EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES
A KEY PILLAR OF THE EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA

In November 2017, for the first time in EU history, the 28 EU leaders debated the future of education at the Gothenburg Social Summit in Sweden. In the same month, the Commission set out a vision for a European Education Area to be built by 2025 "in which learning, studying and doing research would not be hampered by borders". The European Universities Initiative is a flagship project of the European Education Area. It will enable a new generation of Europeans to cooperate across languages, borders and disciplines, developing a strong European identity.

Why European Universities?

Education across Europe is rapidly changing, with deep technological and structural changes affecting teaching and learning. Next to their core tasks of teaching and research, universities will increasingly help address big societal challenges and become true engines of development for the cities and regions they are based in. This requires enhanced cooperation between universities. Today, there are some attempts to use synergies, but cooperation is sporadic and a lot of potential remains untapped. With its European Universities initiative, the Commission is trying to foster excellence, innovation and inclusion in higher education across Europe.

What are European Universities?

European Universities are transnational alliances of higher education institutions developing a long-term structural cooperation and offering – for example – systematic mobility and recognition of learning periods in partner universities, complementary curricula and joint degrees.

Key criterion

Minimum of 3 higher education institutions from 3 EU Member States or other Erasmus programme countries
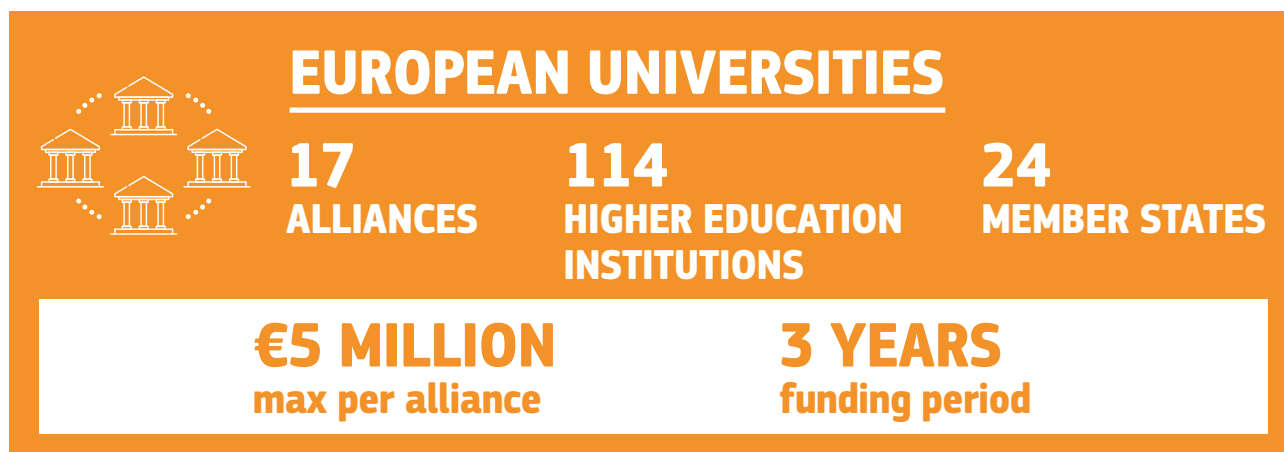
Key cooperation principles

- Alliances need a long-term strategy focused on sustainability, excellence and European values

- Cooperating partners should come from different parts of Europe

- Students can design their own curricula leading to a European Degree

- Enhanced mobility for students and joint research projects for academic staff

- Students, academics and external partners cooperate in teams covering different disciplines to tackle big issues (such as climate change, sustainable agriculture) Europe is facing today

Education
and Training

November 2017 — Commission proposes European Education Area by 2025

December 2017 — European Council conclusions on the future of education adopted, including goal of creating at least 20 European Universities by 2024

October 2018 — Commission launches 1st call to start testing the European Universities model

June 2019 — Results of 1st call announced – pilot phase

September–November 2019 — First European Universities start cooperating

October 2019 — Launch of 2nd call

Beginning 2021 — Full roll-out under the future Erasmus programme

RESULTS OF 1ST CALL

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

17 ALLIANCES

114 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

24 MEMBER STATES

€5 MILLION max per alliance

3 YEARS funding period

For the first European Universities alliances, a broad range of higher education institutions are involved, from universities of applied sciences, technical universities and universities of fine arts to comprehensive and research-based universities.