

European Universities

Definition: “*European University*” is an Erasmus+ KA2 initiative, under the *Sector Skill Alliances*, based on “*sustainable bottom-up networks that are geographically and socially inclusive and work seamlessly across borders*”, within which the students will be able to combine several experiences of studying and training abroad.

Aim: Cooperation between all types of higher education institutions from all regions in Europe and at all levels of the organization, across all areas of activity, from teaching and learning to research and innovation.

Promote: European values and identity

Focus: Quality, performance, attractiveness and international competitiveness of European higher education institutions

Expected characteristics for European Universities:

- European Universities consist in **bottom-up networks of European universities**, pursuing a *common, long-term strategy for cooperation*;
- the support should allow existing networks to scale up their cooperation on a new/higher level;
- European Universities offer **integrated mobility for students, scientists and staff**, and **facilitate knowledge transfer across borders**;
- European Universities offer **innovative study concepts** (*including digital services, the integration of research in teaching, the learning and practicing of different languages, team-oriented work on societal challenges etc.*) and cooperate closely in the fields of education, research and innovation;
- European Universities contribute to **regional development**;
- European Universities **mirror Europe's diversity** (geographically – different types of higher education institutions);
- European Universities are **socially inclusive**, promote **European values** and **strengthen European cohesion**;
- European Universities **can contribute to the development of policies**, such as a **European diploma** and a European status.

Key elements (by 2025):

- **long-term joint strategy for education** (*common vision and shared values, in which staff is empowered to implement it*);
- **European inter-university “campus”** (students customize their mobility experience; new joint and flexible curricula delivered in all study cycles (Ma, Ba, PhD.);
- embedded mobility (50% of students within the alliance);
- **practical and work based experience** provided by external mentor;
- **European knowledge creating teams** (*innovative learning and training; adaptive solutions for different European regions*)
- **Common management structures** (*joint boards, research support, digitalized joint process*)

What will this Action support?

- **the creation of alliances**, ideally composed of 5 to 8 partners, by either setting-up new cooperation partnerships or enhance existing ones, through a **step by step approach**.
- Higher education institutions will progressively implement the activities that are necessary to achieve their long-term vision, starting by increasing their level of integration. To achieve this objective, they will agree on a **mission statement** at institutional level of each of the members of the alliance. The mission statement will have to entail a **full joint strategy** for pursuing a high level of enhanced and sustainable cooperation across various levels of the organization (e.g. management, academics, professional/support staff and students), and across different areas of activity (from teaching and learning to scientific research)
- elaborate a **joint work plan of activities** that is the most relevant to reach their strategic objectives and that will ultimately help them in achieving the long term vision of European Universities. This joint work plan of activities should be supported by the **design of relevant and efficient common management structures**. Examples for establishing a tight cooperation between institutional management structures are: *setting up joint boards, developing common pool of physical and virtual intellectual and administrative resources, distributing shared resources, common provision of infrastructure, data and services such as student, researcher and staff support, administration and international relations, with digitalized joint processes wherever possible.*
- The joint work plan should also include activities to reach the high level of ambition in terms of mobility, social inclusion, and challenge-based approach. Alliances should also engage with key stakeholders in education and where possible research and innovation to foster societal engagement of students and staff as well as their entrepreneurial key competences. **This action will support higher education institutions in implementing the first steps of this joint work plan of activities.**

Who can take part in a European University?

- **Full partners** are those participating organizations that contribute actively to the achievement of the European Universities objectives. Each full partner must sign a mandate to confer to the coordinating organization the responsibility of acting as main beneficiary and act in his name during the implementation of the proposal;
- **Associated partner:** European Universities can involve associated partners who contribute to the implementation of specific tasks/activities or support the dissemination and sustainability of the alliance. For contractual management issues, “associated partners” are not considered as part of the partners of the European University, and they do not receive funding.