



# Annual Report 2022

**Copyright © 2023 European University  
Foundation.  
All rights reserved.**

EUF Annual Report 2022

Published in July 2023

**Authors:** EUF Secretariat

**Editors:** Joachim Wyssling, Anita Kardos

**Proofreading:** Federica Bartolozzi

**Design:** Debora Lucque



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Education and Culture Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



2022

# Foreword

*Prof. Marketá Krížová,  
President of the EUF  
Steering Committee (Charles  
University)*

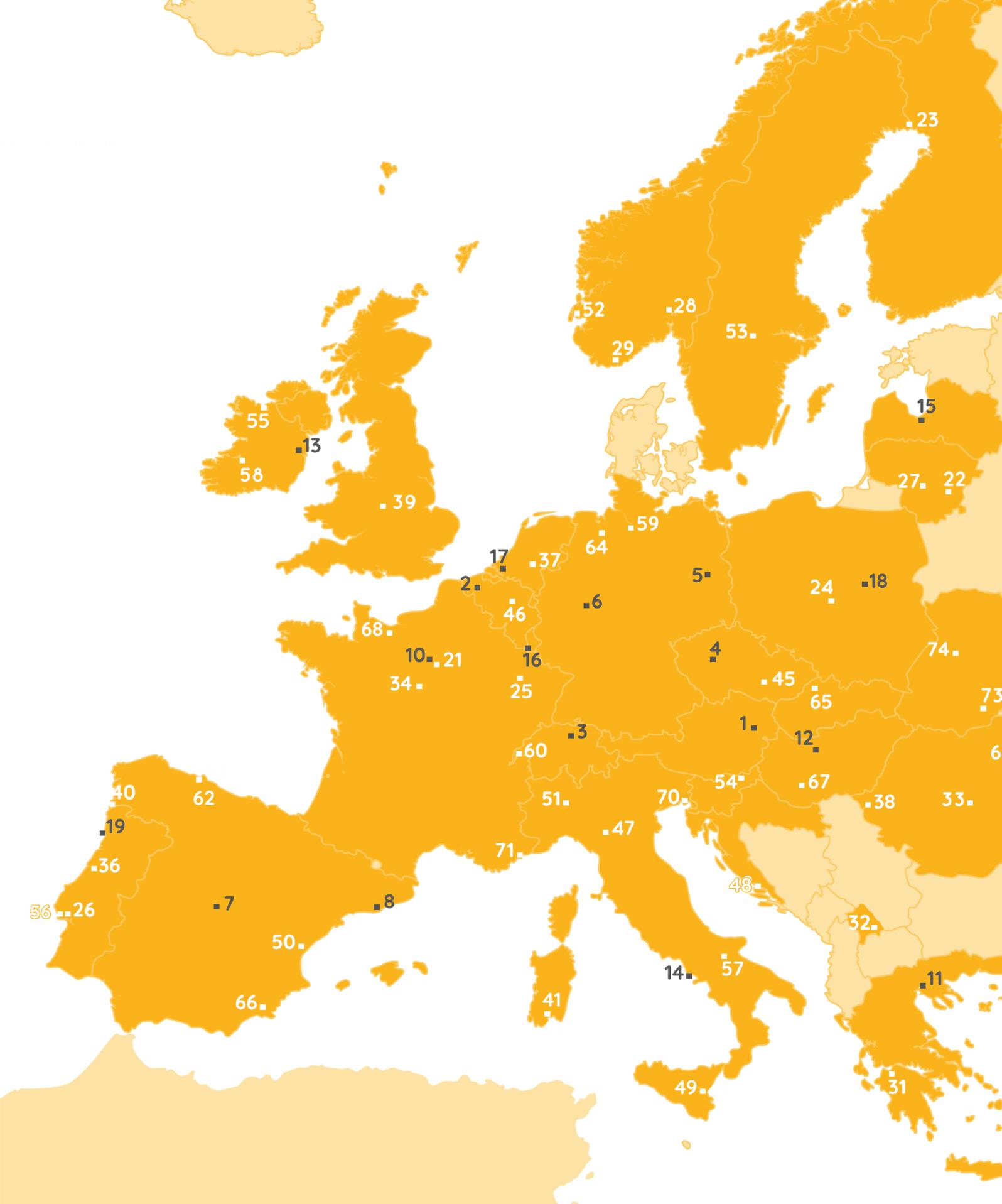
The annual report 2022 highlights the main conclusions drawn from a year marked by the start of Russia's invasion in Ukraine. As a result of this tragic event, Higher Education Institutions mobilised considerable resources to support displaced students and scholars. The European University Foundation was no exception: we worked closely together to provide assistance and built reference tools for those seeking safety. Additionally, we extended institutional support to Ukrainian universities by inviting five of them to become involved in the EUF network, fostering collaboration and addressing present and future challenges.

Throughout these efforts, we remained committed to advancing European cooperation and mobility, while fulfilling our responsibilities within the European Higher Education Area. Our focus on facilitating more participation and accelerating the green and digital transitions remained steadfast, making the year demanding yet

empowering, uniting us like never before.

## **2022 a year of disruptive continuity?**

In this sense, 2022 could be described as a year of 'disruptive continuity' whereby the network and its members sought to address the challenges generated by the Russian war in Ukraine and at the same time contribute to the implementation of the 2nd year of the new Erasmus+ programme. While the Council of Rectors reinforced the focus of EUF on inclusion by making it the new main strategic priority, the Project Manager and Advisor Community reached a proud number of 250 staff members, demonstrating again the need and added-value of a pragmatic and results-oriented approach to internationalisation activities. The community has provided for a very dynamic end of year, generating a lot of ideas to address challenges and key priorities that were turned into project applications in 2023.



# EUF Offices



Brussels  
Representation Office



Luxem  
Heado



Barcelona  
University Internationalisation Hub



Budap  
Mobilit

# EUF network in 2022

## Statutory members

1. University of Vienna
2. Ghent University
3. University of Zurich
4. Charles University
5. Humboldt University of Berlin
6. Philipps-Universität Marburg
7. University of Alcalá
8. University of Barcelona
9. University of Eastern Finland
10. University of Paris-Saclay
11. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
12. Eötvös Loránd University
13. Trinity College Dublin
14. University of Naples Federico II
15. University of Latvia
16. University of Luxembourg
17. Erasmus University Rotterdam
18. University of Warsaw
19. University of Porto

## Associate members

20. Odesa National University
21. Mines-Telecom Institute Business School
22. European Humanities University
23. Lapland University of Applied Sciences
24. University of Lodz
25. University of Lorraine
26. Polytechnic Institute of Lisbon
27. Vytautas Magnus University
28. Oslo Metropolitan University
29. University of Agder
30. Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
31. University of Patras
32. University Kadri Zeka Gjillan
33. Transilvania University of Brasov
34. University of Orléans
35. Cyprus University of Technology
36. Politechnic Institute of Coimbra
37. Han University of Applied Sciences
38. Polytechnic University of Timisoara
39. Birmingham City University
40. University of Vigo
41. University of Cagliari
42. Poltava State Medical University
43. Selçuk University
44. Izmir Institute of Technology
45. Mendel University in Brno
46. Hasselt University
47. University of Parma
48. University of Split
49. University of Catania
50. University of Jaime I
51. University of Piemonte Orientale
52. Western Norway University of Applied Sciences
53. Örebro University
54. University of Maribor
55. Institute of Technology Sligo
56. University Institute of Lisbon
57. University of Foggia
58. University of Limerick
59. University of Hamburg
60. University of Lausanne
61. Erciyes University
62. University of Oviedo
63. University of the Aegean
64. University of Bremen
65. University of Žilina
66. University of Murcia
67. University of Pécs
68. Normandy University
69. Gheorghe Asachi Technical University of Iași
70. University of Trieste
71. University Côte d'Azur
72. University of Galati
73. Chernivtsi National University
74. Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

# 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

02

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European University Foundation joins the chorus of citizens and civil society organisations condemning the war on the European continent. The EUF's strenuous support to Ukrainian students and staff fleeing the war includes the launch of the [Ukrainian War Student Support Center](#), a [joint call](#) with the Erasmus Student Network, European Students' Union, and the Coimbra Group of Universities, an invitation to five Ukrainian universities to join the network, and a [co-signed statement](#) demanding a top-up of funds.



## FEBRUARY

### War in Ukraine



01

## JANUARY

### New projects

The new year marks the start of four new projects which involve the EUF: the [Erasmus for All](#) project, which proposes a more inclusive Erasmus+ grant system; the [Erasmus+60](#) project, which focuses on the concept of third-age universities and intergenerational learning; the [WISE](#) project on student well-being; the [Million of Erasmus Grants \(MEGA\)](#) project, which aims to make the management of Erasmus+ mobility grants more secure and efficient.

03

## MARCH

### Milestones

The number of students using [MyAcademicID](#) to access e-services and tools increased significantly. MyAcademicID served a key role in the digitalisation of administrative processes. The [Erasmus+ mobility programme](#) was pivotal in the rollout of the [European Student Identity Card](#), particularly via the initiative called "IdP of last resort".

THE YEAR  
AT A GLANCE

21  
team members

40  
events organised  
and/or attended

04

The new integrated [European Student Card Initiative \(ESCI\) Community Service Desk](#) becomes operational. In 2022, it processes over 4,600 support requests from students, higher education institutions and technical staff about services such as the Erasmus Dashboard, the Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) network, the Erasmus+ App and the Online Learning Agreement (OLA).

# APRIL

Support

06

The EUF network welcomes new member universities, including the University of Paris-Saclay and five Ukrainian universities: Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Poltava State Medical University, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, and Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.

# JUNE

Network



05



# MAY

Policy

In the framework of the ERUM project, the EUF authors a set of actionable [policy recommendations](#) targeting policy makers, higher education institutions and media organisations. The recommendations gather insights, lessons learnt and resources produced by the project whose mission is to develop students' key transversal competences in terms of media literacy, evidence-based communication, and counteract the spread of disinformation and misinformation.

**126,795**  
people reached by our  
online dissemination tools

**26**  
active EU-funded  
projects

**17,000**  
people reached  
via events

# 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

08

The EUF takes a walk down memory lane of the Erasmus+ App whose [history](#) is an epic journey devoted to improving the experience of all Erasmus students. Since its first launch in 2017, the app has undergone several updates and upgrades, culminating in the [latest version](#) which features structured information in all 23 official languages of the European Union, as well as crowdsourced content, task checklists, and the ability to apply for Erasmus mobility directly from the app.



## AUGUST

### Retrospective

---



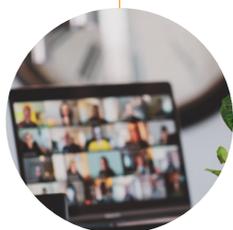
07

## JULY

### Forum

---

As part of the stakeholders engagement activities, the EDSSI consortium holds the first online [European Forum for Student Service Providers](#). Gathering representatives from private companies, organisations and university departments dealing with different services for higher education students, the Forum showcases one of the most innovative tools developed during the EDSSI project, the Student Service Providers' Erasmus Dashboard module.



09

## SEPTEMBER

### New prototype

---

The [Curricula Matching Tool](#) is part of the NORM project. Developed by EUF, the tool intends to aid higher education institutions in finding academically compatible courses and equivalences to make the recognition of learning periods abroad easier.

10

The [PhD.Hub](#) undergoes a makeover. Created to connect researchers, enterprises and society at large, the relaunched platform has easy-to-use search functions and multi-filtering options to help users find or publish personalised opportunities. Higher education institutions, doctoral schools, research centres and companies can publish their courses, funding opportunities, event invitations or calls for internships.

# OCTOBER

New (re)launch

12

The General Assembly of the EUF Council of Rectors (CoR) meets at the University of Warsaw to look back at the activities of the year coming to a close and discuss the [new strategic priority](#) of the network. Recognising the importance of ensuring broader and more inclusive participation in student mobility, the members of the CoR identify “inclusion in and throughout internationalisation” as the main guiding priority of future activities.

# DECEMBER

Inclusion



# ER

type

s launched as developed by the higher ng courses and credit ognition of er.



11

# NOVEMBER

Sustainable mobility

Erasmus Goes Green and Green Erasmus aim to make the Erasmus+ programme greener by empowering students, higher education institutions and decision-makers to push for improvements on environmental sustainability. The initiatives promote sustainability in mobility, international cooperation and strategic planning through various tools, including a [CO2 visualisation tool](#), a [handbook](#) for students, a [petition](#), an [online portal](#), [policy recommendations](#) and [guidelines](#) for Higher Education Institutions.



# Russia's war in Ukraine. Providing support in difficult times to Ukrainian students and institutions

*Joachim Wyssling, Deputy Executive Manager (EUF)*

On February 24th, 2022, the world watched the dramatic events in Ukraine unfold with disbelief: how is it possible that almost 80 years after the end of the Second World War, a country unleashes a total war against another sovereign state? Very quickly, the entire European academic community started [issuing statements](#) condemning the war and calling for the Russian authorities to withdraw their military forces from Ukraine. At the very beginning we also saw part of the Russian academic community condemning the war, notably with a large petition that gathered thousands of signatures. However, the Russian authorities very quickly made sure that the leadership of Russian Higher Education Institutions expressed official support for the war, which made it inevitable the suspension of the two Russian members in the network.

On the other side, the EUF Charter members decided to invite 5 Ukrainian Higher Education Institutions to join the EUF network as associate members free of charge for 5 years. The approved institutions are:

- Ivan Franko University of Lviv
- Odessa I.I. Mechnikov National University
- Poltava State Medical University
- Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
- Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University

These 5 institutions were promptly involved in the network activities and in several EU funded proposals in March 2023. We hope that their participation in the network will give them access to the resources and contacts necessary for their recovery in a positive post-war scenario.

Member institutions ramped up efforts to welcome displaced Ukrainian refugee students and their families, identifying

solutions for temporary study grants and emergency housing. The EUF, jointly with the Erasmus Student Network and the European Students' Union, [issued several statements](#) on making Erasmus+ funds available to support Ukrainian refugee students. Due to several reasons, this unfortunately only happened to a limited extent. By mid 2022, we also launched the "[war in Ukraine – student support centre](#)" through which hundreds of institutions indicated their specific institutional support measures for welcoming Ukrainian refugee students.

The challenges encountered in 2022 also showed the shortcomings of a coordinated European response to support displaced Higher Education students and led to the launch of interesting policy initiatives, such as the proposal - promoted by the European Students' Union - to create a European scholarship scheme for students at risk. 



## Spotlight on the “University Staff for Refugees” initiative

UNISTAR developed a free-of-charge [Online Course](#) providing professional training for staff and students at higher education institutions working with refugee students.



# Making 'Erasmus for All', at long last?

*Ana Reis, Erasmus+ Projects Unit Coordinator (University of Porto)*

*Helena Alves, Federica Bartolozzi, Eva Marcén, and Viktoriya Terzeva, Policy and Research Officers (EUF)*

Ensuring equal access to education and mobility is a vitally important goal for the EUF, and will remain the main network's strategic priority in the years to come. The increased relevance of inclusion as a horizontal priority in the Erasmus+ 2021-2027 Programme has been a positive first step to bring about tangible improvements. To make mobility more inclusive, the EUF and its member universities have engaged in several activities aimed at removing obstacles to students' participation in the Erasmus+ programme. A first set of projects has focused on improving financial support for students, as lack of funding has often been described as an important obstacle to participation in mobility (Allinson & Gabriels, 2021)<sup>1</sup>.

One ongoing project, [Erasmus for All](#), is working on devising a fairer and more equitable methodology to calculate the amount of students' mobility grants, as the current scheme does not respond to the real needs of students. The project, started in 2021, has raised much interest across relevant stakeholders: its first **Multiplier Event**, "[Is the new Erasmus for all? Proposals towards a more inclusive Erasmus scholarship](#)", saw the participation of more than 200 stakeholders, including representatives from the European Commission, National Agencies, Higher Education Institutions and students. In 2022, the partnership got to hear the stakeholders' voices – mainly students and representatives of the European Universities Alliances – on the matter, to ensure that the proposed alternatives match their concerns and priorities. Several **Student Social Labs** were held and the project was also present at the **Campus of University Alliances**, in Versailles. The conclusions reached during these consultations and events were summarised in

<sup>1</sup> Allinson K., Gabriels W., (2021). *Maybe it will be different abroad; student and staff perspectives on diversity and inclusion in student exchanges*. SIEM Research Report, [siem-project.eu](#)

the report “[In-depth analysis on mobility funding in Erasmus and beyond](#)”, which is now available. Through the work of a multidisciplinary group of experts from all partner Higher Education Institutions, European Students’ Union, and the EUF, the consortium has also made considerable **progress in exploring the possible alternative grant calculation scenarios**. The conclusions drawn from the work on these scenarios, as well as its testing, will be then turned into actionable policy recommendations that will hopefully influence the design of the Erasmus+ scholarship to reach more students.

Next to the work of the Erasmus4All partners on making the funding system more equitable, the [MEGA project](#) has focused on ensuring that more students receive their grants on time. In 2022, the consortium conducted a study to identify grant management differences across EU countries. By using both qualitative and quantitative methods, they gathered feedback from National Agencies, International Relations Offices and students on the critical moments in the scholarship payment process, highlighting the causes of delays with grant payment in different countries. The results of this study will contribute to the outline of a digital tool, aimed at ensuring easy and efficient grant management, taking into account the national and local contexts of Higher Education Institutions throughout the Erasmus grant process.

In addition to projects tackling funding issues, EUF members have also engaged in initiatives aimed at removing other types of barriers that hinder participation in mobility. For instance, the “Social Inclusion and Engagement in Mobility” (SIEM) consortium published the second version of the Guidelines for Inclusive Mobility Promotion. Through a series of self-reflection tools, the document helps staff from International Relations Offices design mobility promotion strategies that take into account both the barriers that students from underrepresented groups face, and the support structures and services available to overcome them. Another example is the [Erasmus+60 project](#) which promoted wider inclusion in higher education of a specific target group, people aged 60 or above. In particular, it aims to aid people aged 60 or above to participate in higher education through international learning opportunities and mobility, and through intergenerational learning. In 2022, the consortium developed a series of best practices to incorporate intergenerational learning activities via the production of two outputs: a [desk research report on intergenerational practice](#) and a [toolkit on Enhancing lifelong learning through intergenerational learning](#), through intergenerational learning, which followed a pilot of selected activities aimed at testing the core aspects of intergenerational training in Higher Education. 



Photo by Erasmus Student Network, SIEM final conference (2022)



# Higher Education Institutions joining the fight against disinformation

*Debora Lucque, Communications Officer (EUF)*

Misinformation and disinformation have become an integral part of our daily lives. Although these phenomena are not new, and many examples can be detected throughout history, they have grown exponentially, particularly following the advent of 21st-century communication technologies. Nowadays, we are witnessing “the weaponization of information on an unprecedented scale”<sup>1</sup>, whereby fabricating and distributing false content has never been simpler, amplified by online social networks. Indeed, misinformation and disinformation thrive in the social network and social messaging era, where content consumption is so fast-paced that the wealth of information people digest daily might feel overwhelming at times. It is, therefore, increasingly challenging for readers to distinguish between false information and legitimate factual news.

Several events of global, far-reaching repercussions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the information warfare which ensued, and the increasingly widespread use of Artificial Intelligence platforms to generate written and visual content, have shown time and again how the proliferation of false content can undermine the democratic process, have an impact on decision-making, or polarise public discourse around controversial topics.

Against this backdrop, the EU-funded project [Enhancing Research Understanding through Media](#) (ERUM), recognised not only the urgency to address the issue of disinformation and misinformation in Europe, but also to address the critical role of higher education institutions in shaping the present and future of the information and knowledge society.

<sup>1</sup> *Journalism, Fake News and Disinformation, Handbook for Journalism Education and Training, UNESCO, 2018.*

The ERUM project had two main objectives: improving journalistic work and quality of information focusing on science communication and equipping students with the relevant skills to recognise and question false content.

From 2019 until 2022, ERUM project partners analysed the evolving trends on disinformation and misinformation in the academic and media landscapes. The lessons learned, the insights gathered, and the resources produced by the project aimed to promote media literacy as a vital tool in building resilience against the threats of disinformation and to foster a shift in the way higher education institutions and media are collaborating vis-a-vis evidence- and research-based communication.

The ERUM project focused on media literacy, which is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media in various forms, including text, audio, and video. Media literacy empowers individuals to engage critically with media content, to question its veracity, and to make informed decisions. ERUM developed several resources for higher education institutions to improve media literacy, including learning materials for students and teachers which are freely accessible and downloadable on the [ERUM Open Educational Repository](#).

As we move forward, it is crucial to acknowledge the role that misinformation and disinformation play in our society and to address them as a threat to democracy, free speech, and independent journalism. The ERUM project's findings and [recommendations](#) (authored by the EUF) highlight the need for a concerted effort from multiple stakeholders, including media professionals, policymakers, and educators, to counter the spread of false information. By promoting media literacy, developing transversal skills, and investing in quality journalism and scientific knowledge, we can build a more informed society and protect our democratic values. By investing in media literacy, Higher Education Institutions can empower students to become independent and critical citizens, capable of distinguishing between legitimate factual news and false information. 



Photo by University of Vienna, ERUM Final Conference (2022)



# Providing better support for career development of doctoral candidates

*Federica Bartolozzi, Policy and Research Officer (EUF)*

While the last years have seen an increase in the number of research positions, the growth concerned more junior - than senior - roles, which often come with precarious conditions. Providing PhD holders with the skills necessary to thrive both within and outside academia is therefore a necessary endeavour, which is also reflected in Action 5 of the European Skills Agenda, the EU plan to improve the skills of European citizens and organisations. EUF member Higher Education Institutions have expressed a strong interest in finding ways to improve doctoral training, and have therefore engaged in dedicated activities in this domain.

2022 marked the end of [DocEnhance](#), a three-year Horizon project coordinated by the Arctic University of Norway, which focused on improving transversal skills training for PhD candidates. In addition to a recommended transferable skills curriculum for PhD programmes and the findings from a career tracking survey, the consortium developed three open-access courses on selected transferable skills: Data Stewardship, Career Management & Entrepreneurship, and Supervision. The materials and information to implement the courses are now freely available on the DocEnhance Platform, an online repository for doctoral courses which was developed as part of the project.

The results and knowledge gained during DocEnhance have paved the way to the implementation of a brand new project that was launched in January 2023, [DocTalent4EU](#). In addition to expanding DocEnhance work on transversal skills intelligence and creating three additional open-access courses, the consortium will test a new skills recognition system through the use of Europass digital credentials,



*Photo from the DocEnhance final conference (2022)*

and will implement local talent management centres in participating Higher Education Institutions, which will offer tailored services to PhD candidates to facilitate their career development.

The DocEnhance courses and many of the resources created as part of DocTalent4EU will be accessible through the [PhDHub platform](#). Initially developed as part of a Knowledge Alliance project that ended in 2019, the platform serves as a central repository for researchers wishing to advertise or find job and research opportunities, courses, scholarships, and much more. The new version of PhDHub, which has been launched to the public in January 2023, allows for easier promotion of and access to the available resources, and will be further developed and refined as part of the DocTalent4EU project. <sup>EUR</sup>

Search for PhD opportunities  
in the renewed

phdhub  
PLATFORM

phdhub.eu





# No mobility without affordable and quality housing for students

*Anita Kardos, Communications Officer (EUF)*

*Viktoriya Terzeva, Policy and Research Officer (EUF)*

In recent years, particularly following the pandemic, international students have been strongly affected by the lack of quality housing offers and increased costs due to inflation. Many students have to give up their mobility for lack of accommodation or, even worse, for economic reasons. Because of this, the EUF prioritised its efforts towards improving the quality of student accommodation, particularly by participating in key European initiatives on the topic, such as the new housing module on the [Erasmus+ App](#) of the European Commission, as well as being part of the consortium of the [HOME project](#).

The most innovative contributions of the HOME project, which ended in December 2022, were the following:

- It defined for the first time a European Digital Data Standard for the student accommodation industry, ensuring that information about student accommodation can be seamlessly shared across digital tools and infrastructure. This will facilitate the provision of information about accommodation options, and the free flow of data among housing providers, Higher Education Institutions, students and market intermediaries – ultimately improving, increasing and promoting international mobility.
- Together with the European Digital Data Standard, HOME increased the transparency of information about student accommodation by establishing Student Accommodation Quality Labels, which ensures that quality is assessed based on the data made available by the provider rather than based on any self-assessed quality claims.

- Most importantly, the EUF and partner organisations developed a technological framework including a public API (Application Programming Interface), which allows the integration of this topic with current initiatives for the digitisation of higher education, e.g. the Erasmus+ Mobile App.

Furthermore, one of the biggest goals of HOME was also to create educational resources for the stakeholders addressed by the project and thus ensure that they have access to information that can help them to benefit from the project results. Finally, during 2022, the HOME consortium organised a large range of dissemination events, both physical and online, each of which focused on different areas, stakeholders, and achievements of the project.

The EUF brought their extensive experience in all of the above-mentioned activities, especially in the creation of educational resources, technical support, and communication and promotion. The achievements of HOME are meant to be sustainable in the long term and open the stage for future actions in the field of student accommodation support. 

## WESHAREwECARE

### Accommodation with “grandma” included: homesharing for international students

Besides finding suitable accommodation, another difficulty often mentioned by international students is that they are isolated, with few opportunities to meet locals and learn about the local culture, hindering their immersion in the local community and the development of an intercultural skill set.

Intergenerational and intercultural homesharing programmes are initiatives deeply rooted in their local context and anchored in the concept of solidarity between generations. In addition, it is a possible way for Higher Education Institutions to improve the arrival and integration of international students, in particular those participating in a student exchange. In this scenario, students can avoid isolation and have more opportunities to discover the culture of the host country and get in direct contact with the local community. Moreover, intercultural immersion in the host culture contributes to breaking down prejudices, fostering openness and respect for each other, and strengthening social cohesion in the long term.

Homesharing programmes are highly dependent on their local contexts, mainly managed by local associations. Neither students nor higher education institutions are sufficiently informed about these programmes across Europe.

The [WeShareWeCare](#) project, which ended in 2022, aimed to change this situation. Building on the results of a former Erasmus+ funded project (Toit+Moi), the consortium worked towards an ambitious objective: to assess the obstacles of homesharing in Europe and suggest how it could be improved. The results were presented in qualitative reports. An online platform was also developed to help international students and senior citizens find each other with the support of local associations managing homesharing programmes.

The WeShareWeCare consortium included Erasmus Student Network France, European University Foundation, L'Assurance Retraite, Cohabilis, Solidarios, 1Toit2Âges.



# Emerging mobility formats: the case of blended mobility

*Salome Dermati, Project and Policy Officer (EUF)*

*Luca Erdei, Assistant Professor (Eötvös Loránd University)*

*Orsolya Pósch, Deputy Head of Department (Eötvös Loránd University)*

Diversified opportunities for mobility, as well as additional possibilities for digital and hybrid elements in mobilities, are an integral part of the current Erasmus+ programme period. Through its various models, approaches and manifestations, blended mobility specifically refers to the realisation of physical mobility by students and staff alike, as complemented by a virtual component taking place before, during and/or after the physical mobility. Capitalising on the pre-existing digitalisation trends and the unfolding effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, blended mobility has drawn growing interest and been centred as a promising case for realising the full potential of a more inclusive and innovative educational system in Europe.

Against this background, the EUF became involved in 2022 in the [HIBLend project](#): Fostering high-quality blended student mobility in higher education. The idea arose from the existing gaps between students' expectations and Higher Education Institutions' capabilities to effectively design and carry out quality blended learning opportunities that respond to the evolving needs for digitalisation and inclusive mobility. In order to contribute to the transversal priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme, this project sets out to identify and disseminate best practices of blended student mobility by European Higher Education Institutions and assess shortcomings of quality assessment and assurance. Moreover, it will develop, test and validate comprehensive guidelines for the successful conception, implementation and improvement of different blended mobility formats. In addition, the consortium will bring together a multidisciplinary community of practitioners with expertise and hands-on experience in blended student mobility.

Admittedly, **Blended Intensive Programmes** (BIPs) are among the most visible new formats of blended mobility, as they motivate institutions to jointly develop and carry out solid, high-quality and impactful programmes in various disciplines and study levels. Although they offer excellent opportunities for staff and students, such as new mobility opportunities for disadvantaged learners, they also present a number of challenges and preconditions for successful implementation, which were discussed thoroughly in 3 consecutive Knowledge Exchange Community (KEC) sessions in 2022. Thanks to the active participation of colleagues from the network, we have created:

- A common space to share practices and meet on a regular basis;
- A comprehensive outline of the main steps in planning and implementing BIPs and an overview of pending questions or dilemmas;
- An internal contact information exchange form for universities and colleagues willing to collaborate on BIPs across the EUF network and therefore find partners easily; and
- A set of high-priority topics that will be addressed in the upcoming sessions.

As the design of the virtual component has been identified as one of the main challenges, the main results of the [How Long is Too Long](#) (HLiTL) KA2 strategic partnership project illustrate practices for the best possible blended mobility experience, and also provide recommendations on the minimum duration for the physical mobility experience to optimise the learning curve of students. Higher Education Institutions are encouraged, for instance, to introduce a preparatory and follow-up virtual component, combine synchronous and asynchronous delivery during the virtual exchange component, organise intercultural preparation virtually and “onboarding activities” (either when joining the preparatory virtual activities and/or upon arrival), facilitate active and collaborative peer learning activities in heterogeneous groups, and lastly embed the BIPs into the curriculum by maintaining and integrating results into learning and teaching processes at the home institution.

The ambition for 2023 remains to improve the overall business process and flow of actions as sample structure, as well as disseminate systematic guiding principles and good practices for programme content design and meaningful integration of the virtual part. 

*“Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Higher Education Institutions are now better equipped to organise and carry out blended mobility activities in some respects. This provides an infrastructure for the planning and implementation of the virtual component of BIPs. Although the tools are provided, Higher Education Institutions still need guidance on the design and implementation of BIPs, as a lot of uncertainty is still surrounding their requirements, with different practices country- and institution-wise.”*

Orsolya Pósch and Luca Erdei, Eötvös Loránd University

An aerial photograph of a lush green forest. A narrow, dark path or stream winds through the dense canopy of trees, which are in various shades of green, suggesting a healthy, mature forest. The perspective is from directly above, looking down on the terrain.

# The paradox of internationalisation and sustainability

*Helena Alves, Policy and Research Officer (EUF)*

*Jan Borm, Professor (University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines)*

Like any mobility scheme or institutionalised form of travel, Erasmus+ needs to develop strategies to reduce its carbon footprint in view of making the programme increasingly sustainable. Various initiatives have been launched in recent years to raise awareness. Tools have been developed by projects such as “Erasmus Goes Green” (EGG) piloted by the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (with its carbon footprint calculator) or the [Green Erasmus](#) project coordinated by the Erasmus Student Network, providing students with “concrete information on how to be sustainable before, during and after their Erasmus experience”, ideas and recommendations that are obviously transferable to staff and teaching mobilities. The work developed in 2022 by the EUF and its partners aimed to ensure these awareness raising initiatives had an impact on the whole academic community. The [EGG Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions towards more sustainable cooperation](#) provided concrete information and actions to support Higher Education Institutions in developing their cooperation with international stakeholders in an environmentally friendly way. Focusing on student mobility in particular, the [EGG Handbook for HE students to travel green](#) aimed to guide students through the impact of air travel, highlighting how the EGG carbon footprint calculator can be used to consider the means of transport to go and return from mobility and supporting them in planning a more sustainable trip throughout Europe.

Raising awareness is the first step, but we need to also develop large-scale implementation strategies that make a real difference. To ensure this happens on a systemic level within the Erasmus+ programme, the Green Erasmus consortium looked into the habits of Erasmus students while at home

and on mobility to understand how they related to their environmental attitudes and beliefs. The [survey report](#) highlighted a gap between Erasmus students' environmental concern on environmental issues and their actions. Additionally, when exploring consumer/travel habits, cost/price was deemed as a limitation in adopting a more sustainable lifestyle. This research, which involved over 10.000 students, provided an indication of what needs to be done to encourage students to have a more sustainable behaviour while going on mobility, and led to two specific actions:

- The **Green Erasmus petition** was launched to take immediate action and support students to face the higher costs that a more sustainable trip to their Erasmus destination would trigger. It advocated for an increase of the top-up for green travel of up to 250 Euros and 7 days for the round trip (instead of the current 50 Euros and up to 4 days for the round trip).
- In the longer term, advocate for the Erasmus+ programme to offer every student one sustainable travel ticket (e.g. bus, train, etc.) that covers the outward and return journey. This was one of the key messages of the [EGG Policy Recommendations](#), which provided clear indications to policy and decision-makers on how the Erasmus+ carbon footprint can be reduced.



*Photo by Erasmus Student Network, Erasmus Goes Green final conference (2022)*

While a more systemic impact isn't achieved at European level, there are several Higher Education Institutions that are taking concrete and relevant steps forward to reduce the carbon footprint of their activities. A highly interesting initiative in this respect is the incentives developed by Western Norway University of Applied Sciences in Bergen to motivate students in choosing green options of travel, notably a top-up grant, and the [carbon-footprint reduction scheme of staff mobilities](#) created at the University of Zürich<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The good practices mentioned were presented at the EUF Knowledge Exchange Community session on 29 March 2023.

The urgent need to engage in such sustainability schemes cannot be ignored any longer while bearing in mind that it is essential for young people to travel during their studies to meet with their peers in Europe and exchange ideas, ditto as far as cooperation between Higher Education Institutions is concerned. Once these principles are reaffirmed, it is obvious that substantial efforts have to be made and that these imply changing preconceived ideas and altering habits, in particular as to what is acceptable in terms of the duration of a particular itinerary and frequency of travel during mobilities. Concerning the former, coach and train services can no doubt replace many trips by air in Europe. For longer mobilities, one may reflect for instance on the issue of weekend trips by air travel. Many meetings can be held online, albeit not all. One could even imagine being creative and setting up a system of halts or 'stay over' at partner universities for long-distance travel of several thousand kilometres, for instance within European University Alliances. Relevant activities on the way might be proposed to enrich students' experiences.

Whatever the case may be, we all need to reflect on our own mobility schemes but it is also essential that the Erasmus+ programme, which is such a driving force in terms of European integration, implements green strategies with a significant impact. Its biggest role in the upcoming years might thus rely on its potential to shift the mindset of its participants and continue to increase their knowledge of the impact of climate change, complementing the work already being done by each Institution with an international perspective. 



**ERASMUS GOES GREEN**

**Travelling differently for a sustainable internationalisation**

21st of October, Brussels

Co-funded by the Erasmus Programme of the European Union



# Making mobility the norm rather than the exception

*Eva Marcén, Policy and Research Officer (EUF)*

*Tiago Simões, Backend Web/App Developer (EUF)*

Only a relatively small proportion of students overall has participated in student exchanges. Addressing the reasons behind low participation rates is paramount to ensure the success of the programme, and also one of the main goals of the [“Making Mobility the Norm”](#) (NORM) project, which concluded in 2022 after three years. The project mapped existing approaches to implementing student mobility across European Higher Education Institutions and identified main barriers to student mobility from a curricular perspective. The project delivered two core outputs: the NORM [curricula matching tool](#) and the [European Curricula Design Guide](#).

## The NORM curricula matching tool

Embedding student mobility in the fabric of the study programmes would go a long way to making mobility the norm rather than the exception. The NORM curricula matching tool seeks to facilitate this process: it is designed to easily map equivalent courses or sets of courses between institutions. This enables users to create course equivalence tables which may be used to plan students mobility periods and to pave the way for (automatic) credit recognition between partner institutions in a given field.

Throughout 2022, the NORM curricula matching beta tool became a more mature user-facing application thanks to the collaboration between EUF developers and stakeholders along two main vectors: access to online course catalogues from participating institutions and overall user experience based on feedback from end users. One of the bottlenecks the project sought to address was the access to online course catalogues from participant institutions, a fundamental step to allow content to be imported onto the NORM tool.

The access to online course catalogues was at the core of an online event where IT professionals from NORM partner institutions shared their experiences with implementing the [Open Course Catalogue API](#) (OCCAPI) specification for releasing course catalogue data. The technical issues emerged during this exchange were progressively addressed: NORM tool users can access entire course catalogues from the partner institutions that publish them using the OCCAPI specification.

In parallel to the development of the tool, the NORM partners also produced a research report on structural barriers to physical international student mobility. Building up on the research from the previous two outputs, this report combines in-depth research with a series of focus interviews aimed at identifying and deconstructing challenges related to study programs in Higher Education Institutions. The report, which provides recommendations that Higher Education Institutions can adopt within their institutional structure to make mobility the norm, also laid the foundations for the European Curricula Design Guide.

### **The European Curricula Design Guide**

The European Curricula Design Guide addressed a key barrier to student mobility, which is very often the curriculum itself. When exchanges are not part of the curriculum, students or staff may feel there is no academic need for it. To address this, the guide developed policy recommendations on how Higher Education Institutions can incorporate mobility within study curricula. In particular, the guide encourages Higher Education Institutions to assess the performance of their Inter Institutional Agreements with a series of indicators such as: performance of incoming and outgoing students (comparing planned vs completed ECTS), the satisfaction of students with their mobility experience, the academic quality of courses offered by partners or the type of mobilities. This review should then trigger changes in mobility practices at their institutions to make sure they live up to academic expectations and can be made an integral part of study programmes. 



*Photo from NORM training event at the University of Alcalá (2022)*



# Digital transformation in Erasmus+ on a forced path towards compliance?

*João Bacelar, Executive Manager (EUF)*

*Daiga Kuzmane, Digital Strategy Officer (EUF)*

*Joachim Wyssling, Deputy Executive Manager (EUF)*

The EUF, with the direct involvement of some of its members, is leading the digitalisation of the Erasmus+ programme in the context of the European Student Card Initiative. 2022 marked a turning point where project-based and self-funded maintenance of this digital infrastructure gave way to a more sustainable approach which is meant to enable a higher quality of service to the community.

2022 also marked the 10th anniversary of [Erasmus Without Paper](#) (EWP) since the inception of the idea by a group of higher education institutions and stakeholders. An [online panel](#) was organised in December 2022 to reflect upon the achievements and challenges faced by the multiple bottom-up initiatives that have led EWP to become a part of the Erasmus+ programme. Through the years, many interlinked projects, such as the [Online Learning Agreement](#) or [MyAcademicID](#) came about, focusing on diverse aspects of the infrastructure, further facilitating its growth.

## The big reboot: EWP is back<sup>1</sup>

Thanks to a competitive tendering procedure launched by the European Commission (EC), which was awarded to a large consortium coordinated by the EUF and known as EWP+, the further deployment of EWP was at long last resumed in 2022. It was reassuring that the EC finally acknowledged that it is not tenable that a network of 72 universities is expected to

---

<sup>1</sup> For the section about the EWP, extracts from the [article](#) by David Eeckhout and Paul Leys, published online at the end of 2022 have been used.

The consortium working on EWP+ for a period of four years includes:

- Ghent University (responsible for outreach and communication)
- University of Warsaw (responsible for the interoperability network)
- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (responsible for Higher Education Institutions web applications)
- Eötvös Loránd University (responsible for student web applications)
- University of Porto (security)
- IBM and EWX (assorted expertise)

The delivery of the activities also involves DAAD, GEANT, the University of Barcelona and the University of Paris-Saclay, as well as a broad range of stakeholders such as the Erasmus Student Network, the LifeLong Learning Platform and Erasmus+ National Agencies.

cover the costs of tools used by more than 3000 Higher Education Institutions. The new contracts allowed us to shore up operations and reverse the degradation of the quality of the service.

Hence, in 2022, we started to address delays in the digital transformation process and roll out improvements that had long been planned. The capacity of the helpdesk was also significantly increased. Additionally, a new governance framework was put in place.

The EWP+ Consortium, together with DG EAC, has also developed the [Interoperability Reinforcement Plan](#) (in short 'Action Plan'). The Action Plan, finalised in April 2022, set out the full interoperability of Inter Institutional and Learning Agreements as the highest priority of the EWP Network for the remainder of 2022 and was green-lighted to start in August 2022. The plan proposed a set of actions grouped under three main clusters:

- a more regulated environment,
- no end users left behind, and
- enhanced cooperation with third-party providers.

To assess the state of play as of October 2022, EWP+ issued the EWP [Assessment Report](#), taking stock of current EWP data exchanges. The report aimed to improve the collective understanding about how well EWP works. The main conclusion was that, while EWP itself works well, some key nodes still present problems, particularly as far as Inter Institutional Agreement data exchanges are concerned; Learning Agreement data exchanges, by contrast, worked rather well and, while not necessarily perfect across all systems, they did not present major problems to International Relation Officers.

The report also illustrated that an overwhelming majority of the target institutions (higher education institutions holding an Erasmus+ Charter for Higher Education and implementing student mobility) was connected to EWP. Additionally, the number of Inter Institutional and Learning Agreements concluded over the network increased substantially over the months following the start of the Action Plan.

## **Governance: a community-driven approach**

During the first semester, the EWP+ Consortium worked together with DG EAC to design a broader governance structure for the initiative, tapping into the collective intelligence of the higher education community and ensuring transparency, as well as inclusive decision making. This is essential to safeguard the core objective of achieving meaningful digitalisation for both students and Higher Education Institutions.

The final structure, approved by the EC, centres around different bodies which represent all key stakeholder groups working towards a digitalised Erasmus+. Their role is to provide conclusions, impressions, and feedback from their experience as users and/or experts and share their perspective on digitisation advances. See more information [here](#).

As a vital part of the community, we invited all interested higher education institutions to take part in the EWP user groups. These groups offer insights into the community needs and sentiments, suggest solutions, and help benchmarking. These user groups provide specific feedback and suggestions per type of infrastructure (system they use to connect to the EWP network), making it possible to understand very clearly what is happening at all levels. More information can be found [here](#).

## **Enhanced EWP+ Dashboard**

In December 2022, an enhanced version of the [EWP Dashboard](#) started becoming available. This upgrade is the culmination of months of work which aimed to improve the experience of all Dashboard users. And while the EWP Dashboard looks completely different, all existing data - for Learning and Inter Institutional Agreements, as well as user accounts - continued to be available in the new version of the platform.

## **Community support**

Another important pillar of the EWP+ activities was the focus on the centralised Service Desk. When the first steps were made under the [EDSSI project](#), the Service Desk was hopelessly understaffed, with only a 0,8 full time position catering for more than 7000 tickets that arrived in 2021. The capacity was boosted to 6 full-time agents dealing with tickets ranging from basic information provision to technical issue resolution.

The communication activities also restarted in 2022 and a range of diverse actions to facilitate the information distribution as well as to engage key stakeholders were facilitated. Throughout 2022, several webinars were organised for EWP Dashboard and Network users. A new 'town hall' format was also introduced, which allowed for direct interaction with the higher education community and helped answering questions from implementers. The new [European Student Card Initiative website](#), and especially sections such as [FAQs](#), aimed to further support the community and facilitate the digital transition.

## A transition from bottom-up projects to a more integrated programme

2022 marked the first year when we effectively started transitioning from parallel running projects to a single programme with a more integrated approach towards managing the different core components of the digital ecosystem. In this context it is important to single out the work conducted by several of these parallel running projects:

Between 2020 and 2022, the [European Digital Student Service Infrastructure](#) (EDSSI) project, coordinated by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, started building bridges between the various tools for Erasmus+ mobility management developed by different teams and projects, at different times, often as the result of the pro-bono work of a few enthusiastic IROs and developers of a few universities in Europe. EDSSI further built, tested solutions notably for the authentication and authorisation of students (with our partners from Géant) focusing on the roll-out of the European Student Identifier to uniquely and securely identify mobile students all along their mobility journey and on the deployment of technical solutions (with the IdP of last resort) ensuring all Higher Education Institutions can enable their students in this part of the digital ecosystem.

In 2022, the second iteration of the EDSSI project, coordinated by Humboldt University of Berlin, was also in full swing with the main objective of developing an interoperable eCard system that will allow students to get a digital European Student Card and therefore access students services from different campuses using their own digital student card.



*Photo from the Erasmus+ App final conference (2022)*

After the two successful iterations of the [Online Learning Agreement](#) (OLA) Erasmus+ KA2 projects, the [OLA 3.0 project](#) also came to an end in 2022. Not only is the OLA platform the reference implementation of the Learning Agreements via the EWP Network, but at the time of the KA2 project finalisation, over 80% of all Higher Education Institutions that were connected to EWP to manage digital Learning Agreements did so via the OLA platform, demonstrating the technical maturity of the platform.

In 2022, the [Erasmus+ App](#) project also came to an end. The first version of the Erasmus+ App was launched in 2017, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Erasmus+ programme. It changed the way students manage their mobility, and that was just the beginning. Unfortunately, its development was interrupted for a few years; while lack of funding meant that no further development was possible, the EUF took on the considerable task of maintaining the App despite all the difficulties.

In 2020, the Erasmus+ App entered a new phase. For the following two and a half years the project coordinator Eötvös Loránd University with the Erasmus Student Network and EUF worked to make sure the Erasmus+ App would finally play the central role it deserves in Europe's mobility ecosystem, serving as a one-stop shop for mobile students to access as many useful resources as technically possible.

The enhanced version of the Erasmus+ App was launched at the [final conference](#) hosted by Eötvös Loránd University in March 2022. 





Photo from the EDSSI final conference (2022)

# Supporting the success of European University Alliances

*João Bacelar, Executive Manager (EUF)*

*Joachim Wyssling, Deputy Executive Manager (EUF)*

The European initiative for the establishment of European University Alliances has been piloted by the European Commission since 2020 and has led to the creation of 44 alliances, a number that has increased to 50 by mid 2023. The EUF has been and is still involved in the working group that led to the creation of the funding calls and is a strong advocate for such deep transnational cooperation that was notably pioneered by the network under the '[Campus Europae](#)' programme from 2004 to 2014. The EUF strategically decided not to become directly involved in any proposal in a time where the race towards these calls has triggered more competition than cooperation among Higher Education Institutions. As the dust is settling from the marathon of setting up and operationalising the alliances, 2022 marked the year where the EUF members decided to set up an informal working group of full members active in European University Alliances. The goal is to share good practices, challenges and common solutions to problems encountered by the alliances, with a particular focus on enabling 50% of student mobility within said alliances.

The members of this working group met on a monthly basis from July 2022 onwards and the following challenges were discussed in great depth:

- Opening e-learning opportunities by sharing course metadata across alliances and facilitating an e-infrastructure for students to authenticate, identify themselves, access course information, enrol in courses, partake in said courses and receive recognition for it. In

this context we also discussed the use of [Erasmus Without Paper](#) or eduGAIN powered systems like [MyAcademicID](#) (projects that were coordinated by the EUF) for the transfer of data between information systems and Learning Management Systems.

- Integrating existing systems such as digital course catalogues. The EUF and some of its member universities have worked on course comparison notably in the context of [Campus Europae](#) and [NORM](#): the key challenge is to provide access to existing digitised course catalogues to enable the systemic deployment of alliance-level course repositories.
- Implementing Blended Intensive Programmes. The group members discussed whether there are specific use cases for such blended mobilities, especially with regards to Learning Agreements, Inter-Institutional Agreements and how these courses are embedded within curricula.
- (Not) digitising alliance-level agreements, the so-called Erasmus+ Multilateral Agreements. Most of the alliances have concluded an Inter-Institutional Agreement with all alliance members to create a level-playing field. The group members concluded that it was not necessarily worth pursuing digitalisation efforts for such agreements as their number will remain limited and that from a technical/digital perspective there is little difference between a bilateral and a multilateral agreement. However, it was also noted that Blended Intensive Programmes could become reliant on multilateral inter-institutional agreements. 



# The EUF network in 2022

Joachim Wyssling, Deputy Executive Manager (EUF)

2022 has been a rich year for the development of the EUF network, first and foremost at governance level: the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, represented by Prof. Nikolaos Papaioannou, finished their mandate in the EUF Steering Committee and the members of the Council of Rectors, who met for their annual meeting in Warsaw in December, expressed their satisfaction at the dedicated involvement of the departing member of the Steering Committee. Humboldt University of Berlin, represented by Dr. Yoan Vilain, was elected to the EUF Steering Committee as a successor, joining both the University of Porto, represented by Prof. Maria Joana de Carvalho, and Charles University, represented by Marketá Krížová. In 2022, the rotating Presidency was assumed by the University of Porto and taken over for 2023 by Charles University.

In 2022, the EUF has continued to invest time and energy into supporting the digital transformation process underway in the context of the European Student Card Initiative and it will continue to be the case in the coming years. In December 2022, the members of the Council of Rectors decided that it was time to start shifting more substantial efforts to another priority: inclusion. Not only is this essential to make European University Alliances a success story, it is also a vector for making tomorrow's societies more cohesive - it is therefore of paramount importance to ensure that internationalisation activities at large and student mobility in particular become more inclusive than they are.

The EUF Coordinators assumed their responsibilities of making the EUF a vibrant network where ideas, new challenges and lessons learned are exchanged on a weekly basis to support the modernisation of the European Higher

Education Area. In 2022, Ghent University, represented by Andries Verspeten, was elected by the EUF Coordinators to hold a fourth seat in the EUF Steering Committee. The EUF Communities further developed with the Knowledge Exchange Community sessions, which included 6 online workshops notably tackling topics related to micro-credentials, participation of teaching staff in internationalisation and blended mobility. The Project Manager and Advisor Community also grew to over 250 members across the EUF membership and supported the community with 10 online events to develop new projects and implement newly approved projects. The Community also kick-started the process of developing new project ideas to be submitted in 2023.

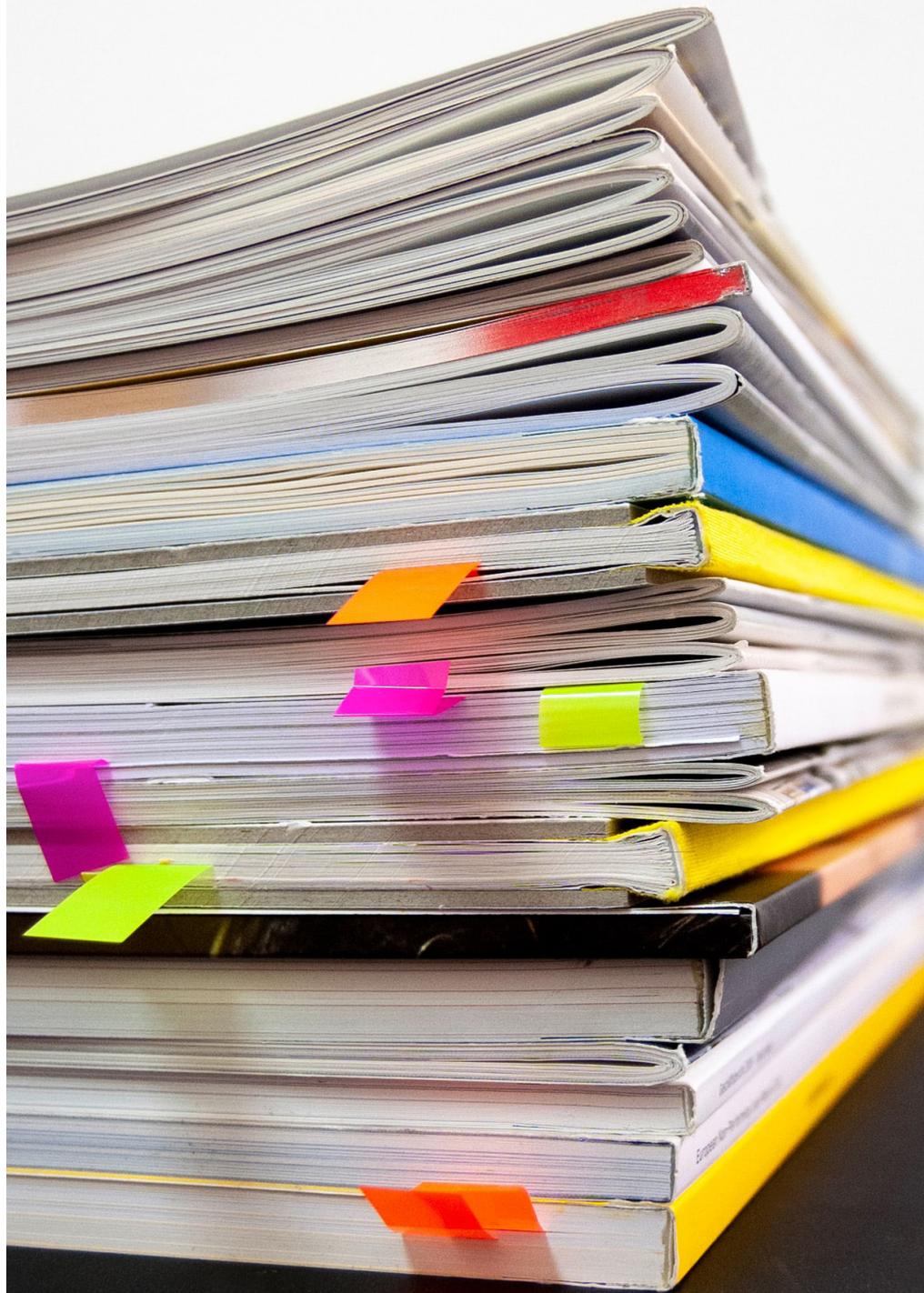
The network saw the valuable addition of the University of Paris-Saclay/University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines to the network as a full member and also welcomed 5 new associate members from Ukraine. While the network is likely to grow over the coming years up to 100 members, spread across most European countries (if not all), 2022 was also the moment to reinforce qualitative growth by monitoring members' participation in the network activities more closely to better tailor them to the needs and expectations of members.

With its activities, the network has reached an outstanding number of participants and viewers: 126.000, attained notably through the organisation of more than 40 physical and online conferences/workshops. 



*Photo from the EUF Council of Rectors at the University of Warsaw (2022)*

# Financial overview for 2022



## BALANCE SHEET IN EUR

### Assets

	2022	2021
Fixed assets	48 645,85	51 014,33
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	1 252,57	3 621,05
<i>Financial fixed assets</i>	47 393,28	47 393,28
Current assets	1 787 187,89	725 394,34
<i>Receivables</i>	131 640,75	52 215,36
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>	1 655 547,14	673 178,98
Accruals	64 466,30	229 170,86
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 900 300,04</b>	<b>1 005 579,53</b>

### Liabilities

	2022	2021
Equity	882 463,38	495 611,78
Short-term liabilities	572 088,97	117 162,25
Accruals	445 747,69	392 805,50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 900 300,04</b>	<b>1 005 579,53</b>

## PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT IN EUR

	2022	2021
Grants	2 851 752,03	1 698 815,78
External charges	1 531 820,39	717 076,73
Personnel	923 182,98	812 574,13
Depreciation	2 368,48	2 368,47
Other interest rate	1 216,88	12,56
Other operating expenses	8 487,62	8 255,33
Result of the year	386 851,60	158 391,84

**EUF** EUROPEAN  
UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION

[uni-foundation.eu](http://uni-foundation.eu)