# QUALITY ASSURANCE
# FIRST LESSONS LEARNT IN CIRCLE U.

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I'MINQA PROJECT – WG QA OF
EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCES
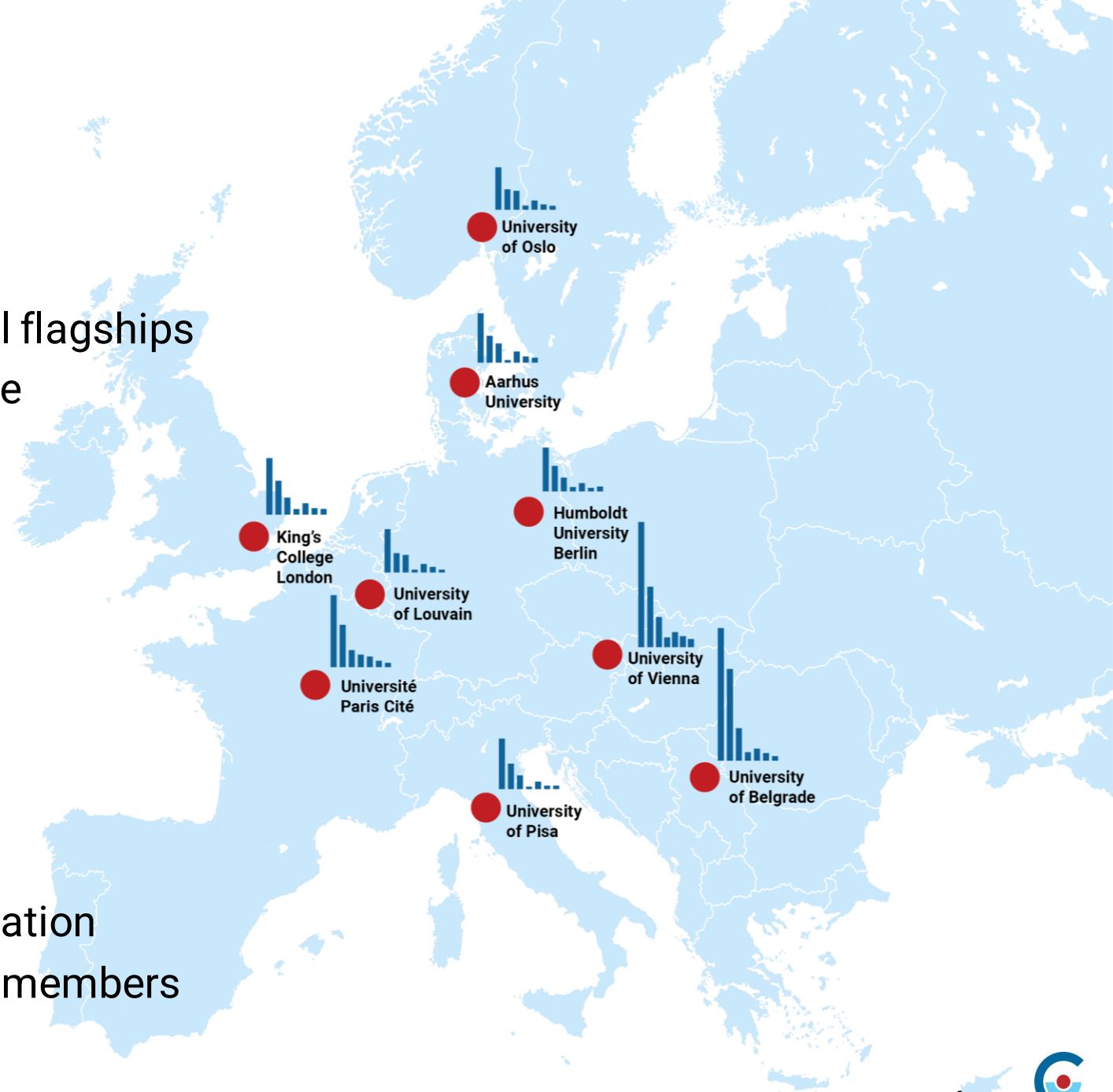BRUSSELS – 17 JANUARY 2023

**MESSAGE #1**

# A SHARED DEDICATION TO THE ALLIANCE

# WHO ARE WE?

- **"Likeminded" universities**
  - World, European, national and regional flagships
  - Comprehensive and research-intensive

- **Universities with values**
  - Among the first universities in Europe
  - Academic freedom and integrity
  - Inclusion and diversity

- **Strongly committed universities**
  - Long-term and sustainable transformation
  - Strategic development, including new members

University of Oslo

Aarhus University

King's College London

Humboldt University Berlin

University of Louvain

Université Paris Cité

University of Vienna

University of Pisa

University of Belgrade

# CIRCLE U.?

**9** universities

**0.5Mio** students

**65K** staff

**+2 500** study programmes

**34** ass. partners

**1 vision**

**+400** ERC

**1** legal entity

**+1.8K** EU projects

MESSAGE #2

# CIRCLE U. IS THERE FOR THE LONG RUN

# WE ARE RUNNING A SPRINT AND MARATHON AT THE SAME TIME

## SPRINT

### or completing pilot projects

- Currently, **three EU-funded projects**: E+ strategic partnership, E+ European university and SwafS
- **"Trial and error"** approach
- **Project logic** with focus on **short-term results**

## MARATHON

### or structuring a sustainable and innovation collaboration

- Transform how we think, we work, we cooperate, we internationalise education, research and innovation
- Develop a new culture of cooperation
- **Structural logic** with focus on **realizing a shared vision**

# OUR ALLIANCE TODAY

Quality assurance guidelines
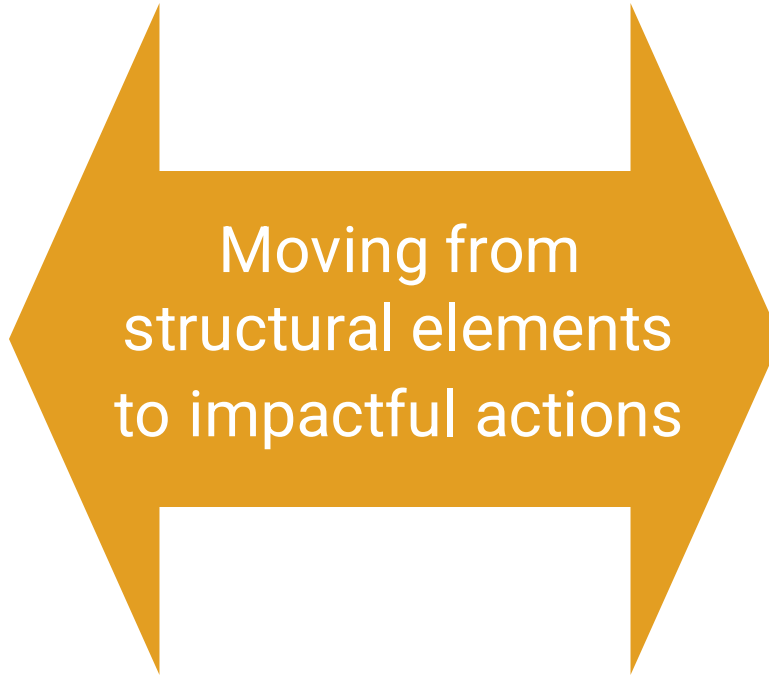
Mobility framework

Academic chairs

Website, newsletter, Teams, Twitter

Legal entity / joint governance

Seed-funding schemes

Think and Do Tank

Knowledge Hubs and OSPG

Moving from structural elements to impactful actions

Summer schools

Joint courses

National conferences

Circle U. challenge

Mobilty for researchers

White papers / policy papers

Circle U. Prize

Mentorship programmes

# SOME FIRST RESULTS

**11.85Mio** total budget for Circle U.

**5** summer schools

**17** ongoing joint courses and programmes

**46** academic chairs

**1** legal entity

**2** new members

**6** Circle U. challenges

**9** seed-funded bottom-up projects

**MESSAGE #3**

# CIRCLE U. IS NOT REVOLUTIONIZING QA BUT WE ARE BUILDING TRUST

# QUALITY ASSURANCE?

**What** are we talking about?

- **Project** management? > framework imposed by the EC but development of MEL strategy ("Monitoring, evaluating and learning")

- QA of **joint learning/teaching activities**? Degree-granting or/and non degree-granting? > Joint QA approach based on European, national and institutional existing tools

- Quality of **joint research activities**? > Not yet

- Quality of our **transformative cooperation process**? > MEL strategy

# QA OF LEARNING/TEACHING ACTIVITIES

- **Starting points**
  - ESG and European approach to QA for joint programmes
  - Expertise, experience, practices of each university
  - No additional "lasagne layer"

- Definition of **common values** > why QA?

- Agreement on the **scope >** QA on what?

- **Guidelines:**
  - No joint QA body for the whole alliance
  - "Final" responsibility for the "delivering" institution
  - Recognition by the other institutions
  - Use of common tools, e.g. student survey

# RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK

- **Starting** points
  - LRC, ESG, European Recognition Manual for HEIs and ECTS Users' guide
  - Main focus on **credits**, **courses**, **grades** and **student status** – no degree recognition
  - **All types** of mobility

- No Circle U. student status yet, but **a possible way to explore**

- **Automatic recognition** of credits and level of qualification, as guiding principle

- Fair and transparent procedures, with a common ambition **to use EMREX**

# AND NOW?

- Both "frameworks" are **living documents**

- **First learning activities** have happened lately (5 summer schools, challenge-based learning, 5-10 joint courses, thematic seminars)

- But the focus has been first and foremost **on academic content**

- Quality and recognition are **central for students** and is a "prerequisite" for the **success of our alliance**

- Because these activities are jointly developed, **trust prevails!**

QUESTION?

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