



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES INITIATIVE - Building the universities of the future

Meeting with Rectors of European Universities alliances Brussels, 30-31 January 2023

Key messages for the successful implementation of the alliances

- **European Universities are frontrunners** for re-thinking the higher education role in the 21st century, as highlighted in the [European strategy for universities](#).
- **Strong leadership from Rectors** is key for pushing and lead as actors of change, for enabling and empowering **staff and students across all faculties to take full ownership of the initiative**, with **equal commitment from all HEIs involved** in an alliance. Good practices were shared in terms of aligning the strategy of each member HEI with the strategy of their alliance; on how to disseminate the benefits and opportunities of a European University across all its faculties, including by prominently communicating about it on the universities websites and other channels of communication, and by providing seed funding for bottom-up joint activities.
- **Enhancing mobility is a key objective** of the alliances, to be understood in a broader sense of physical, virtual and blended forms of mobility, for adaptability to various needs and inclusiveness.
- Embedding various formats of mobility, as well as **innovative pedagogies, interdisciplinary and challenge-based approaches** within existing programmes, on top of creating new joint programmes, was seen as a promising way forward.
- **Breaking down silos between education and research and innovation** is key for the success of alliances.
- **Reinforcing the alliances' cooperation with their innovation ecosystems** (cities, regions, private sector innovators, schools, communities, etc) strengthens the education and innovation nexus and contributes to prepare younger generations for future jobs as well as life-long learning opportunities for all.
- **Sustainable funding** is needed for the implementation of the alliances' long-term vision, supported by **national legislations** that offer more flexibility to their higher education institutions in the context of transnational cooperation, as presented in the [Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education](#), adopted last year. 21 European Universities alliances will be engaged on testing and exploring a joint European degree label and a possible European legal status. European Universities are key drivers for policy progress.
- **Disseminating innovative approaches** developed by the alliances to the entire higher education sector, as well as to Member States and the wider society, is key for the next steps post 2027.



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Action points

- **Organisation of regular meetings for Rectors of European Universities**
- **Reinforce opportunities for cooperation between the alliances to share knowledge and work on matters of common interest**, for example teaming-up to cooperate between alliances and with their innovation ecosystems, like innovative business communities such as the members of the [Coalition of the Willing](#).
- Continue **co-creating** and **co-implementing the future of the European Universities initiative**, by consulting/working together - the Commission services and the alliances side by side - on issues such as:
 - ✓ **remaining challenges for deeper transnational cooperation**, for instance through the experimentations with the **joint European degree label** and the **possible legal status for alliances**, diffusing results and experience of the Erasmus+ pilot call projects as sand boxes for transforming the way universities cooperate transnationally, also looking into key aspects such as quality assurance and academic careers.
 - ✓ **building together a monitoring framework to assess progress of the European Universities initiative as a whole**, encompassing quantitative and qualitative indicators.
 - ✓ **building an investment pathway** for European Universities post-2027 that takes into account regional, national and European funding.