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European University Association (EUA):

Main initiatives, events and publications in summer 2018

1. Autonomy

Autonomy Scorecard update release

At its Annual Conference in Bergen, on 6-7 April 2017, EUA presented the state of play on university autonomy in Europe, with the launch of its newly updated Autonomy Scorecard. The Scorecard online tool can be consulted [here](#). The [extensive study](#), published in June 2017, profiles and scores 29 higher education systems, and is complemented by a series of [country profiles](#). In 2017 and in 2018, the updated Scorecard continues to support national-level discussions on autonomy reforms in various European higher education systems. On 23-24 April 2018, EUA and Universities UK co-organise a high-level workshop “[University Autonomy in Europe - Trends, Benefits, Challenges and Threats](#)” in Leicester, UK. Based on the findings of EUA’s Autonomy Scorecard, the event seeks to foster a well-informed debate on the importance of autonomy for university success.

TRUNAK project: university autonomy in Kazakhstan

The Autonomy Scorecard methodology also supports the implementation of the Erasmus+ [TRUNAK project](#) that focuses on improving the regulatory framework for universities in Kazakhstan (2017-2020). In 2018, the consortium undertakes an analysis of the state of play to develop recommendations to effectively enhance institutional autonomy in the country.

2. Learning and Teaching

TRENDS 2018

Following its 8th TRENDS survey to European higher education institutions, EUA is now working on the TRENDS 2018 report, which will focus on learning and teaching developments. The report is expected to be published by autumn 2018, and used in various policy and practice contexts.

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

EUA Learning and Teaching Initiative

Following the successful first European Learning and Teaching Forum organised on 28-29 September 2017, EUA published a report summarising the lessons learnt from its L&T work in November 2017. The report is available [here](#). In 2018 EUA will coordinate a new round of thematic groups. The discussions and recommendations of these thematic peer groups will feed into the second edition of EUA’s European Learning & Teaching Forum, which will be held in Warsaw, Poland on 14-15 February 2019. More information can be found [here](#).

European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching (EFFECT)

The EFFECT project (Erasmus+ KA3, 2015-2018) aims at facilitating European exchanges and collaboration on teaching enhancement, identifying and developing innovative practices, supporting the institutions in developing strategic approaches, and assessing the feasibility of a sustainable structure for the enhancement of L&T at European level.

Among other activities, EFFECT has developed a set of ten [European Principles for the enhancement of learning and teaching](#) which have been launched in autumn 2017. These Principles are non-prescriptive and underpin the need to re-emphasise the education mission of the university. They are intended to serve institutional leaders working with staff, students and other stakeholders to ensure the quality, relevance and attractiveness of higher education. The EUA Council, which gathers the Presidents of 33 European National Rectors’ Conferences, endorsed the Principles in October 2017. EFFECT is now

working to connect the Principles with practice, by engaging a selection of 12 European higher education institutions to test the Principles in their home institutions. It is also planned to develop guiding questions to accompany institutions who would like to engage with these Principles, and use them as a reference document for reflecting on their institutional strategy and practices in L&T.

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

3. Quality assurance

European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF)

The 13th EQAF will be held on 15-17 November 2018, hosted by WU (Vienna University of Economics and Business) and AQ Austria. This annual event is co-organised by the E4 group (ENQA, ESU, EURASHE and EUA) and the theme of the 2018 Forum will be 'Broadening the scope of QA'. A call for contributions is currently open and the deadline for submissions is 24 July 2018. Further information can be found [here](#).

Enhanced Quality through Innovative Policy and Practice (EQUIP)

The partners of the EQUIP project, including EUA, have published a study and recommendations regarding the role of quality assurance (QA) in improving higher education in the European Higher Education Area. The study is the result of a series of activities including workshops, surveys and focus groups implemented under the framework of the EQUIP project. The aims of the activities were to support QA stakeholders in meeting the expectations of the ESG 2015, and to explore how to tackle the most common challenges in internal and external quality assurance in practice and at the policy level.

This study, entitled '[Enhancing quality: from policy to practice](#)', presents the results of this work and includes recommendations for practitioners and policy-makers. Topics covered include the diversity of external contexts and legal frameworks, institutional responsibility for QA, communication about QA, quality culture and bureaucracy, and student-centred learning. The key messages and recommendations for public authorities are also presented in a separate [policy leaflet](#).

4. 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:

The Arab-EU Higher Education Conference (AECHE)

AECHE is a joint endeavour with a Steering Committee comprising EUA, the Association of Arab Universities, UNICA, UNIMED, joined by other partners, among them the Union for the Mediterranean, with the University of Barcelona hosting the Secretariat. It organises biannual HE Leadership and thematic events. AECHE established a scheduled, systematic participatory dialogue and cooperation process, which offers different parties to join and integrate their initiatives and pool resources. The Process has been acknowledged in a joint memorandum of the EU and the Arab League. The last AECHE Conference, AECHE 4, took place from 24 to 26 April 2017 in Rabat. It resulted in the release of the Rabat Declaration, which can be found [here](#). More information on AECHE can be found [here](#).

Centralised Support for Higher Education Reform Experts (SPHERE)

The University of Barcelona (coordinator) and EUA currently comprise the consortium SPHERE (Support and Promotion for Higher Education Reform Experts), an initiative funded by the European Commission. SPHERE provides training and networking for Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) and National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) in European neighbourhood countries (former Tempus countries) between January 2015 and December 2020. More information, as well as the list of upcoming events, can be found [here](#).

European Union Support to Higher Education in ASEAN Region (EU-SHARE)

EUA is involved in the project "European Union Support to Higher Education in ASEAN Region (SHARE)" (2015-2018), funded by the EU. EU-SHARE aims to strengthen regional cooperation by enhancing the

quality, regional competitiveness and internationalisation of ASEAN higher education. The SHARE workshop/symposium took place in Bangkok in August/September 2017, with further events planned for 2018. Further information about the SHARE project can be found [here](#).

ASEF Rectors' Conference and ASEM Meeting of Education Ministers

As the representative of European universities, EUA is engaged in the Asia-Europe Meeting of Education Ministers (ASEM ME), which is organised on a biennial basis. The latest meeting took place in Seoul, South Korea, in November 2017.

EUA, together with the ASEAN University Network (AUN), actively participated to the 6th Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) Rectors' Conference (ARC6), which took place at Singapore Management University in October 2017. In particular, EUA and AUN, together with ASEF, lead the development of ARC6 [policy recommendations](#), which were conveyed to the ASEM ME.

Modernisation of Institutional Management of Innovation and Research in Southern Neighbouring Countries (MIMIr)

Thirteen higher education institutions are participating in the MIMIr project (2015-18; Erasmus+) together with the Moroccan and Jordanian Ministries for Higher Education and Research, EUA and the Association of Arab Universities. They work together under the coordination of the University of Barcelona to develop innovation and research management capacity in the Arab world, particularly in Morocco and Jordan. More information can be found [here](#).

Development of the Internationalisation of PhD Studies in South-Africa (Yebo!)

The Yebo! project (2017-20, Erasmus+) is focused on developing the internationalisation of doctoral education in South African universities. It will develop a web-based portal and organising thematic conferences and training sessions. The project builds on the FRINDOC framework for international doctoral education developed by EUA. Five European and seven South African higher education institutions together with EUA, the Coimbra Group and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development are involved in the project. The University of Montpellier is the project coordinator.

Harmonisation and Innovation in Central American Higher Education Curricula: Enhancing and Implementing the Regional QF (HICA)

[HICA](#), driven by university associations, universities and ministries, intends to support the reform, innovation and harmonisation of higher education curricula in six Central American countries. The project will further develop and implement a regional qualifications framework for Central American Higher Education ('MCESCA') – proposed by the prior project [Alfa PUENTES](#) - to which EUA also contributed as a partner.

Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA Initiative)

The HAQAA Initiative supports the development of a harmonised quality assurance and accreditation system at institutional level, national, regional and Pan-African continental level. In its first two years of implementation the Initiative, managed by the University of Barcelona, ENQA, DAAD, AAU and EUA, delivered the training course for a "common QA language" among key African QA stakeholders and disseminators, set up the Technical Working Group for drafting the African Standards and Guidelines for QA (ASG-QA), mapped the existing standards and guidelines, performed a needs assessment for standards and guidelines in QA, and completed a series of consultations with key stakeholders to endorse ASQ-QA. The ASG-QA is aimed to be a continental framework for quality assurance in higher education and it is planned to be endorsed by heads of state in Africa during 2018.

5. Inclusiveness

Refugees Welcome Map

In late 2015 EUA has launched the [Refugees Welcome Map](#) campaign, to showcase the commitment of the higher education sector in welcoming refugees. The interactive tool so far has gathered around 300 initiatives that focus on the integration of refugees through a number of concrete activities, such as bridging and language courses, community outreach and research, the adaptation of recognition procedures and scholarships for refugees.

Higher Education Supporting Refugees in Europe (inHERE)

The information gathered in the map has been analysed through the inHERE project, co-funded by the EU and lead by UNIMED, in order to identify [good practices](#) which potentially can be upscaled or transferred to other institutions and their respective local contexts. The project will offer training to university staff on specific activities for refugee integration through a series of online events, as well as a staff training week in April 2018, and a policy dialogue event on the day before the EHEA Ministerial Conference in Paris, hosted by Campus France at CPU's premises. The registration link and further information can be found [here](#).

Towards Empowered Migrant Youth in Southern Europe (TandEM)

The TandEM project, co-funded by the AMIF fund and lead by the IOM (International Organisation for Migration), will carry out activities to foster the engagement of young third-country nationals (TCNs) and their peers in six Southern European Countries. The project will contribute to improving access to and integration of TCNs into higher education by conducting a comparative cross-country study aimed at understanding access-related needs and identifying operational recommendations to remove barriers. These will feed into a pilot student mentorship scheme.

EUA focus groups diversity & inclusiveness

In late 2017 and early 2018 EUA is organising two focus groups on [diversity and inclusiveness](#) and on [public engagement](#), based on the imperative for broader participation in higher education, which opens up discussions on the social responsibility of universities and points towards a number of strategic and practical questions for institutions about how to deal with issues of diversity, inclusion, equity and access. With the focus groups, EUA aims to give interested members the opportunity for open exchange and peer learning on concrete aspects, such as institutional strategies for diversity management, policies for equal opportunities, social innovation or widening participation of underrepresented groups.

EUA Annual Conference (5-6 April 2018)

The 2018 Annual Conference built upon EUA's work with its members on various topics linked to the societal mission of universities. 400 members came to the University of Zurich to discuss universities' pivotal role in generating knowledge, developing intercultural understanding and fostering civic engagement through their core missions. The conference was preceded on 4 April by the Leadership Roundtable with more than 90 rectors from all around Europe to discuss the role of leadership in developing universities' social responsibilities. More information can be found [here](#). The next EUA Annual Conference will be hosted by Sorbonne University on 11-12 April 2019.

6. University finances & EU funding

EUA 4th Funding Forum: "Frameworks that empower, universities that deliver"

[This year's Forum](#) will be hosted by Ramon Llull University, Barcelona, on 18-19 October 2018. The event will feature well-known popular formats and step up interaction among participants through a variety of new activities. The event, which philosophy can be summarised by "*share and learn to grow and improve*", will focus on empowering institutions in financial and economic environments characterised by uncertainty and risk. Policy-makers will have the opportunity to explore reform mechanisms of interest. The Forum will enrich the perspectives of both institutional leaders and policy-makers engaged in funding reforms and more broadly in change management.

Registrations open in May 2018. A call for academic contributions is open until 30 April 2018.

In 2017, EUA disseminated the results of the consultation it carried out with its membership on the interim progress of the two major EU funding programmes for research and higher education: Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+. The aim was to develop a comprehensive view of the university sector in time for European-level discussions on the future of Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ and their post-2020 successors. The findings are presented in [two reports](#).

EUA also released its proposals for "[Ambitious funding for excellent research in Europe post-2020](#)", where it advocates for a quantitative and qualitative leap in EU research funding, and suggests to open a discussion on a possible ring-fencing or shift of funding for R&I from ESIF or other sources for a more ambitious and well-functioning research programme.

Simplification of EU funding

EUA understands simplification as the achievement of a coherent set of rules, mindful of the diversity of actions and beneficiaries accommodated in a programme, and that ensures both high-quality processes and an effective use of resources.

EUA presents an outline of the challenges surrounding simplification in research and innovation and shares its perspectives and solutions for effective simplification in its paper "[Taking simplification of EU funding to the next level: the university perspective](#)" (February 2018). EUA argues for the wider acceptance of nationally recognised institutional management and accounting practices of beneficiaries as the most significant way to enhance efficiency and participation in the programme.

In 2018, EUA will release a compendium of national and institutional accounting practices as well as a series of thematic briefs to inform the discussion on impactful simplification.

'EU funding for universities' campaign

EUA's work on FP9 and on Erasmus+ is included in its broader campaign '[EU funding for universities](#)', which also puts forward recommendations for impactful simplification and increased efficiency and value for money of EU funding programmes. In 2018, the campaign feeds into the debate leading to the adoption of the next multiannual financial framework of the European Union, and focuses on added value of EU-level investment in research & innovation. In addition to previous [membership consultations on Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+](#), EUA has published a list of concrete reasons to step up EU investment in research and innovation and in higher education exchange and cooperation [here](#).

Public Funding Observatory

EUA released in December 2017 its latest edition of the [Public Funding Observatory](#), which tracks developments in national public funding to universities. The analysis reveals that since the 2008 financial crisis, the divide between higher education systems that increase public funding, and those that reduce investment, is getting wider, and that any recovery that can now be detected is slow and fragile. Data collection for the next update will take place in the second semester of 2018.

Efficient university management: USTREAM project

The [USTREAM project](#) is supported by the Erasmus+ programme and examines the measures that are in place in universities across Europe to enhance efficiency at operational level, and also analyse policies at system level that support universities in their efforts to operate more efficiently, with a view to identify good practice examples and develop recommendations for further development. The project addresses the question of operational efficiency in universities in a European comparative way. In 2018, the third and final peer-learning seminar will focus on governance and leadership (April 2018, Brussels) and will be followed by national policy dialogue events organised in the first semester (Austria, Latvia and Lithuania). The aim of the events is to bring together relevant higher education stakeholders engaged in design and implementation of efficiency, effectiveness and value for money, ranging from university leaders to funders and policy makers. A series of thematic publications are being released in the first semester of 2018.

7. Research & Innovation

EUA contributed to several research and innovation (R&I) policy areas with the aim of supporting EUA members in following up and contributing to main developments at EU level. The work of EUA in R&I is coordinated through high-level working groups gathering input from all EU countries. Policy dialogues in 2017 revolved around the development of the next framework programme for research and innovation (FP9), Open Access/Open Science and Smart Specialisation Strategies. The field of Energy as a major underlying societal challenge continued to be a thematic focus area of the EUA Platform of Universities in Energy and Environment. In close relation with research and innovation, Doctoral Education, a central activity characteristic of universities, was addressed through the EUA-Council for Doctoral Education (Section 7).

EUA proposals for the next framework programme for research and innovation (FP9)

In November 2016, EUA published its [vision for the design of FP9](#) which identified three key thematic areas of concern for universities in the post-2020 period: 1) providing long-term policies and funding instruments for research; 2) reinforcing collaboration and minimising discrepancies across the EU; 3) seeking a stronger alignment of policies for education, research and innovation.

In view of the forthcoming negotiations for the next Multiannual Financial Framework, EUA has further defined its vision in the [position paper](#) entitled “From vision to action: EUA proposals for the next framework programme for research and innovation (FP9)” by providing a reflection on each thematic area and putting forward specific recommendations for the design of FP9 rules, programmes, instruments and criteria of participation. The position was presented at the [policy event “Excellence in research, innovation and education: The universities’ recommendations for an efficient and ambitious FP9”](#) hosted by MEP Christian Ehler at the European Parliament in November 2017.

EUA joined a broad coalition of major European university networks in March 2018 issuing a [call](#) to member states to double the investment in research, innovation and education. In April 2018, EUA also [responded](#) to the European Commission’s call for feedback on mission-oriented research and innovation (R&I) in FP9. The response of the association sets out four framework conditions for successful missions and identifies six challenges and opportunities for mission-driven R&I in FP9.

Open Access/Open Science

Given the increasing importance of ease of access, fast circulation and valorisation of research results and data in the transition to a more open scholarly communication system for the benefit of science, the economy and society at large, EUA has developed a series of aims and recommendations to further assist European universities and National Rectors’ Conferences in moving towards open access to research publications and data. In 2017, EUA published its [recommendations on Open Access to research publications](#) (June), [recommendations on Research Data Management and Text & Data Mining](#) (October), as well as the [EUA political statement on Open Science](#) (October) with key messages from the university sector addressed to EU institutions and national governments. The documents were guided by the results of the [Open Access survey 2016-2017](#) – released in a [report](#) in February 2018 – and the work of the [EUA’s Expert Group on Science 2.0/Open Science](#). The package of the 2017 Recommendations illustrate the increasing and considerable work and engagement of European universities in the transition towards a more open scientific system. Another focus area in 2017 and 2018 are negotiations of large-scale contracts for scientific publications with publishers. Work in this area is led by the EUA High-Level Group on ‘Big Deals’ since 2016 and it resulted in a first [report](#) mapping major scientific publishing contracts in Europe in April 2018. These efforts will continue throughout 2018 with particular attention to three priority areas: research assessment; citizen science; open science skills and education. As a first step in these areas, EUA expects to publish a roadmap on research assessment in May 2018.

Smart specialisation (RIS3)

In January 2018, the EUA Council adopted a [policy position on Smart Specialisation](#) (RIS3), developed by EUA and its Expert Group on Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation with a view to defining the priorities for the post-2020 period. The document presents the following key messages from the university sector for maximising the effectiveness of smart specialisation strategies for regional development: (1) investing in human talent and skills to ensure enduring innovation, (2) enhancing the strategic involvement of universities in regional innovation ecosystems, (3) promoting the engagement of all EU regions without compromising excellence, (4) strengthening collaboration and multi-level governance to induce innovation at the regional level, (5) reinforcing synergies and multi-level governance. These key factors emerge from successful RIS3 strategies across Europe showcased by a number of universities and other R&I stakeholders at the EUA workshops on regional innovation in [Poland](#) (2016), hosted by University of Warsaw, and [Estonia](#) (2017), hosted by University of Tartu. In addition, this document builds on [EUA’s funding paper](#), published in May 2017, and [EUA’s recommendations for the next Framework Programme](#), published in November 2017.

In autumn 2018, EUA will run the next edition of the annual workshop on RIS3, which will be hosted by University of Graz, Austria. The event will be organised in collaboration with Austrian Rectors Conference (UNIKO) and Italian Rectors Conference (CRUI), in the framework of the activities of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The workshop will aim at collecting good practice of universities in RIS3 and will be addressed to university leaders (rectors, vice-rectors, heads of administration, etc.), municipal, regional and national policy-makers, and all other stakeholders interested in regional innovation.

UNIversities in the SET-Plan (UNISSET) project

Co-ordinated by EUA, the FP7 UNI-SET project (2014-2017) aimed to mobilise European universities to contribute to the European energy goals spelled out in the European Energy Union, the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan) and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. UNI-SET has mapped existing energy-related Master, Doctorate and Research programmes at European universities and collected empirical data about the range of university activities

in disciplines and scientific fields related to the SET-Plan. It has also been active in monitoring the skills and professional profiles needed in the current and future European energy sector. Results from these two activities informed the discussions at the UNI-SET Energy Clustering Events held between 2015-2017. In addition, the UNI-SET consortium provided [input](#) to consultations by the European Commission on the SET-Plan since 2015, published its [Roadmap](#) for European Universities in Energy in December 2016 and published the report "[Energy Transition and The Future of Energy Research, Innovation and Education - An Action Agenda for European Universities](#)", which seeks to stimulate new innovative approaches to learning, teaching and research. Moreover, the project partners released the publication "Energy Research and Education at European Universities: The UNI-SET Universities Survey Report" ([link](#)). The results of the UNI-SET Employers are expected to be released in the 1st half of 2018.

The EUA Energy and Environment Platform (EUA-EPUE)

In 2018, [EUA-EPUE](#) will continue its work supporting universities in energy research and education, focusing on the energy transition, and expanding the platform's multidisciplinary remit to include environment and climate change. An "Energy Clustering Event" was organised from 21 to 22 March at the University of Lorraine in Nancy, France and a second one is planned for the last quarter of the year. EUA-EPUE is also preparing a joint position paper with the European Energy Research Alliance ([EERA](#)) and [InnoEnergy](#) on the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation ('FP9') with a particular focus on energy-related issues. Other activities, for example during the European Sustainable Energy Week 2018 and in relation to the Strategic Energy Technology Plan are being prepared by the platform. More information is available on the new [website](#).

8. Doctoral Education

Study on Doctoral Education

EUA is currently working on a Europe-wide study on the organisation of and challenges in doctoral education. The study is based on a survey to all European higher education institutions providing doctoral education, was open until the end of January. A report presenting the findings will be published in the beginning of 2019.

11th EUA-CDE Thematic workshop (January 2018)

The EUA Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE) invited academic leaders, heads of doctoral schools and doctoral education professionals to the 2018 Thematic Workshop. They reflected on key practices that have been introduced, i.e. institutional structures, doctoral supervision, transferable skills training and career development, and inter-sectoral collaboration and their impact on doctoral education and its outcomes. Part of this discussion considered if and how universities are building an evidence-base by monitoring and evaluating the practices and structures they have in place. More information can be found [here](#).

EUA-CDE Annual meeting (June 2018)

Doctoral education across Europe reflects the diversity of European higher education and research systems and the changes that have taken place in the doctoral education landscape over the last decade. These include higher participation rates, continued internationalisation, the organisational variety of doctoral programmes and diverse backgrounds of doctoral candidates. This landscape offers opportunities for enhancing mutual learning and collaboration.

This year's Annual Meeting coincides with the 10th anniversary of EUA-CDE. The focus will be on exploring the ways in which embracing diversity in doctoral education contributes to promoting research excellence, innovation and improved career opportunities for doctoral candidates.

Another key element will be the presentation and discussion of the results of a major study on the organisation of doctoral education in Europe that EUA-CDE has been carrying out over the last year. Finally, given the growing importance of the internationalisation of doctoral education, we will also seek to provide an international perspective on our various European agendas.

Registrations are open also for non EUA-CDE members. More information can be found [here](#). Further questions can be directed to info@eua-cde.org.