

European University Association (EUA): Main initiatives, events and publications in Autumn 2021

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1. Bologna process & key commitments

BWSE FORward

EUA is a partner in the ESU led “Bologna with Stakeholders’ Eyes for a Stronger Future of the Bologna Process” ([BWSE FORward](#)) project which aims to update the latest version of the “Bologna with Student Eyes publication” (2018), analysing the views of European students on the implementation of the Bologna Process. As part of this two-year project co-funded by Erasmus+ KA3 Support to Policy reform, EUA organised two peer learning activities with the involvement of different actors that play a role within the Bologna Process to discuss the areas that students identified as challenging and seek solutions. These activities resulted in a report that will serve as basis for the development of a green paper that the project consortium will propose.

MICROBOL

EUA takes part in the “Microcredentials linked to the Bologna Process Key Commitments” ([Microbol](#)) project. It published a [report](#) that examines the status of micro-credentials, explores how they are perceived by different actors, and how the existing EHEA tools can be used for or adapted to accommodate them. The project consortium published a [report](#) on the state of play of micro-credentials in the EHEA and a [joint output document](#) of all three working groups (on QA, recognition, and QF & ECTS).

SPOT

The Erasmus+ co-funded “[Spotlight on recognition](#)” project (2020-2022) aims to support university staff and enhance their capacities in terms of academic recognition procedures compliant with the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC). To do so, the project consortium has launched the website [Academic Recognition Hub](#) in December 2020, which is a single, dedicated space gathering documents, tools and online resources that are relevant to the implementation of a daily LRC-compliant recognition practice. In addition, the [STREAM platform](#), which offers a training course attuned to the needs of university staff in charge of academic recognition, was reopened in the context of the project. Finally, the webinars “[Ensuring fair and transparent recognition procedures through Bologna Process tools](#)” and “[Smooth recognition of academic qualifications: The role of quality assurance](#)” were organised in early 2021. The project consortium is currently developing a self-assessment tool on academic recognition, which will be published in 2022.

EUA’s vision for Europe’s Universities in 2030 and its follow-up

In February 2021, EUA launched “[Universities without walls – A vision for 2030](#)” as a vision by the sector and for the sector. This seminal document is the result of extensive consultations and deliberations with EUA members and partners over a six-month period in 2020. It sets out a vision of open, engaged and autonomous universities, serving Europe’s societies towards a better future.

EUA’s vision will support the development of the European Education Area and the European Research Area and provide 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.

In Spring 2021 EUA organised a series of leadership workshops to take the vision further and discuss possible pathways for universities to achieve the goals under different future scenarios, focusing on three key emerging topics, changing geopolitics, digitalisation and the development of artificial intelligence and the course of democracy. The outcomes were fed into the publication “[Pathways to the future – A follow-up to ‘Universities without walls – A vision for 2030’](#)”.

EUA’s input to the upcoming European Strategy for Universities and the future of the European Universities Initiative

EUA is part of the EC stakeholder group to inform the development of the upcoming European Strategy for Universities and the future of the European Universities Initiative and engages with the Commission and member states on these topics on various occasions.

In June, EUA published its policy input “[Towards an EU strategy for universities](#)” which was developed based on EUA’s “Universities without walls – A vision for 2030” and established EUA policy positions on the European Education, Research and Higher Education Areas. It outlines where EUA sees an added value in such a new EU strategy, as well as what the strategy should refrain from.

Regarding the European Universities Initiative EUA continues to argue for a balanced approach, considering the scheme as a great opportunity to deepen transnational university collaboration next to other instruments supporting collaboration at various scales and different formats. In its [reaction to the EU Council Conclusions](#) in May, EUA warned against a top-down approach, underlined the need to keep the academic project in the focus, give time, support and leeway to the alliances and accelerate the removal of barriers to transnational collaboration to the benefit of all institutions also beyond the alliances.

European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF)

The [2021 EQAF](#) took place online on 18 – 19 November. This annual event is co-organised yearly by the E4 group (ENQA, ESU, EURASHE and EUA).

The 2022 EQAF will be organised on 17 – 19 November. Further details about the programme and registration information will be available on the [event website](#) in due course.

Report and Webinar on the topic Covid-19 and internal quality assurance

EUA published a [report](#) that draws on the experiences of a focus group of 39 representatives with responsibilities for internal quality assurance at EUA member institutions. It examined the key challenges faced, the role internal quality assurance played in ensuring that quality standards were maintained and how quality assurance practices supported university communities in their work. It concluded with key lessons learnt and a reflection on what lies ahead for internal quality assurance.

To follow-up on the findings of the report, EUA organised a [webinar](#) titled “Covid-19 and internal quality assurance.”

EUniQ project

EUA was a partner in the NVAO led Developing a European Approach for Comprehensive QA of (European) University Networks (EUniQ) project. The consortium developed in close cooperation with European Universities, a [European Framework for the Comprehensive Quality Assurance of European Universities](#) and a [Development Roadmap](#). The framework is geared towards the special multi-campus features and comprehensive missions of the new university alliances.

2. Learning and Teaching

EUA Learning & Teaching Activities

EUA’s [Learning & Teaching Thematic Peer Groups](#) have continued throughout 2021 to discuss topics concerning digitally enhanced learning and teaching, in terms of strategy and organisational culture, curriculum and assessment, and international partnerships. As in the previous years, there will be reports summarising the work of the groups, including recommendations brought forward by them. The work of these groups will also feed into the programme of the next [European Learning & Teaching Forum](#), on 17-18 February 2022. In 2021, the Thematic Peer Groups take place in the framework of the [DIGI-HE project](#) co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme. The 2022 round of Thematic Peer Groups, which will be launched by Spring 2022, will also take place in the framework of DIGI-HE, and address issues related to digitally enhanced learning and teaching.

DIGI-HE

In January, EUA started the [DIGI-HE project](#) (Erasmus+ KA3) which explores different ways higher education institutions can boost their strategic approaches to digitally enhanced learning and teaching and enhance their capacity. DIGI HE conducted a [survey on digitally enhanced capacity](#) at European higher education institutions as well as developed an [institutional self-assessment instruments](#) for developing a high performance digital education ecosystem. From March 2021, under the frames of the project, EUA Thematic Peer Groups for 2021 have kicked off their work under the frames of DIGI HE project, on the following three topics: strategy and organisational culture, curriculum and

assessment, and international partnerships. The findings of the groups will be presented at the [EUA Learning and Teaching Forum 2022 in Bilbao](#). The call for the 2022 Thematic Peer Groups will be launched in late November.

The project has also kicked off workshop series on high-performance digital education ecosystem. The 1st event took place on 19 October on [strategy and organisational culture](#). The workshops are being offered via an open call of registrations with limited spaces of participation. Two workshop from the series will take place in the course of 2022.

LOTUS

The project “Leadership and Organisation for Teaching and Learning at European Universities” ([LOTUS](#)) aims to contribute to capacity building and strategic change management for learning and teaching at HEIs, and to demonstrate the potential of various actors to support transformation and innovation in learning and teaching. LOTUS has two strands:

- (1) The Leadership Development Programme, which addresses individual HEIs in a peer-learning approach. Following a first round (Jan. – Oct. 2021) involving 28 HEIs, it now involves 26 HEIs in a second round (Dec. 2021 – June 2022).
- (2) The policy dialogue, which consists of a series of webinars and events to gather different profiles of stakeholders (HEI leadership, national and European policy makers, university associations, students, teachers organisation, etc.), to explore what could be best done to support learning and teaching in the EHEA. The first policy dialogue event took place online on 25-26 October, and a second session is planned to take place at the 2022 European Learning and Teaching Forum, on 17 February. A series of three workshops, taking place in Ireland, Finland and Austria, are planned for Spring 2022.

The policy dialogues address cross-cutting issues that are widely discussed by HEIs, but also in the context of the BFUG Working Group on Learning and Teaching – such as teaching in academic careers and support for teaching or collaboration in teaching. In addition, it offers a reflection on the concept of leadership in teaching, as a collegial approach and collective endeavour towards improving learning and teaching.

3. Social Dimension

InSPIREurope project

EUA participates in the [InSPIREurope project](#), a Europe-wide initiative that aims to support researchers threatened with discrimination, persecution, suffering or violence. The InSPIREurope project will forge a coordinated, cross-sectoral, Europe-wide alliance in support of researchers at risk and facilitate transnational cooperation between European and national initiatives and programmes. Funded under the European Commission’s Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, the project brings together a diverse set of partners under the leadership of Scholars at Risk Europe, based at Maynooth University in Ireland. The project runs from 1 September 2019 until 31 August 2022. In August 2021, the Inspireurope project published [Researchers at Risk - National-Level Actions in Europe](#). The report gathers the experiences of 14 national-level initiatives in Europe supporting researchers at risk. The aim is to share knowledge and insights between those already involved in these efforts, and to encourage the development of new national-level initiatives.

UNIdiVERSITY project

EUA participates in the [UNIdiVERSITY](#) project (Socially responsible university for inclusive societies in the era of migration), led by La Sapienza University, in collaboration with University of Barcelona and UNIMED, co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme. The two year project builds on the work of the [inHERE project](#) (Higher Education Supporting Refugees in Europe), continuing to foster the exchange of knowledge and practices of welcoming students with a refugee background, yet with a new focus on how these activities are embedded in the institutions overall work and strategies on inclusion and diversity. In November 2021, the project has published "[Higher Education diversity strategies for migrant and refugee inclusion](#)". The report presents a comparative analysis of the interplay of support measures for migrants with a refugee (-like) background provided by European higher education institutions, and their diversity and inclusion strategies. It discusses how this strategic link influences both the day-to-day implementation and the overall impact of the support initiatives.

4. Global Dimension and internationalisation

EUA supports the internationalisation of its members through conferences and projects. At the same time, it engages in international dialogue, in particular with sister organisations around the world. Over the last decade, internationalisation has emerged as an issue of high importance for universities. This has generated a network of international partners that continue to convene and collaborate in different settings and on different issues. Some examples of this are:

Centralised Support for Higher Education Reform Experts (SPHERE II)

Over the past The SPHERE II (Support and Promotion for Higher Education Reform Experts) has provided training and networking opportunities for Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) and National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) in Southern and Eastern European neighbourhood countries (former Tempus countries), including Russia and Central Asia. An initiative of the European Commission and its EACEA, it is implemented by the EUA and the University of Barcelona. Since its start in 2015, the initiatives has organised annual conferences, seminars and university visits. It also facilitated more than 300 technical assistance mission (TAM), and conducted a number of studies, for example on [mobility of disadvantaged students from Partner Countries, under the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility](#), and on the impact of the [Erasmus+ capacity building measures](#). For all publications, incl. Conference reports see [here](#))

Due to the Covid 19 crisis, in 2020 most activities were put on hold. In 2021, the Technical Assistance Mission were continued online, and for the first time, a [university visit](#) has been conducted online (on Employability - at DCU, Ireland). On a new topic and in a new format, an interactive webinar on [Greening](#) has been conducted, featuring EU programmes and the result of an EUA survey on the topic, that included all EHEA, and also some neighbourhood countries.

The SPHERE comes to its end in December, but the EC already indicated the continuation of the HERE and NEO schemes, and also of a new SPHERE-like initiative. The recent [Annual Conference](#) was the opportunity for stocktaking and impact assessment on the past seven years, but also to project what a future initiative should address. It included sessions on the EHEA and its Global Dimension, and was joined by some colleagues from the BFUG and active in the Bologna Process.

More information on the initiative can be found [here](#).

Participation to the Asia-Europe Meeting Standing Working Group and Expert Group on Digitalisation

As part of its commitment in inter-regional dialogues on higher education, EUA takes part in the ASEM Standing Working Group working on the proposal of a vision and strategy 2030 for the ASEM Education Process, as well as in the ASEM Expert Group on digitalisation. The new strategic plan and vision 2030 for the ASEM Education Process is expected to be adopted at the ASEM Ministerial meeting of 15 December 2021. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

EUA also engaged in the EU-level discussions on international collaboration in research and higher education and provided [input to the EC Communication on a Global Approach research and innovation](#) informed by the expertise of a dedicated task and finish group of EUA members. Furthermore, in autumn 2021, EUA organised a webinar series “A new world? Universities in changing international relations”, with a webinar on the [EU’s Global Approach, one on transatlantic relations](#) and one on [risk assessment in international partnerships](#). All replays are available on the [EUA YouTube channel](#).

5. Fundamental values

Autonomy Scorecard

Throughout 2022, EUA will proceed to the update of its University Autonomy Scorecard, last published in 2017. The update will allow to take stock of the level of institutional autonomy throughout Europe and analyse the reforms that have taken place in the last five years. EUA’s continued work on university governance and autonomy shows that many European countries have continued to discuss and implement reforms in the field (comprehensive reforms or significant changes affecting one of the autonomy dimensions). In addition, EUA has observed that various factors have started to affect the development of the regulatory frameworks in which universities operate, including the pandemic-related crisis and the emergence of European University Alliances.

NEWLEAD: Innovative Leadership and Change Management in Higher Education

The [NEWLEAD project](#) aims to build the capacity of university leaders in steering change and in addressing new priorities on the institutional transformation agenda. NEWLEAD is led by the University Ramon Llull (URL) in Barcelona, in partnership with a diverse consortium including EUA. NEWLEAD is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission, as a Strategic Partnership for Higher Education. The project started in Autumn 2020 and will run until September 2023.

In October 2021, the NEWLEAD consortium published [a report on institutional transformation and leadership development at universities](#), based on the consultation of higher education leaders and national university associations. The report contributes to a meaningful conversation on the importance of capacity-building for higher education leaders as an enabler to support the post-pandemic institutional adaptation and transformation. In the first semester 2022, focus groups will bring together university leaders to discuss change management and better articulate needs in this area.

STAND project: Strengthening university autonomy in the Western Balkans region

EUA is partnering with Western Balkans universities to help [strengthening university autonomy](#) and increasing accountability and transparency in the region (Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro). EUA is

training the consortium to undertake an analysis of the state of play of institutional autonomy on the basis of a simplified Autonomy Scorecard methodology. In Autumn 2021, EUA and Western Balkans partners performed the analysis for the three countries, assessing organisational, financial, staffing and academic autonomy. In the next phase, the sector and public authorities will discuss priorities for reforms.

EUA Annual Conference (28-29 April 2022, Budapest, HU): University values: what, why and how?

In recent years, many countries have gone through a large-scale, societal reflection on democratic values. For universities, this development implies that particular attention must be paid to safeguarding values such as academic freedom, university autonomy and freedom of expression. In order to remain environments that are defined by openness, freedom of thought and enquiry, and scientific rigour, universities must embrace their societal responsibility, foster a culture of academic integrity and engage in partnerships that both further their strategic objectives and honour their principles and values.

The 2022 EUA Annual Conference will provide a platform to discuss which values shape the missions and strategic objectives of Europe's universities and how these values help to guide their activities. Through plenary and breakout sessions of various formats, including audience participation, the conference will also provide insights into the measures universities can take to ensure that their values are understood and lived individually and collectively. Finally, the event will invite the audience to reflect on and share measures to uphold academic values even in a context of mounting external pressures. A [call for contributions](#) is open until December 2021.

DG EAC Working Group on Equality and Values in Education and Training

EUA will contribute to the EC's new working group on equality and values. The group on will focus on structural reform to promote equality in education and training. It aims to provide inspiration for policymakers and practitioners who strive to improve equality in education and training systems across the EU and contribute to developing evidence-based procedures to assess and improve policies in the Member States through mutual learning.

6. University finances & EU funding

EUA Public Funding Observatory 2021/2022

In November 2021, EUA has launched the survey for Part 1 of the 2021/2022 report, which targets national university associations and aims to collect data about universities' expectations in terms of funding and system governance in Europe in the medium term, in the wake of the pandemic (2022-2024). The report will be published beginning of 2022.

Public funding models

EUA will release by the end of the year an updated study on public funding models for universities, notably focusing on the funding mechanisms and types of indicators used across Europe. The work builds on the previous report "[Designing Strategies for Efficient Funding of Universities in Europe](#)" (2015).

EU funding

EUA has analysed the relevance and impact of national recovery and resilience plans put forward under NextGenerationEU. The [briefing](#), published in October 2021, highlights and shares examples illustrating the diversity of options available to universities, underlines potential complementarities with other funding schemes, and contributes to the plans' transparent implementation at the national level by formulating key messages to universities and policy makers.

EUA has campaigned for a [more ambitious budget for Horizon Europe](#) for 2022, with an outcome above the Commission's draft budget and additional funds earmarked for health. EUA also remains vigilant on the simplification agenda for European funding programmes. In this context, it issued in November 2021 a [joint statement](#) with other partner organisations calling for caution before making a wider use of lump-sum funding in Horizon Europe, until complete data becomes available on the full lifecycle of projects currently ongoing under the pilot scheme.

Synergies

Building synergies between education, research and innovation and the related EU and national funding programmes is another important element of EUA's work. With its policy input paper "[Building synergies between education, research and innovation by aligning the EU funding programmes](#)" released in February 2020, EUA contributes to the ongoing debate on synergies and complementarities with a focus on the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Erasmus+, European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and funding programmes at the national level.

7. Higher education response to the Covid-19 Crisis

EUA has been closely following the ways in which across European higher education institutions have been affected since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

An early 2020 review captured first reactions, resulting into a [briefing](#). Another focus of early work was a reflection on the [impact on university funding](#).

EUA also supported the global survey of the International University Association (IAU) in [2020](#), and 2021 (forthcoming January 2022). Most recently, it published [a briefing on the impact of Covid-19](#), based on a survey to national rectors' conferences and addressing the autumn/winter semester of 2021/22.

Covid-19 is also one of the core issues explored in the 2021 EUA-CDE survey on current developments in doctoral education (see [10. Doctoral Education](#)) and a report and webinar on the topic Covid-19 and internal quality assurance (see [3. Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.](#))

8. Greening and sustainability

EUA has promoting the SDGs and stepped up its activities on sustainability and greening over the past year.

A survey among European HEI on institutional policies and activities on greening and sustainability (including research, education, governance etc), has been conducted in April-May. Results have been presented through a series of webinars on [mobility and internationalization](#), [learning and teaching](#), and [university strategies](#).

A series of expert voices have been authored, by EUA and its members:

- [Higher Education for a greener Europe](#)
- [The green transition at universities public procurement](#)
- [The climate framework – as response to climate crisis from the Swedish universities](#)
- [Framing the SGS within an institutional strategy – the case of Trinity College Dublin](#)

[Final results](#) have just been published in a report, and were the basis for an EUA response to the [EU consultation](#) that is part of the preparations for a Council Recommendation on education for education for environmental sustainability.

EUA will publish by the end of the year a paper entitled “Greening: a governance, funding and efficiency perspective”, building on the survey data. The paper focuses on specific areas through which sustainability and greening can be addressed at higher education institutions, namely funding, efficiency, procurement, governance and leadership.

9. European Research Area, research & innovation

Horizon Europe

As a key stakeholder, EUA has been closely following the developments of Horizon Europe since 2016. The Association has dedicated its attention widely to this strategic programme, gathering feedback from university members across the continent, providing input to policy makers and campaigning for the recognition of its vision and recommendations developed in close cooperation with the EUA Research Policy Working Group.

Within [its campaign](#), EUA participated in all major European-level dialogues as the Horizon Europe programme took shape. The Association provided [detailed input](#) on how to best design the programme structure and the rules for participation. Its [recommendations](#) paved the way for an excellent, open and inclusive Horizon Europe. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, EUA called for adequate funding for the programme as this will strengthen the strategic resilience of Europe, reinforce its knowledge base, support innovation ecosystems, and address the challenge of underfunding. The Association also successfully campaigned for an acceptable internal balance within the Horizon Europe programme, preserving the importance of funding to fundamental research.

Currently, EUA is monitoring the implementation of Horizon Europe, and in particular the work of the European Research Council, the European Innovation Council, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology as well as the implementation of missions and the European Innovation Ecosystems component. It is also monitoring the programme in relation to impactful simplification, the concrete implementation of synergies across EU funding programmes as well as alignment among funding organisations at EU and national level. Notably, in November 2021, EUA published a [joint statement](#) with CESAER and EARTO calling for caution in the use of lump sum funding in Horizon Europe. The

detailed analysis of the programme implementation will be conducted based on feedback from the EUA members to be gathered in a mid-term review consultation.

The new European Research Area (ERA)

The process to renew the European Research Area (ERA) was launched on 30 September 2020 with the publication of the European Commission Communication "[A new ERA for Research and Innovation](#)" (R&I), coinciding with a Communication on "[Achieving the European Education Area by 2025](#)". The ERA Communication articulates the Commission's ambition to broaden and deepen the new ERA, building on past achievements, as well as on the European Research Area and Innovation Committee's (ERAC) advisory "[Opinion on the future of the ERA](#)" adopted on 17 December 2019.

EUA has been a formal partner in shaping the ERA since 2012 and has provided input on the renewal process. The Association welcomed the process in a [position on 5 March 2020](#) and [responded to the Commission Communication on 15 October 2020](#). EUA has also expanded on its views on the new ERA, focusing on the most important topics for universities, on a [policy input paper published on 3 December 2020](#). Building on previous policy positions, this policy input further expands EUA's views on the new ERA and focuses on the topics that are most important to universities.

As the Council of the European Union will finalise the ERA governance system at the end of November, EUA together with other European research and innovation organisations have [published an open letter addressed to the EU institutions](#) expressing the urgent need to include R&I stakeholders in the governance of the renewed European Research Area (ERA).

Open Science

As one of the leading actors in the transition to Open Science, EUA is developing a comprehensive approach to this paradigmatic shift, with the support of the Expert Group on Science 2.0/Open Science, chaired by Prof. Jean-Pierre Finance. By carrying out regular university surveys and commissioning studies, EUA has built a shared knowledge base on the most pressing implications of Open Science, as Open Access policies for research publications and data, the financial cost of access to scholarly publications (Big Deals), research/career assessment practices, innovative publishing practices (such as Read and Publish agreements) and other key Open Science issues, as open science skills and education or citizen science.

In July 2021, EUA published the findings of the 2020-2021 EUA Open Science Survey. With more than 270 responses from 36 European countries, the [survey report](#) focuses on the level of development of Open Science in European universities. It also addresses the role of Open Science in institutions' strategic priorities and its implementation in institutional practices. The report includes evidence-based recommendations for institutions, researchers, research funders and policy makers on the transition towards Open Science. A [webinar](#) offered participants the opportunity to discuss those results and recommendations. EUA works to achieve more transparency and greater sustainability in the scholarly publishing system together with its members. The Association monitors the evolution of negotiation mechanisms between universities and publishers and how these affect the content and financial conditions given to academic institutions. To support the work of the negotiating consortia, EUA published in 2019 a [mapping of major scholarly publishing contracts in Europe](#) and a [comparative analysis decrypting the Big Deal landscape](#). EUA has also started looking into new types of contracts between publishers and consortia, namely through the [Read & Publish study](#) (July 2020). This study investigates the implications of different scenarios to open up scholarly publishing for the future of scholarly publishing.

Building on those results, EUA hosted the [webinar series "Universities and the future of scholarly publishing"](#) in May and June 2021. The first webinar focused on different scenarios to open up

scholarly publishing, their advantages and disadvantages, challenges and opportunities. It aimed to explore the implications those scenarios could have on universities and consortia. The second webinar presented different scholar-led Open Access initiatives and highlighted how universities can support and nurture such projects. The third webinar looked into the ins and outs of the different types of transformative agreements with large and small publishers. It also explored their potential to flip scholarly publishing to Open Access. The final webinar addressed imminent and practical questions about universities and the implementation of Plan S. In partnership with Coalition S, this webinar offered an opportunity for EUA members to exchange on several approaches universities can take to advance Open Access. [The recordings of the four webinars are available as a specific playlist on EUA's Youtube channel.](#)

EUA also published a practical, flexible checklist to support universities in using their institutional power to promote immediate and full Open Access in alignment with Plan S. [The new university Open Access checklist](#) is a guide for universities that wish to further develop their Open Access activities. It includes an *à la carte* approach, whereby institutions can consider the goals and actions that make most sense in their particular context and for their specificities. The checklist covers three main goals: (1) Empowerment, through high-level policies and strategies; (2) Capacity building, through libraries and negotiating consortia; and (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. The checklist was published at the occasion of the [International OA week](#).

EUA will continue to explore new, diverse and community-driven scholarly publishing models.

EUA is also a project partner and work package leader in "[Fostering a FAIR research culture in Europe](#)" (FAIRsFAIR) since March 2019. This project aims to supply practical solutions for the use of the FAIR data principles throughout the research data life cycle. Emphasis is on fostering FAIR data culture and the uptake of good practices in making data FAIR. FAIRsFAIR will play a key role in the development of global standards for FAIR certification of repositories and the data within them contributing to those policies and practices that will turn the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) programme into a functioning infrastructure.

As project partner, EUA focusses on embedding FAIR data education in university programmes and doctoral training. The Association is finalising the development of practical tools (cf. "FAIR Competences Adoption Handbook for Universities" (Dec 2021) and "Good Practices in FAIR Competence Training report" (Dec 2021) for universities to integrate FAIR data science skills and content in curricula at bachelor, master and doctoral level. Those tools are based on a [comprehensive European survey, mapping of existing instruments](#) and [competence framework](#). In addition, [a series of university and stakeholder workshops was organised in 2021](#), offering interested institutions a chance to learn about our work and provide input on its further development. The closing conference of the project will be held on 25-27 January 2022.

Closely related, EUA is engaged in the EOSC Association (EOSC-A). The Association has been selected as one of the members of the Task Force on Research Careers, Recognition, and Credit recently created by the EOSC-A. EUA also offers a platform to facilitate the exchange of information and sharing of experiences across EUA individual and collective members that are also Members or Observers of the EOSC-A.

Academic career assessment

EUA represents the voice of Europe's universities in the initiative developed by the European Commission to reform the research assessment system in Europe. In addition, EUA is working on a new academic assessment strategy. [EUA's vision for 2030](#) calls for a reform of academic careers and [EUA's Strategic Plan](#) adopted in 2020 includes commitment to "identify and share good practices in shaping academic careers" and "celebrate parity of esteem for learning and teaching with research and innovation within our institutions". Against this backdrop, EUA has widened its portfolio of activities from research assessment to *academic* assessment, taking a comprehensive and holistic approach to academic assessment.

Innovation Ecosystems

In Q2 2021, EUA conducted a survey on universities and innovation with the aim to build a Europe-wide picture of university innovation and its contribution to the acceleration of the green and digital transitions. Based on the [results](#) from 166 institutions located in 28 countries, the Secretariat has developed, in collaboration with the EUA Innovation Ecosystems Expert Group, a [policy position](#) with recommendations for universities, policy makers and funding agencies on how to enhance universities' contribution to European innovation ecosystems.

EUA launched the survey results and recommendations at a physical [event](#) in Brussels on 10 November. It was a stakeholder forum reflecting on the survey data, during which EUA officially handed over the recommendations to Commissioner Mariyja Gabriel as the Association's contribution to the upcoming European Commission's communication on innovation.

In the next step, EUA will draft a report where the survey results will be complemented by best practice examples of university innovation. In parallel, taking into consideration the survey results and the EU innovation policy agenda, the EUA Innovation Ecosystems Expert Group will be developing a proposal for an EUA innovation agenda for the coming years.

The EUA Energy and Environment Platform (EUA-EPUE)

The Steering Committee of the EUA Energy and Environment Platform held several meetings in the course of 2021 to discuss how EUA could make the case for universities' involvement in the Green Deal. After sharing its initial input with the EUA Research Policy Working Group in May, the Steering Committee proceeded to draft an EUA position over the summer outlining a university vision for the Green Deal. The position will be published in early 2022. It will underline the need to recognise universities as critical stakeholders in the Green Deal, whose wide-ranging expertise can help enhance this policy framework. Moreover, it will make concrete recommendations to the European Commission on devising holistic solutions to the climate challenge in partnership with universities.

10. Doctoral Education

2021 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

The 2021 [EUA-CDE Annual Meeting](#) entitled “*Preparing doctoral education for a post-pandemic world*” organised between 13-15 September brought together more than 200 representatives from EUA-CDE member universities to discuss key challenges facing doctoral education in the fallout of the Covid-19 crisis. During three days, participants addressed topics such as collaboration in doctoral education, the skills needs and development of doctoral candidates and the importance of academic freedom. A recording of all the sessions is now available on the [EUA Youtube channel](#).

2021 EUA-CDE survey

In spring 2021, the EUA-CDE Secretariat launched a [survey on current developments in doctoral education](#) with the aim to provide an overview of the most important developments in doctoral education within the framework of the Covid-19 pandemic. The online questionnaire was open between 23 March and 31 May and it collected 138 responses from EUA and EUA-CDE members.

During the EUA-CDE Annual Meeting, participants addressed selected topics in small working groups based on the outcomes of the survey. A report presenting key results will be released beginning of 2022.

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

In 2020, the EUA-CDE Secretariat established its second Thematic Peer Group on “Co-tutelles and Joint Doctorates”. Representatives from 25 European universities participated at this Thematic Peer Group following a call for participation among EUA-CDE members. This working group is chaired by Professor Laurinda Leite, Vice-Rector of the University of Minho.

The working group gathered during several virtual meetings to discuss the importance of co-tutelles, steps leading to the co-tutelle agreement, the key challenges faced by universities when implementing these agreements and how they can cope with them.

The EUA-CDE Secretariat is working on a report that reflects the work carried out by this group which will be published in the first quarter of 2022.

EUA-CDE reflection paper

In the recent years, universities have begun to focus on new thematic areas given that the broader societal and global context has changed. In addition, key aspects of doctoral education itself are undergoing transformation. The 2021 EUA-CDE survey on doctoral education has provided some additional evidence of this, showing the relevance of looking into issues like supervision, the digital transformation and the need to better support postdoctoral researchers. Based on the results of the 2021 EUA-CDE survey on doctoral education in Europe and an exchange with its members, EUA-CDE will publish a new reflection paper with the aim to tackle these current and future trends in doctoral education.

2022 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting

The [2022 EUA-CDE Annual Meeting](#) entitled “*Time and timing in doctoral education*” is planned to take place at the University of Manchester, UK between 22-24 June. This topic has been chosen due to the

fact that time and timing plays an important role in doctoral education. And this on different levels. Doctoral education represents a distinct period in a researcher's career, distinct from the previous (usually the master's program) and the later (diverse careers within and outside academia). However, new forms like fast-track promotion or the increasing activities of doctoral schools in the field of postdocs point to a dynamic in this field. The doctorate also takes time. As the Salzburg Principles of 2005 stated, the doctorate itself is supposed to take between 3 and 4 years, although there are certainly differences in Europe. The duration of the doctorate can at time still be a hot topic. Timing is also important when structuring of the doctorate. Be it with regard to the organisation of doctoral programs, be it with regard to time management as an independent skill. And finally, people start at different moments in their lives, and the issue of older doctoral candidates is also worth addressing. During the annual meeting, these topics will be discussed in the course of 3 days.