

CESAER

conference of european schools
for advanced engineering education
and research

MORE STRATEGY, HIGHER QUALITY

PAPER ON SUCCESSOR OF ERASMUS+

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KEY MESSAGES

The Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research ([CESAER](#)) herewith presents its advice for the successor of Erasmus+. Based on the intense collaboration of our Member universities of science & technology with other academic institutions, business, industry, public services and citizens, and their strong culture of entrepreneurship, CESAER advises the European Union (EU) to:

- demonstrate ambition, assume strong leadership and look beyond itself to realise [knowledge societies](#) and contribute to achieving the [sustainable development goals](#);
- take responsibility, provide new momentum, dynamism and equity to the European Higher Education Area ([EHEA](#)) and establish the successor of Erasmus+ as the instrument to its implementation;
- safeguard the necessary boundary conditions for the free circulation of knowledge and its bearers, academic freedom and institutional autonomy in Europe and beyond;
- bring education and research closer together through stronger links between the EHEA and European Research Area (ERA);
- introduce an EHEA TOP-UP intervention scheme whereby the EU would fund additional activities of excellent higher education projects selected and funded at national level;
- establish a new and uniform ethical, legal and financial framework for association to the successor of Erasmus+ to any industrialised country allowing for the direct participation of institutions, scientists and innovators from such associated countries;
- establish Sounding Boards per (sub-) action involving university staff to collect feedback on and suggestions for programme management, administration and implementation;
- increase the strategic value of the successor of Erasmus+ and the budget for centralised actions in order to implement institutional development strategies in a context of trust and confidence allowing for less burdensome auditing;
- centralise all Key Action 2 to create a level playing field at European level and beyond, guaranteeing quality and participation across member states and partner countries;
- re-introduce intensive programmes and curriculum development as part of the successor of Erasmus+ and manage this Sub-Action at European level;
- extend the contracts for Joint Programmes to five years;
- increase the budget for higher education cooperation in neighbourhood policy and capacity building, reimburse real costs, allow for the purchasing of equipment on the EU side and - importantly - reintroduce overheads;
- use Jean Monnet to reach out to larger groups within universities and beyond, in creative ways beyond typical classwork, on topics related to European integration, history, citizenship, democracy and human rights, mass media and communication;
- use Erasmus students as ambassadors for European values and actively involve them in such initiatives mentioned above to strengthen the European idea and increase inter-cultural understanding and openness;
- innovate the dissemination and communication efforts on projects results, e.g. television, social media and video clips.

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1. IMPORTANCE OF ERASMUS+

Universities of science & technology translate scientific research and technological and social development into innovative solutions for the benefit of society, and educate and train future generations. Scientific engineering education transforms the world in which we live and contributes to solving the challenges of tomorrow. Based on our intense collaboration with other academic institutions, business, industry, public services and citizens, and the strong culture of entrepreneurship within our institutions, our activities encompass higher education, research and innovation and we strongly bridge towards state, market and civil society. We bring open education, open science and open innovation into practice on a daily basis and we are open to the world.

Although limited in size, Erasmus+ is a forceful tool to improve the skills of our graduates, to modernise higher education and - to a certain degree - to realise the EHEA. It helps us universities of science & technology to deliver excellence in education, promotes collaboration among our staff, boosts our attractiveness worldwide and enables us to realise institutional development strategies.

We note a growing tension when we relate the institutional development strategies with regard to outgoing mobility to the means available in the near future. Universities have increasingly encountered the need to make additional funds available. This cannot go on and more funding is required.

Unfortunately, our ability to report comprehensively on our participation in any Erasmus+ actions is limited due to a lack of centralised and publicly available information.

Fifty-one leading doctorate-granting universities of science & technology from twenty-six European countries united within CESAER with this paper offer their collective input and advices for the successor of Erasmus+. The views expressed do not necessarily fully cover all the views of the individual Member institutions.

- As key stakeholders in Europe, CESAER is prepared and committed to work together with the European Commission (EC), Member States (MS), Programme Countries, the European Parliament (EP) and with other stakeholders in improving the working of Erasmus+ and making its successor a success.
- We stress the importance to allocate more funding under the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) in order to absorb the growth foreseen.
- We suggest improving the centralised and publicly available information on Erasmus+ allowing for better reporting on Erasmus+ to the citizens of Europe and for institutions to benchmark better their performance.

2. PROVIDE NEW IMPETUS FOR EUROPE OF KNOWLEDGE

We are living in crucial times with only thirteen years to achieve the [sustainable development goals](#) and with the ongoing [debate on the future of Europe](#) feeding into the elections of the European Parliament in 2019 and the new European Commission.

- Europe must demonstrate high ambitions, assume strong leadership and look beyond itself to realise [knowledge societies](#) and contribute to solving the global challenges when designing the Erasmus+ successor. To safeguard a brighter [future for humanity](#), Europe must base this programme beyond debates on the future Europe and short-term political, electoral and financial considerations. Therefore, the design and the negotiations on an ambitious Erasmus+ successor need to be leading in the design of the MFF and other EU funding programmes, notably the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

It is against this urgent and global setting that you may view our advice on the European policy context and for the Erasmus+ successor described in this chapter.

SET MORE AMBITIOUS PRIORITIES FOR EHEA

Since 1998, the creation of the EHEA and related activities have been the driving policy force behind European cooperation in higher education. We have made substantial progress addressing the structures of European higher education:

- better recognition of degrees (Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications & Diploma Supplement) and of study points (European Credit Transfer & Accumulation System (ECTS));
- more flexible and open curricula where students can fill in parts of their curricula with courses from other countries within a system of three consecutive cycles, i.e. bachelor, master and PhD;
- more courses or curricula taking a global approach or bringing together people from different countries and cultures (European and international dimension);
- more and better mobility and lifelong learning; improved quality assurance through the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR);
- more attention for student participation, higher attractiveness and the social dimension of European higher education;
- better links between the EHEA and the ERA.

However, we need to consider the threats directly affecting European higher education. The lack of a sense of urgency and of national and EU investments on the one hand, and post-factual politics, populism, authoritarianism, protectionism and nationalism on the other, threaten the free circulation of knowledge and its bearers (i.e. students, teachers, researchers and inventors), the international orientation and cooperation of our institutions, and in some cases academic freedom and institutional autonomy. War, terrorism, climate change and related migration are topping these crises. Alarming, these threats to the fundamental core values of science also occur within countries that earlier paved the way [towards knowledge societies](#). Intolerance of divergent opinions and political interference with academia jeopardise the ability of science to act in the public interest and to take our full societal responsibility.

Universities and research performing and funding organisations in the EHEA deliver knowledge (i.e. education, research and innovation) and, as such, still constitute the strongest science system in the world. Knowledge is indispensable for long-term sustainable economic and societal benefit to European citizens and the rest of the world. We cannot afford submitting cooperation in education, research and innovation to short-term political interest in other policy areas and cutting corresponding budgets. Rather, we must build upon achievements, put knowledge back at the heart of EU policy making and - finally - invest more into cooperation and competition in these fields as essential drivers for the future of Europe.

In order to enforce European higher education further, governments and the private sector must strengthen the capacities of universities to act autonomously and to take leading positions in regional and European innovation ecosystems. The freedom to teach and to undertake research, equal opportunities, and targeted approaches to diversity, all are prerequisites for us to attract and maintain the brightest talents and ideas from all over the world.

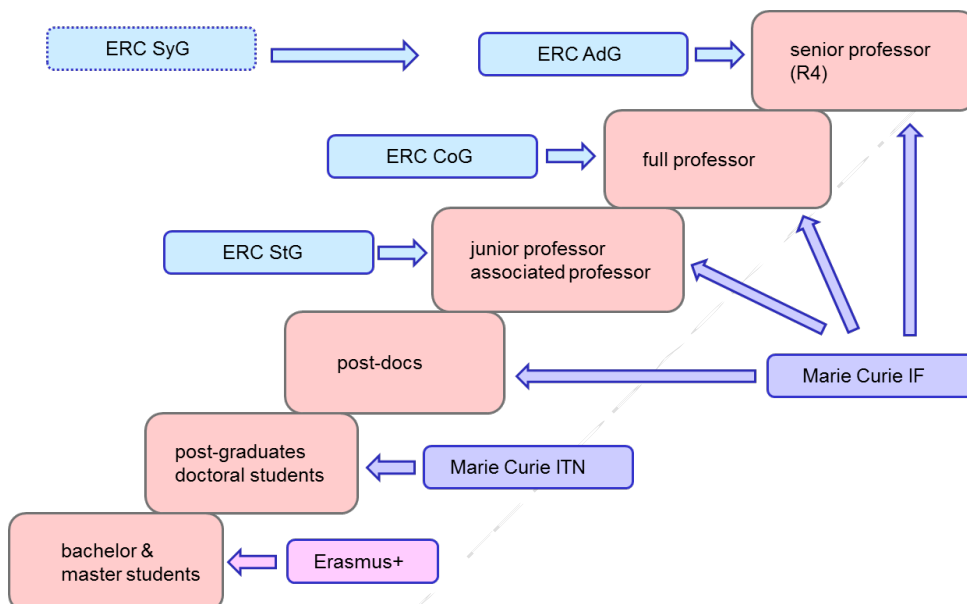
- We call upon the EU to overcome its lack of self-confidence and its complacency, to take responsibility, to provide new momentum, dynamism and equity to the EHEA and to establish the successor of Erasmus+ as the effective instrument to implement the EHEA. We need more and a better Europe in higher education and the EHEA needs to have clear governance, strongly supported by the EU.
- There is an immediate call for action upon the EU to safeguard the respect for the rule of law and human rights, freedom from political interference, tolerance of divergent opinions, democratic citizenship, evidence-based policy making, free circulation of knowledge and its bearers, academic freedom and institutional autonomy. We encourage the opening of a debate on the values of the EHEA.
- The successor of Erasmus+ should go beyond the mere mobility of students and staff, establish higher education next to research and innovation priorities and broaden the current focus on universities supporting business creation and providing for employability skills. A holistic view on the role of universities in the Europe of knowledge and in European culture should be promoted recognising universities as important players that make a sustained contribution to social cohesion, democratic citizenship and European identity. Thus, the impact of Erasmus at the institutional and societal levels would be raised.
- The EHEA now needs to shift from structural reforms towards teaching and learning, incentivising universities to focus on quality and innovation in teaching.
- The benefit of the European level lies beyond simply the sharing of best practice and learning from each other. The MS should remove remaining barriers and commit to regularly monitor and assess the implementation of the EHEA, ERA and the Europe of Knowledge. There is an evident need for further aligning higher education, research, policies and programmes as well as corresponding legal and regulatory frameworks at the regional, national, European and global levels.

STRONGER LINK BETWEEN EHEA AND ERA

Universities embody the knowledge triangle. The new momentum for the EHEA must be mirrored in the European Research Area (ERA). Improving the synergies between them will increase:

- the impact of the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Development and the EU funding programme for education, youth and sports;
- the strategic use and quality of European higher education cooperation, as the strategic possibilities offered by Erasmus+ beyond mere mobility of students and staff are limited.

By bringing the ERA and EHEA closer together, the EU will foster the role of universities in peaceful and prosperous knowledge societies in Europe and beyond and enable attractive career paths for future societal leaders and talents through its different actions:



Importantly, higher education offered by our universities of science & technology increasingly is research-based with students themselves increasingly engaged in research, Therefore, the separation between funding for bachelor and master levels through Erasmus+ and for PhD through Horizon 2020 is somewhat artificial.

- The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) combining policy objectives in both education and external relations should be brought in line with European research and innovation policy. Together with foundations laid in education projects that allow for intensive thematic cooperation and curriculum development, this will allow universities to implement true institutional development strategies.
- We advise the EU to evaluate EMJMD support in order to increase its effectiveness. Indeed, for some programmes, the number of students is quite low compared to the high administrative burden because of the strong focus on the creation of a joint degree. The aim of creating sustainable cooperation offering an innovative education programme should be highlighted more. Structured exchanges can also lead to a big impact on sustainable cooperation also in other areas such as research and innovation

- Erasmus+ provides an excellent starting point to boost entrepreneurship and the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme would benefit from integration into Erasmus+, in terms of existing structures, knowledge and good practice.
- Erasmus+ and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) need to focus more on quality enabling universities to implement attractive career paths through participation in the different funding programmes, recognising prior achievements of their beneficiaries.
- In Horizon 2020, entrepreneurial education has been a main topic of the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT) and executed through its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). Given the moderate success of the EIT and the importance of strengthening entrepreneurship and innovation aptitude in Europe, we propose that the EIT is fundamentally reformed and its different tasks are distributed to other funding programmes such as the successor of Erasmus+ and the emerging EIC. In such a scenario, the entrepreneurship education would nicely fit into an extended Erasmus+ programme, particularly for the EIT labelled Master and Doctoral Programmes. In any case, the single set of rules should apply and transparency around the calls for proposals and evaluation be guaranteed.
- Europe needs more and better researchers. It is important to acknowledge the research profession and to create attractive career paths - such as tenure tracks - on a wider scale. The implementation of the Code of Conduct for the recruitment of researchers and the European Charter for Researchers is essential in this respect. In career progression, universities should acknowledge teaching and research as well as activities in the area of the universities' third mission in a balanced way.
- In light of the success of the MSCA, we advise to allow for the funding of doctoral schools in flexible structures, and allowing for more co funding.
- We advise to allow for the funding of education and training aspects and research skills in the PhD phase effectively bringing the different sets of rules between Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 closer to each other.

ACHIEVE MORE COMPLEMENTARITIES AND SYNERGIES

Acknowledging the delineations and complementarities and sometimes synergies between the EU funding programmes, we point to the conservative use of funds under other EU programmes. The lack of success of effectively using the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for education, research and innovation is disappointing. Given the dramatic over-subscription and very low success rates in the centralised actions resulting in time inefficiencies for applicants, we express our conviction that the successor of Erasmus+ could help to give a more future-oriented spending agenda for these funds to widen the participation of lesser performing regions in the knowledge programmes and to spread excellence.

- We encourage the EU to establish better and more synergies between the knowledge programmes on the one side – i.e. Erasmus+, Horizon 2020 and Creative Europe – and the other EU funding programmes on the other – such as ESIF, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Programmes, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II), the LIFE Programme, etc.

OPEN UP TO ENTIRE WORLD

We underline the importance of Erasmus+ for the neighbourhood policy and for capacity building and suggest that these opportunities are increased in its successor. However, the current political and legal framework of bilateral negotiations between the EU and third countries for association to the EU programmes is not fit for purpose. It has led to much uncertainty and unequal level playing fields and thus jeopardised the long existing excellent links and cooperation between institutions from the EU and non-EU countries. Compared to the previous funding period, we moreover regret the reduced chances for cooperation with higher education institutions from industrialised countries (partner countries), in particular in the area of student mobility. The current Key Action 1 International Credit Mobility is only a limited compensation for the loss of the original Erasmus Mundus Action 2 (2009-2013).

- The EU should increase the budget for higher education cooperation in the neighbourhood policy and capacity building, reimburse real costs, allow for the purchasing of equipment on the EU side and - importantly - reintroduce overheads.
- The EU needs to change fundamentally its approach to international cooperation in all interlinked and inseparable facets of the Europe of Knowledge – i.e. education, youth, sports, research, innovation, culture and media. The EU should not subject it to short-term political considerations. Through this cooperation, future generations are formed and the EU thus has an intrinsic long-term geopolitical interest to safeguard such cooperation within the necessary boundary conditions.
- The EU should define a general policy and adopt equivalent legislation for the association of any industrialised country to the successor programmes of Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+. They should establish a uniform ethical, legal and financial framework allowing for the association based on `you pay what you get` safeguarded by front-loading of funds from these countries to cover the contributions for the direct participation of institutions from these countries. The EU should cover the programme management and administration. In return, the EU rules apply providing for a powerful tool to realise strategic long-term interests. Compliance with these rules must be assured at the level of beneficiaries through the grant agreement rather than through bilateral agreements with third countries.
- In order to assure the participation in and impact of the decentralised International Credit Mobility programmes, the financial sustainability of partnerships must be improved and the administrative burden reduced. Its budget allocation over the programme countries should allow for greater alignment of the budgets available per country with institutional internationalisation strategies. We flag the positive experiences in determining such national strategies involving the universities.
- The EU must ensure involvement of refugees and scholars at risk through special measures, such as budgets for the preparation of the participation of newcomers into higher education.
- The successor of Erasmus+ needs to keep up and reinforce its efforts to attract global talents to the EHEA through the pooling of resources, e.g. through Joint (Degree) Programmes that clearly demonstrate excellence.

SIMPLIFY AND ALIGN MORE

The integration of several programmes under Erasmus+ has clarified communication to applicants, simplified the application, administration and reporting procedures, and reduced the administrative burdens for the beneficiaries. The design with three Key Actions is clear and facilitates the promotion of the programme to candidate-beneficiaries and potential partners. We welcome the increased attention to tools easing recognition and quality of study abroad, e.g. the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE).

However, the increased use of unit costs by the Executive Agency Education, Audiovisual and Culture (EACEA) and National Agencies (NAs) is counterproductive to cost awareness and reimbursement of integral costs. Moreover, as the mobility beyond the European Economic Area is subject to different regulation, we have to deal with additional administrative burden.

- Simplified and unified EU rules for participation are essential in order to safeguard a level playing field across borders due to big differences in national legislation.
- We advise the EC to establish Sounding Boards per (sub-) action involving university staff to collect feedback on and suggestions for programme management, administration and implementation.
- We suggest replicating the annual events focused on coordinators, opening them to other participants and organising them along regions (north, central and south) hosted by different cities.
- Traineeships should be mandatory for all students in EIT programmes, but the legal framework for these traineeships must be simplified to guarantee good execution in all countries.
- The successor of Erasmus+ should be designed as a lever for the strategic development of universities by the tuning of the different sub-actions, making them into mechanisms for the funding of different cooperation activities that build upon one-another and gradually increase in intensity and level of partnership integration.

INCREASE FUNDING

We welcome the augmentation of the Erasmus+ budget, in comparison with its predecessor. However, we point out that the current rigidity and low funding level for grants jeopardises the mobility of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and from poorer countries. Moreover, we are greatly concerned about the large over-subscription in the Key Actions 2 and 3 and fear that the overall attractiveness of the programme considerably suffers from this.

- Funding for knowledge should also be increased and improved in delivery at national level. The European governments must stop cutting national budgets for education, research and innovation and finally agree upon a target of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) spent on higher education.
- The EU must urgently move towards collecting increased own means through direct EU taxes and allocating more ring-fenced funding for its education, research and innovation activities in all its funding programmes.
- We urge the EU to allocate a more ambitious amount for the successor of Erasmus+ under the MFF substantially increasing the funding levels for individual grants for student and staff mobility, the strategic cooperation actions, the policy support actions and the Jean Monnet Programme. The overall funding for the successor of Erasmus+ should amount to at least €25 billion for seven years and if the EU truly wants to assume leadership and realise more ambitious goals for the EHEA, a higher amount should be made available. Thereof, 45% should be ring-fenced for higher education and at least 50% of these funds should be allocated to centralised actions.
- We urge the EU to provide for full cost funding via grants. They are important for not-for-profit universities and should be given out via ESIF and EFSI too. Moreover, providing loans in a funding programme may lead to a confusing message.
- We advise the introduction of an EHEA TOP-UP intervention scheme whereby the EU funds additional activities of excellent higher education projects selected and funded at national level.
- We advise to pilot a COFUND intervention scheme with one set of rules effectively leveraging public and private investments.
- The EU should refrain from applying simplified forms of costs, promote real cost awareness and safeguard that EU funding does not drop below salaries paid at national level.
- We would welcome an invitation to assist with the evaluation of the *lump sum* funding under Erasmus+. Importantly, *lump sum* funding may not orientate at the outputs, but at activities exclusively. Moreover, it may not lead to a situation where beneficiaries get less money for doing more work. Finally, *lump sum* funding must be transparent, assure awareness of costs and assure full coverage of real costs taking differences between countries into account.

3. MOBILITY

STUDENT AND STAFF MOBILITY

The mobility of individuals is and should remain the basis of the Erasmus+ programme. It has the widest outreach of all Key Actions and an impact far beyond the walls of the universities, forging citizens that are highly skilled for today's society and labour markets.

Whereas highly valuable tools have been developed to facilitate the recognition of study abroad and to ensure the quality of student exchange, there is room for a reduction of administrative burdens and improved data collection. The Erasmus Charter is a good step towards addressing the quality of mobility, but the compliance with the commitments expressed in it can be the object of stricter monitoring, thereby providing further impetus to quality. Teaching staff mobility can be more directly committed to increase the academic quality of student exchange. It allows for improved understanding of the curricula offered at partner universities, while also being a driver for the exchange of good practice and innovation. All procedures for application and reporting on student mobility will greatly benefit from a continued focus on their digitalisation, if this digitalisation is undertaken in a dialogue with both stakeholder groups, i.e. students, as well as university staff. We also highlight the current limited possibilities to include online and open education in the context of Erasmus+ credit mobility.

- In order to spread excellence and to widen participation, we suggest funding higher grants allowing for the better coverage of real costs.
- Teaching staff mobility should be used as a driver for raising quality. To make teaching staff mobility more attractive, the available budget should be increased, red tape reduced and even more flexibility established, allowing for the coverage of real costs.
- We suggest increasing the funds for non-academic staff mobility through the International Credit Mobility (ICM) and the Key Action 1 Institutional Projects, and creating a specific action line to develop European staff weeks for academic and non-academic staff.
- We suggest allowing for the inclusion of online (and open) education in virtual exchange. By using our expertise and experience in face-to-face exchange to develop worldwide virtual exchanges, we could improve our students a great deal: many more students would have access to a wide range of interesting subjects in areas of expertise that their home university may not have and could get the credits recognised by their own education. However, any financial support should be complementary and not to the detriment of the support.
- We encourage voluntary work during Erasmus exchanges.
- The digitalisation of the administrative procedures related to mobility is welcome, although it did not result in a reduction of administrative burden.
- We advise the EC to use Erasmus students as ambassadors of European values. Young people represent the future of Europe and through mobility will lead to a more open, democratic and prejudice free Europe. The EU should multiply initiatives promoting European values using Erasmus students as the main driver of said initiatives in order to reach a wider audience in and outside of Europe.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND STAFF MOBILITY

Under the current Erasmus+, higher education institutions from programme countries on a yearly basis have to reapply for ICM in partnership with partner countries. The application takes several weeks of work and the success rate in some of the regions (e.g. Asia Industrialised, Latin America, and North America) is very low resulting in a considerable waste of time and resources. Higher education institutions have from sixteen to twenty-six months to spend funding obtained under ICM. This restrictive timeframe particularly jeopardises new partner institutions. For example, if a student is nominated for a nine-month ICM exchange and pulls out at the last minute, there is insufficient time to reallocate the scholarship to another candidate before the funding period expires, resulting in a substantial underspend.

- We are convinced that thirty-six month contracts will allow us universities to focus more on quality and sustainability rather than quantity and deadlines.
- We call for an increased and consolidated budget for ICM allowing for a strategic approach throughout the participation in this action and for the building up of sustainable and long-term collaborations. Moreover, we plea for a coherent approach among all NAs.
- To achieve sustainability, we suggest the ICM to last for at least 7 years.
- We argue for the extension of the brand name Erasmus Mundus to ICM, to enable a clear distinction between the scholarships for intra- and extra-EU mobility, which is especially relevant to avoid confusion among applicants. Further on, to distinguish these scholarships from the scholarships in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters, we propose to call the former 'Erasmus Mundus Exchange Scholarships', whereas the latter can be called 'Erasmus Mundus Joint Master scholarships'. Importantly, these Erasmus Mundus Joint Master scholarships should be automatically awarded if a project for a joint programme is approved.

4. COOPERATION

The purpose of cooperation is to boost excellence and attractiveness. Universities and governments should better facilitate cooperation across disciplinary, departmental, institutional and national borders enabling our students, teachers and researchers to solve the grand challenges at the global level. We all need to make better use of the scientific and technological potential of international partner countries and to join forces with European and international partners in order to ensure critical mass in international competition.

- We suggest centralising all of Key Action 2 to create a level playing field at EU level and beyond, guaranteeing quality and participation across member states and Partner Countries.
- Whereas the mobility of students and staff has its purpose in its own right, its impact can be increased if it is built on and expanded into more strategic cooperation. Key Action 2 should form the instrument to this end, with a set of sub-actions each building upon one-another, gradually increasing in intensity and level of partnership integration, from individual staff mobility in Key Action 1, to further European collaboration in a Strategic Partnership, to Joint Master Degrees as highest level of subject-specific integration in teaching cooperation.

INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Intensive Programmes, which existed under the Life-long Learning Programme (LLP), create more interest for study abroad and for staff mobility and would generate an impetus for designing more joint programmes. Unfortunately, the current Erasmus+ does not offer direct funding for those activities anymore. The current Strategic Partnerships are too generic in comparison to intensive programmes.

Likewise, Curriculum Development projects are no longer directly funded by Erasmus+, whereas they can be the perfect preparation for the development of joint programmes, either stand-alone or as continuation of Intensive Programmes.

- We suggest that the EU re-introduces Intensive Programmes and Curriculum Development as part of the successor of Erasmus+ and manages this Sub-Action at the European level.

JOINT MASTER PROGRAMMES

The number of Joint Programmes is currently limited under the claim of exclusiveness. However, there is much more excellence in European higher education and one has to take into account that the use of them boosts excellence and attractiveness.

- We call for a continued investment in joint programmes of excellent quality, as they are the true hallmark of the EHEA. The three years' contracts for Joint Programmes should be extended to five years in order to boost sustainability, continuity and stability. The building of a smooth-running joint programme with international reputation takes more than three years. The preparatory investment should be awarded. Finally, the EC should allow for the continued use of the brand name `Erasmus Mundus` for long-standing joint masters, as a token of their international standing and proven record of accomplishment in excellence.

- We urge the EC to separate the budget for staff exchange of scholars in Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) from the budget for the management of these programmes, which is already very tight. We urge the EC to recognise the extra administrative challenge and administrative costs for running an EMJMD and triple the budget for EMJMD management.
- We suggest allowing renowned scholars with busy schedules to stay for short stays, e.g. two days.
- The number of scholarships for participation in EMJMDs dedicated to European students should be at the same height as for non-European students, in order to create balanced classrooms. Alternatively, provide for clear guidelines on the usage of the 'classic' Erasmus+ scholarship for participation in EMJMDs.
- The EC should provide for a new sub-action for EMJMDs that have been running successfully by attracting self-funded students, allowing financial support to activities enhancing the joint character of these programmes, e.g. funding for kick-off meetings, winter and summer schools, joint workshops and joint graduation ceremonies.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The current decentralised selection and management of Strategic Partnerships distorts the level-playing field within Europe, and is detrimental to the quality of the projects. It also entails a possible duplication of efforts.

- The Strategic Partnerships should be re-centralised at European level to increase the European benefit and to allow for better connections and interlinkages than the current Knowledge Alliances.
- In their generic form, Strategic Partnerships remain the means to develop innovation in education and the exchange of good practice, in a flexible structure, and complementary to the more targeted Intensive Programmes and Curriculum Development projects in focal educational areas.
- We suggest continuing the Strategic Partnerships as looser networks with a specific action line that supports different initiatives concerning the development of international communities in the European framework countries.
- The increased budget for the re-centralised Strategic Partnerships should accommodate the removal of the separate Knowledge Alliances Action in order to have the opportunity to raise the budget for each Strategic Partnership project and to have the financial capacity to cooperate with more partners from business, industry and public services.

KNOWLEDGE ALLIANCES

Knowledge Alliances only differ from Strategic Partnerships through the eligibility criteria that require partners from industry, the larger overall budget, and the structure of activities and accompanying unit costs. In all other respects, they are equally as generic as Strategic Partnerships. Most importantly, the current success rates for Knowledge Alliances are far too low, do not match the efforts needed to formulate a proposal and therefore unnecessarily decrease their attractiveness.

- We recommend to remove Knowledge Alliances, but to allow for the participation of higher education and research institutions, business, industry, public services and other relevant partners in Intensive Programmes, Curriculum Development and Strategic Partnerships, and to leverage private funding through the COFUND intervention mechanism.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building projects are to lay the foundation for the cooperation with global partner universities at increasing levels of intensity and integration. In order to keep the attractiveness of Capacity Building projects, the budget and the outlook of the Action needs boosting both at EU and non-EU levels. In essence, the EU should demonstrate high ambition to contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals and take strong leadership.

- We urge the EU to increase the overall project budget for capacity building, reimburse real costs and allow for the purchasing of equipment at EU level and - in particular - reintroduce overhead costs related to managing and administering the cooperation with institutions in partner countries.
- Bring Capacity Building under the umbrella name of Erasmus Mundus, to indicate clearly to non-European universities that the action is part of an overall long-term strategy towards increased cooperation levels, i.e. through Capacity Building projects and/or International Credit Mobility, towards cooperation within joint programmes awarding joint degrees as the top-level type of integrated cooperation.
- For actions involving student mobility within capacity building, the monthly allowance must be raised. Cost for insurance and visa should not be part of the monthly allowance, but added to the budget for travel.
- The current amount for travel costs is insufficient for countries especially in South and Latin America. Also, the cost for travelling to/from other cities within the home and host country needs to be covered, keeping in mind also travels required to obtain the visa. This could sometimes be in another country.

5. POLICY SUPPORT

Universities remain willing and committed partners to projects in a specific Key Action that supports the starting-up and implementation of policy level initiatives taken within the context of the EHEA, the Modernisation Agenda, the links between the EHEA and ERA.

- We call for the extension of the Key Action 3 budget with a contingency budget that allows for the launching of calls for proposals targeting emerging challenges during the programme period. The recent calls for proposals on inclusion are an example. Such calls will receive more attention and more motivated participation in comparison to generic Key Action 2 Strategic Partnership calls with priorities that remain largely invisible to the wider higher education community.
- We request calls for proposals that leave enough time between their launching and the deadline, allowing for the thorough preparation by applicants, and clear administrative and financial guidelines for selected projects.
- It would be good to have both type of calls launched in parallel every year and not alternately every second year. Many project ideas lose momentum if the following appropriate call turns out to be in two-year's time.

6. JEAN MONNET

We emphasise the achievements of the Jean Monnet programme to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European studies worldwide and to foster the dialogue between the academic world and policy-makers, in particular with the aim of enhancing governance of EU policies. However, in light of the threats to the Europe of Knowledge, we feel that more can be done to enact the provisions in the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (particularly Part 2) and to safeguard the necessary boundary conditions for international cooperation in higher education.

- To promote cooperation and dialogue on European values, integration and citizenship and to create a stronger understanding of the accomplishments in this respect, more participation in Jean Monnet is to be encouraged, also beyond the limits of fields regularly involved in this topic (e.g. Law, Political Sciences, History). Jean Monnet should be used to reach out to larger audiences in academia, business, industry, public services and most importantly the citizens. We suggest investigating and funding more creative activities on topics related to European integration, as well as history, citizenship, democracy and human rights, mass media and communication beyond traditional and typical classwork.

7. OUR PROPOSAL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACTIONS IN SUCCESSOR OF ERASMUS+

	KEY ACTION 1 'MOBILITY' DECENTRALISED 50%	KEY ACTION 2 'COOPERATION' CENTRALISED 45%	KEY ACTION 3 'POLICY SUPPORT' CENTRALISED 5%
ERASMUS 70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student mobility - staff mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intensive Programmes - Curriculum Development - Strategic Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiatives for policy innovation - forward-looking cooperation projects - European policy experimentations - Specific calls for emerging challenges
ERASMUS MUNDUS 30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - international staff mobility - international student mobility scholarships for Joint programmes (students and scholars) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capacity building projects - joint master programme management - award double or joint degrees - support to joint character of EMJDs 	
JEAN MONNET 2.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching and Research: Jean Monnet Modules, Chairs and Centres of Excellence - Support to Associations: Jean Monnet support to Associations - Policy debate with the Academic World: Jean Monnet Networks and Jean Monnet Projects - Outreach activities promoting European values beyond academia 		
INSTRUMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants - COFUND intervention scheme - EHEA TOP-UP intervention scheme 		