policy paradigm

13 June | Workshop | Universities of the future



What does the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive mean for universities?

3 July | Briefing | Sustainability



Participation in institutional governance

Evolving models of university governance II

9 July | Briefing | Autonomy & governance

This briefing explores the evolving landscape of university governance in Europe, offering a detailed picture of the development and current models of governance, their structures, legal provisions and levels of inclusiveness.

While differences between higher education systems persist – reflecting diverse traditions, political cultures and regulatory environments – EUA's research identifies several common trends. These include the spread of the dual governance model and the greater role of university boards, as well as the inclusion of external stakeholders in university governance becoming more common.



Universities and competitiveness

A big picture view on the EU's new policy paradigm and the implications for universities

29 October | Report | Universities of the future



Sustainability and greening in European higher education

27 November | Report | Sustainability



Similarities and differences in the digital transformation of higher education

Perspectives from Africa, the Arab region, Asia, Europe and the Americas

5 December | Report | Digital transition, Global context



Mapping approaches to sustainability in European higher education

What do universities' strategies tell us?

11 December | Briefing | Sustainability



European solidarity

The core value of European solidarity underpinned EUA's work in 2025. In particular, the Association published principles and guidelines to help its members ensure that academic freedom is a lived daily reality on campus, joined efforts to support at-risk academics – including by implementing the MSCA4Ukraine fellowship scheme, and called for UK universities to return to Erasmus+.



2025 EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop

Establishing and advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in doctoral education

16-17 January | Braga, PT | Doctoral education, Equity, diversity, inclusion & belonging



How universities can protect and promote academic freedom

EUA principles and guidelines

4 February | Position | Academic freedom

For EUA, it is essential to support universities as central actors in the protection and promotion of academic freedom. In 2025, the Association offered concrete and practical guidance on how universities can do so.

Calling on its members across Europe to implement their own institutional guidelines and policies, this paper formulates key principles that highlight the essential role of academic freedom for universities and for societies; it proposes a number of guidelines to frame and reinforce efforts by university leadership, individual academics and university communities to ensure that academic freedom is a lived daily reality on campus. In addition, EUA reiterates certain key actions in support of academic freedom that can be taken by governments and public authorities.

Global solidarity

Bolstering European solidarity, including beyond the borders of the EU

Distributed excellence

Solidarity is a fundamental value of EUA

Supporting those with developmental needs

Sharing experiences, expertise and solutions



MSCA4Ukraine to support 49 additional researchers

23 April | At-risk academics and students, Ukraine



Europe must champion academic freedom and protect academics at risk

20 June | Academic freedom, At-risk academics and students



EUA Board calls for a resolution to the challenging situation facing Serbian universities

22 July | Academic freedom, Autonomy & governance



The government of Türkiye misses opportunity to align appointment of rectors with European standards

31 July | Autonomy & governance



Expanding opportunities in Europe for researchers at risk


Inspireurope+ recommendations (2025 update)

17 September | Report | At-risk academics & students




 **Universities urge negotiators to swiftly agree to UK Erasmus+ association**
8 October | Erasmus+, Global context

 **Enhanced collaboration with the Ukrainian higher education sector through MSCA4Ukraine fellowships**
13 October | Webinar | At-risk academic and students, Ukraine

 **EU-Africa Summit: Universities call for emphasis on higher education and research**
10 November | Global context

 **Global University Associations Forum holds fourth annual meeting**
21 November | Global context

 **Enhanced collaboration with the Ukrainian higher education sector through MSCA4Ukraine fellowships**
24 November | Video | At-risk academics and students, Ukraine

 **Universities welcome the UK's return to Erasmus+**
17 December | Erasmus+, Global context

At the end of 2025, EUA and Universities UK welcomed news that the United Kingdom will associate to the Erasmus+ programme from 2027.

As the voice of European universities, EUA has worked closely with our UK members to advocate for their return to Erasmus+. The programme has long been a cornerstone of international collaboration in higher education, and the UK rejoining will help rebuild and deepen partnerships that are vital for research, mobility and cultural exchange.



Enabling enhanced performance

2025 brought several milestones in EUA's work to achieve its strategic priority of enabling enhanced performance among its members. For example, the Association started implementing its first strategic agenda for learning and teaching, conducted wide-ranging work on academic careers and their assessment, as well as staff development, and outlined how universities can shape the future of scholarly communication.

-  **24 participants selected for EUA's Leadership Development Programme**
16 January | Leadership
-  **New project on automatic recognition assessment starts work**
7 February | Academic recognition
-  **CoARA working group maps initiatives to reform academic career assessment**
13 February | Academic careers
-  **European Higher Education Sector Observatory and Scoreboard launched to support evidence-based policy making**
19 February | European Education Area, Autonomy & governance
-  **2025 EUA Annual Conference**
Connecting the dots on sustainability and resilience
10-11 April | Riga, LV | Sustainability
-  **EUA holds first on-site Leadership Development Programme session in Riga**
15 April
-  **EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (EUA-IEP): a tool to develop strategic leadership and capacity to manage change**
5 May | Webinar | Quality Assurance
-  **EUA-IEP launches evaluations of European Universities alliances**
6 May | European Universities alliances, Quality Assurance

Academic
careers

University values,
institutional
autonomy and
academic freedom

Open Science,
academic
integrity, quality
assurance

Ethical, critical
and creative
thinkers

*Societal
relevance and
impact*

*Championing
all academic
disciplines,
interdisciplinarity*

Capacity in
governance,
academic and
operational
leadership and
management



EUA L&T Agenda 2030

A strategic framework to strengthen universities' first mission
22 May | Position | Learning & Teaching

In May, EUA published the Association's first L&T Agenda, a strategic framework for the Association's activities in this field up until 2030, around three focus areas:

- Quality – Keeping the student front and centre
- Connectivity – Linking disciplines, peers and stakeholders
- Transformation – Enabling excellence in dynamic contexts





Key principles for attractive and sustainable academic careers

Final report of the EUA Task-and-Finish Group on Academic Careers

27 May | Position | Academic careers

A reform of academic careers is needed in Europe to ensure that academia remains an attractive career option and place of excellence.

As such, this publication presents five key principles for universities that address:

- professional development, rewards and recognition
- diversity and inclusivity
- balancing competition and collegiality
- early-career academics
- societal embeddedness



Making internal QA work for institutional growth

Workshop series | Quality Assurance

Creating and enhancing a culture of quality

28 May

The role of stakeholders in internal quality assurance

3 June

The connection between internal and external reviews

6 June



Transitions and transformations in staff development for learning and teaching

STAFF-DEV Masterclass 1

26-28 May | Cork, IE | Learning & Teaching, Academic careers



2025 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

20 years of progress - Celebrating the achievements and shaping the future of doctoral education in Europe

4-6 June | Lausanne, CH | Doctoral education



Doctoral education in Europe today: enhanced structures and practices for the European knowledge society

2025 EUA-CDE survey report (I)

6 June | Report | Doctoral education





Reclaiming academic ownership of the scholarly communication system

Challenges and opportunities for universities

5 June | Briefing | Open Science

Despite a current publishing system that is entrenched in a competitive, prestige-driven academic culture and the significant challenges of transforming it, universities have a unique opportunity to shape the future of scholarly communication.

This briefing describes the current status of academic publishing, highlighting the main factors shaping the system and the key challenges faced by the academic community, thus leading to six key considerations for universities.



Reclaiming academic ownership of the scholarly communication system

The future of scholarly communication (IV)

5 June | Webinar | Open Science



Spotlight on Sustainability

June - December | Webinar series | Sustainability

Science and policy for sustainability

12 June

Making sustainability reporting a strategic asset for universities

17 June

Competitiveness and sustainability: can universities find a common ground?

23 September

Technological innovation – universities' role and dilemmas in sustainability

9 December



Introducing the EUA L&T Agenda 2030: A strategic framework to strengthen universities' first mission

16 June | Webinar | Learning & Teaching



Towards a holistic reform: exploring EUA's key principles for attractive and sustainable academic careers

23 June | Webinar | Academic careers



EUA's Leadership Development Programme concludes successful pilot edition

9 September | Leadership





Advanced staff development: fostering educational leadership and scholarship

STAFF-DEV Masterclass 2

8-10 October | Utrecht, NL | Learning & Teaching, Academic careers



2025 European Quality Assurance Forum

QA in times of crises – Ensuring stability, autonomy and international cooperation in higher education

12-14 November | Budapest, HU | Quality Assurance

EQAF 2025 reflected on the role of QA in upholding public education as a shared societal asset and promoting academic values to ensure that higher education continues to be a foundation for progress and development.

The conference explored new policies, innovative methodologies and tools that allow QA to promote institutional autonomy and effective governance amidst disruption and external pressures. Participants also discussed how QA can sustain the spirit of international academic cooperation within and beyond the EHEA.



Making internal QA work for institutional growth

November | Webinar series | Quality Assurance

Creating and enhancing a culture of quality

24 November

The connection between internal and external reviews

27 November



Experts from EUA universities start work on post-2030 sustainability agenda

3 December | Sustainability



EUA launches new website for its Institutional Evaluation Programme

10 December | Quality Assurance



Navigating the future of scholarly communication, Open Science and AI

The future of scholarly communication (V)

16 December | Webinar | Open Science, Artificial intelligence



The European voice for doctoral education

EUA-CDE is the largest European network in doctoral education, covering more than 290 universities and institutions in 39 countries.

In January, EUA-CDE held its annual Thematic Workshop in Braga, Portugal on [‘Establishing and advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in doctoral education’](#).

By March, EUA-CDE wrapped up a survey on [‘Doctoral education in Europe today: achievements, policies and emerging trends’](#).

In June, 20 years since the Salzburg Principles were adopted, the [2025 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting](#), in Lausanne, Switzerland, reflected on two decades of progress and achievements in doctoral education while looking ahead to new horizons in an ever-evolving society.

During the Annual Meeting, EUA-CDE published the first findings from its 2025 survey, in a report entitled [‘Doctoral education in Europe today: enhanced structures and practices for the European knowledge society’](#).

In September, Peter Hanenberg (Universidade Católica Portuguesa) was appointed as [the new chair of the EUA-CDE Steering Committee](#) and three new members joined the committee.



Where does European doctoral education stand 20 years after the Salzburg Principles?

This report captures a comprehensive picture of the current landscape of doctoral education in Europe, with particular attention to how institutional structures and practices reflect the Salzburg Principles. It explores central themes such as:

- the rise of doctoral schools across Europe,
- the organisation and development of supervision practices,
- the support services available to doctoral candidates, and
- how universities are addressing career development opportunities in an evolving and competitive labour market.

As such, it is an important resource for universities and stakeholders who wish to understand how doctoral education has evolved, identify where challenges remain and explore opportunities for further development.

The survey findings will also inform the future work of EUA-CDE, helping to support its members in advancing and reinforcing their doctoral education capacity.

Fostering institutions' strategic leadership and capacity to manage change since 1994

EUA-IEP is an independent quality assurance programme, led by European experts, that offers tailored evaluations to help institutions navigate challenges, foster growth and adapt to emerging trends.

For three decades, EUA-IEP has prided itself on its context-sensitive approach, offering comprehensive, improvement-oriented institutional evaluations. It is led by a dedicated Steering Committee, and its pool of approximately 50 experts is composed of current or former university leaders, as well as experienced higher education professionals and students from right across the European Higher Education Area.

EUA-IEP is registered as a quality assurance agency on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

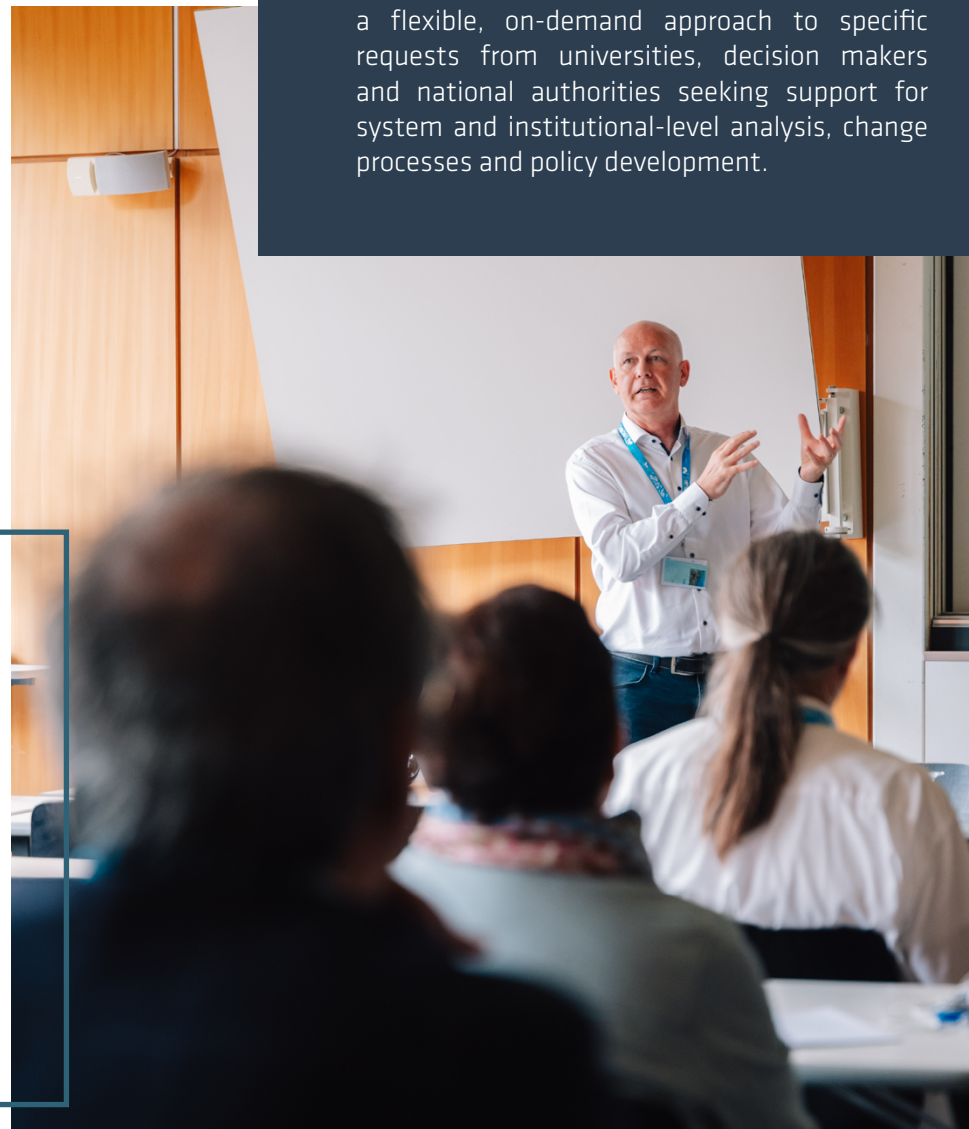
2025 at EUA-IEP

- Started to provide [customised evaluations of European Universities alliances](#) – to strengthen alliances' strategic leadership, change management capacity, internal quality culture, cooperation mechanisms and joint educational offerings.
- Launched a [new EUA-IEP website](#), where interested institutions can find comprehensive content on the programme's methodology, evaluation process and published reports, along with a wide range of resources.
- Finalised three evaluations – at Charles University, Czech Republic, the University of the Republic of San Marino, and UCT University of Chemistry and Technology, Czech Republic.
- Held [a webinar on all that the programme has to offer](#) (the recording is available on EUA's YouTube channel).

EUA Solutions

Tailor-made services in higher education

EUA Solutions is a tailored service based on a flexible, on-demand approach to specific requests from universities, decision makers and national authorities seeking support for system and institutional-level analysis, change processes and policy development.



Governance

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

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 is the highest governing body of the Association, and it elects the President and Board. On 10 April, the 28th EUA General Assembly took place in Riga, Latvia prior to the Association's Annual Conference. An extraordinary General Assembly was then held online on 2 October, for the purpose of electing a new member to the EUA Board.

Council

The EUA Council is comprised of the Association's President, the members of the Board and the chairperson or nominated representative of each collective member. The Council meets to discuss and define EUA's priorities and to endorse various policy positions and statements. In 2025, it met on three occasions.

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 of EUA full member universities. The Board is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the Association's policy and the planning of its activities. In 2025, it formally convened on four occasions.

During the year, the terms of Paul Boyle (Swansea University, UK) and Anne Lequy (Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, Germany) came to an end, and Astrid Söderbergh Widding (Stockholm University, Sweden) stepped down from the Board.

In April, Angelika Epple (Bielefeld University, Germany), Gregor Majdič (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) and Manuel Tuñón de Lara (University of Bordeaux, France) were elected to the Board and Ivanka Popović (University of Belgrade, Serbia) was re-elected for a second term. In October, Sunniva Whittaker (University of Agder, Norway) was elected to the Board at an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly.

At the end of 2025, the EUA Board was comprised of:



Josep M. Garrell
Ramon Llull University,
ES – President



Ivanka Popović
University of Belgrade,
RS – Vice-President



Marcin Pałys
University of Warsaw,
PL – Vice-President



Angelika Epple
Bielefeld University,
DE



Gregor Majdič
University of
Ljubljana, SI



Maurizio Tira
University of Brescia,
IT



Manuel Tuñón de Lara
University of
Bordeaux, FR



Wim van de Donk
Tilburg University, NL



Sunniva Whittaker
University of Agder, NO



Secretariat

The EUA Secretariat is based in Brussels and Geneva. Led by the Secretary General, Amanda Crowfoot, the Secretariat ensures the daily management and implementation of all EUA activities.

As part of its work, the Secretariat also coordinates a variety of EUA expert groups and steering committees, which draw on the expertise of EUA members to guide the Association's initiatives in specific areas.

In memoriam

During the past year, EUA said goodbye to two dear former colleagues who left a indelible impact on our Association and the wider higher education and research sector.



In memory of
Tia Loukkola



In memory of
Stephane Berghmans



Membership

EUA supports Europe's universities by bringing people together, creating partnerships and a wealth of knowledge that contributes to the strategic development of institutions.

EUA members

- * influence policy decisions
- * network and share expertise
- * contribute to Europe-wide studies
- * participate in peer learning and events

Is your university a member?

[Check EUA's membership directory](#)



* as of 31 December 2025

Joining EUA – what you need to know

EUA has three membership categories.

- * Individual Full Members
- * Collective Full Members
- * Individual Associate Members

- * EUA supports prospective members during the application process, providing relevant material and guidance as needed.
- * All applications are reviewed by the EUA Secretariat, assessed by the EUA Standing Membership Committee and endorsed by the EUA Council.
- * EUA has a differentiated membership fee structure that takes into account the economic strength of the country and the number of students enrolled at the institution.
- * Affiliate status is open to organisations that are interested in European cooperation in higher education and research and support the mission and aims of EUA but are ineligible for membership.

[Learn more about EUA membership and how to apply](#)



In 2025, EUA welcomed 22 new members, as well as two new affiliates.

Welcome to EUA!

Individual Full Members

University of Dubrovnik, HR
Catholic University of Lille, FR
Clermont Auvergne University, DE
Europa-Universität Flensburg, DE
Medical University of Lublin, PL
University of Life Sciences in Lublin, PL
Vistula University, PL
University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest, RO
Alfonso X El Sabio University, ES
Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, TR
Biruni University, TR
Üsküdar University, TR
Interregional Academy of Personnel Management, UA
National Pirogov Memorial Medical University, Vinnytsya, UA
Technical University of Sofia, BG
University of Technology of Compiègne, FR
Harokopio University of Athens, GR
Krakow University of Economics, PL
University of Economics in Katowice, PL
University of Rzeszów, PL
National University of Ostroh Academy, UA

Individual Associate Members

Laurea University of Applied Sciences, FI

Affiliates

Fédération des Établissements d'Enseignement Supérieur d'Intérêt Collectif, FR
Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis, LV

EUA's Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE) also welcomed three new affiliates in 2025:

National Network of Doctoral Colleges, FR
Research Council of Lithuania, LT
Council of Young Scientists at the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, UA



EUA calling

In 2025, EUA launched several opportunities for members new and old to get involved in its work, through:

- 5 calls for contributors to present at EUA events
- 3 calls for hosts for EUA conferences
- Major surveys on sustainability and doctoral education
- Surveys and focus groups on the Association's next Strategic Plan
- Opportunities to join groups that shape EUA's work on quality assurance, doctoral education and learning and teaching, as well as individual focus groups on topics like the European Research Area, academic recognition and research ethics

Find current opportunities on EUA's Get Involved page



EUA's impact in 2025 – facts and figures



**23
NEW**

POSITIONS
POLICY INPUTS
REPORTS
BRIEFINGS



**> 73.000
downloads**

EUA's publications and conference papers were downloaded over 73,000 times in 2025, a 32% increase on 2024.

SOCIAL MEDIA



**+7,500
new followers**

Over 62,000 followers connected with EUA across our social media channels, including 7,500 new followers.



PRESS AND EDITORIAL

Throughout 2025, EUA's work was extensively covered in higher education and research media like Research Professional News, AEF info, Forschung & Lehre, Khrono, University World News and Science|Business, as well as European and national press including Euractiv, ARTE, The Guardian, Les Echos and Cumhuriyet.

**> 50%
increase**



2025 was a record year for EUA's Expert Voices blog, with over 50% more views in 2025 than 2024 and new articles from the EUA community throughout the year.





EVENTS

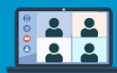
EUA received over 6,000 registrations from 72 countries for our seven on-site and 25 online events in 2025.



> **6,000**
TOTAL
REGISTRATIONS



7 on-site



25 online



Fully online conference

In addition to EUA's established flagship conferences and regular webinars, we also held a fully online conference on AI in May, including exclusive pre-recorded content from global stakeholders.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

In addition to EUA's own events, EUA's leadership and experts represented the voice of Europe's universities in key fora throughout 2025, including the 2025 European Education and Skills Summit, the Times Higher Education Europe Universities Summit, the European Flagship Conference on Research Security and the Anniversary Conference of the Magna Charta Universitatum.



3 newsletters



Monthly EUA newsletter

Bi-monthly President's Newsletter

exclusive to
EUA members

Quarterly EUA-CDE newsletter



Expert Voices

EUA's blog features points of view, ideas and experiences from across the university sector, as well as the latest op-eds from EUA itself.

Universities must foster entrepreneurial mindsets to deliver on societal goals

27 January | Aline Miller & Luke Georghiou | University of Manchester, UK

Three funding scenarios for the future viability of alliances

14 February | Eric Tschirhart | University of Luxembourg, LU

How universities can overcome roadblocks to citizen science in academia

19 February | Egle Butkeviciene | Kaunas University of Technology, LT

There is a road ahead for Ukraine's universities

24 February | Ivanka Popović | EUA

FP10 can create genuine change for gender equality in European R&I

5 March | Kamila Kozirog | EUA

Embedding gender equity within doctoral education is a collective responsibility [EUA-CDE Doctoral Debate]

6 March | Rachel Van Krimpen, Alice Haslam & Sandra Rose | University of Nottingham, UK

Will Open Science survive the EU's competitiveness agenda?

13 March | Federica Garbuglia | EUA

Why mainstreaming gender in research content is necessary [EUA-CDE Doctoral Debate]

1 April | Eva Cerezo | University of Zaragoza, ES

Fix the university-shaped hole in the EU's grand plan [Op-ed]

3 April | Thomas Jørgensen | EUA

Ten years into Agenda 2030, what have universities learnt about the SDGs and their trade-offs?

8 April | Thomas Jørgensen | EUA



Quality label or new degree? European degree may be both [Op-ed]

8 May | Maria Kelo | EUA

Does AI risk averaging knowledge and sacrificing creativity in academia?

16 May | Stefan Lang | University of Salzburg, AT

Stand-alone FP10 is welcome, but it needs to be strong [Op-ed]

22 May | Kamila Kozirog | EUA

Can you really assess a university's commitment to sustainability?

3 June | Geneviève Le Fort | University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Western Switzerland, CH

European Universities alliances: moving to the next level

13 June | Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen | European Commission

Erasmus+ makes Europe more prepared, competitive and resilient, it needs a higher budget

18 June | Stephan Geifes | National Agency for Erasmus+, German Academic Exchange Service, DE



A turning point for European science [Op-ed]

24 June | Kamila Kozirog | EUA

Five principles to help boost academia as a career choice [Op-ed]

25 June | Helene Peterbauer | EUA

Assuring higher education's quality in the age of AI is no easy task

30 June | Eve Alcock | Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), UK

An investment in early-career researchers is an investment in the future of higher education

7 July | Manuela Raith | Technical University of Leoben, AT

Aligning, acting and accelerating Europe's research and innovation brings new challenges and opportunities for doctoral education [EUA-CDE Doctoral Debate]

7 July | Manuel Heitor | University of Lisbon, PT

Using AI to serve inclusive education

9 July | Monique Mackenzie | University of St. Andrews, UK | Elliot Spaeth | AdvanceHE, UK

A growing international movement is changing academic career assessment

26 August | Stefan Penders | Universities of the Netherlands, NL | Rita Morais | EUA

Supporting early-career researchers to become ambassadors for European higher education's values [EUA-CDE Doctoral Debate]

27 August 2025 | Ann MacPhail | University of Limerick, IE | Peter Hanenberg, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, PT

Artificial intelligence is creating impressive teaching avatars, but also ethical dilemmas

3 September | Martin Ebner & Sandra Schön | Graz University of Technology, AT

Can one tool deliver academic career assessment reform?

10 September | Ragnar Lie | Universities Norway, NO

The doctorate was supposed to be about discovery – what happened? [EUA-CDE Doctoral Debate]

19 September | Sónia Cardoso | Lusófona University of Humanities and Technologies, PT



Erasmus Mundus is a key asset for the European Union's competitiveness

22 September | Fabrice Lemoine | Université de Lorraine, FR

What can Europe and its universities do to halt the erosion of academic freedom? [Op-ed]

30 September | Monika Steinel | EUA

Leading green university transformation – from solar panels to sustainable mindsets

1 October | Sargis Asatryants | National Polytechnic University of Armenia, AR

Reforming academic career assessment is about much more than quantitative versus qualitative

13 October | Sybille Hinze | Berlin University Alliance

Is the Lisbon Recognition Convention still fit for purpose?

12 November | Sjur Bergan

Four lessons for universities to better support their teachers

5 December | Katy Dineen | University College Cork, IE

Research security and universities: is the glass still only half full?

10 December | Sergiu-Matei Lucaci | EUA

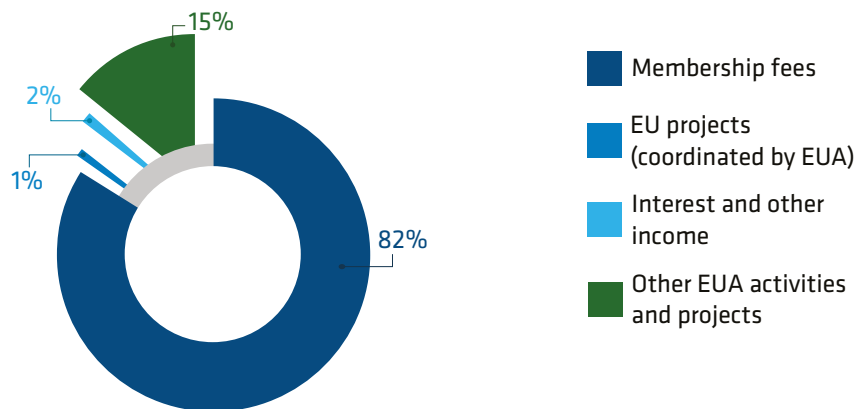


Finances

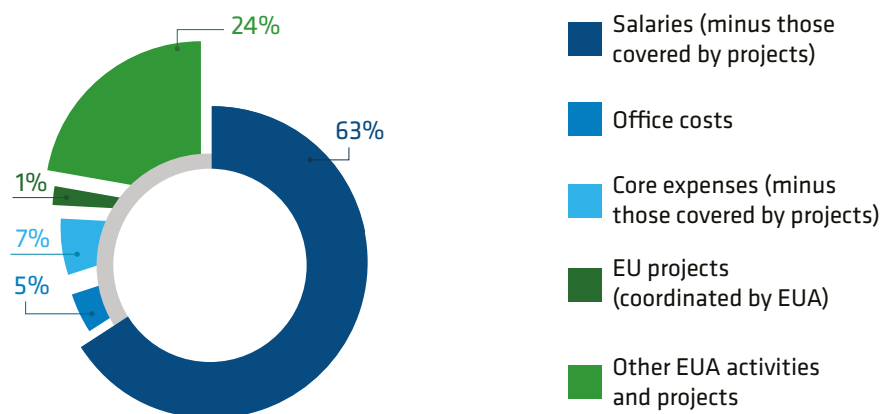
EUA is funded by its wide membership, as well as by projects and other activities.

In 2025, the Association's income was over €5.6 million. With this funding, EUA sustains its work, offers members the many events, publications and projects cited in this report and covers expenses related to the Association's staff and office premises.

Funding sources in 2025



Expenditure in 2025



2025

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

