

Mission Statement

February 2019

4eu+



**The following Mission Statement
has been endorsed by the Boards of:**

Københavns Universitet

Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Sorbonne Université

Università degli Studi di Milano

Univerzita Karlova

Uniwersytet Warszawski

Six partners, three challenges, one vision

As we write this report, Europe is at a tipping point. Our continent has never known such a long period of peace and prosperity, nor a greater level of political integration, yet over the last few years, the post-war social contract has begun to unravel.

Brexit springs to mind, but the problems run deeper. The end of the job-for-life paradigm, the growing concentration of wealth and the failure of redistributive mechanisms question the assumption that the next generation will enjoy better and more equal lives than we do. The transformative impact of social media and the subsequent rise of fake news question the value of truth and knowledge. Climate change and artificial intelligence, in various ways, question our very existence as humans.

As leading European Universities, these issues go to the heart of our identity. They highlight our responsibility and demonstrate the need for new approaches: guiding our students as they acquire the knowledge to build a better future, supporting our researchers as they continue to expand the limits of knowledge and ensuring that this knowledge helps society address the challenges of our times.

We share these challenges with all other universities in Europe and beyond. However, as flagship institutions in our respective countries, we have a special mission to disseminate knowledge and new pedagogical methods to partner institutions, to train students who will, themselves, teach in schools, professional institutes and universities throughout Europe, to promote a better understanding of European culture and history throughout our national educational systems and to ensure that Europe continues to be a key reference point in education, research and knowledge, and technology transfer.

These convictions have shaped our vision.

4EU+ is our answer.

Six partners for one university

Our six institutions are large, comprehensive, public European research universities. We are strongly embedded in our local territories and share European values and a global outlook. We are convinced that a strong Europe open to the world is our common horizon and that our first responsibility is to form the next generations of citizens to face and solve global challenges.

	Numbers		International rankings (ARWU)		H2020 funding ¹			Erasmus+		Membership of existing networks
	Students	Academic staff	Global	National	Total M€	Rank - national	ERC - number	Total projects	Rank - national	
Heidelberg ²	29,689	5,910	47 th	1 st	53 M€	6 th	22	26	9 th	LERU, Coimbra Group, EUA
Charles	51,438	4,057	201-300 th	1 st	17 M€	1 st	6	60	2 nd	LERU-CE7, EUF, UNICA, Coimbra Group, EUA
Sorbonne	53,400	6,400	36 th	1 st	53 M€	1 st	18	22	9 th	LERU, UNICA, EUA
Milano	59,000	2,159	151-200 th	1 st	36 M€	6 th	8	42	8 th	LERU, EUA
Copenhagen	38,615	5,166	29 th	1 st	190 M€	1 st	55	41	3 rd	LERU, IARU, UNICA, EUA
Warsaw	54,800	2,992	301-400 th	1 st	19 M€	1 st	6	43	4 th	LERU-CE7, EUF, UNICA, EUA

Table 1: 4EU+ key comparative data

¹ All data included here comes from the Horizon2020 dashboard <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dashboard/hub/>. The names of institutions and projects are not fully disambiguated, and the dataset underestimates the total number of projects of certain institutions (for example CNRS projects hosted by Sorbonne University are not included), but it does provide a fairly accurate overall picture.

² Incl. Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg

The coherence of our alliance enables us to be ambitious and to work together in all fields without exception. As table 1 clearly demonstrates, we share similar characteristics, are part of the same networks and play comparable roles in each of our six countries. We all emphasise inclusiveness and promote the idea that research universities can be both large and successful. This makes implementation far easier and increases the likelihood of success.

The table also highlights major differences, notably in terms of international visibility (rankings) and research potential (Horizon 2020 funding). This diversity also exists in areas such as student administration procedures, level of internationalisation in staff and student cohorts, student mobility, lifelong learning, entrepreneurship initiatives, digitalisation including educational services and streamlining of administrative procedures. It reflects the differences between countries and European subregions, the structural inequalities of European higher education and the need to ensure a better balance within Europe³. This is a key mission of our project.

Indeed, our universities are situated in all four European subregions⁴ and play a key role as regional flagship universities and gateways to Western Europe (Heidelberg, Sorbonne), the Nordic countries (Copenhagen), Central Europe (Charles and Warsaw) and Southern Europe (Milan). They are furthermore within all four of the macro-regions of Europe, which have been selected by the EU as testbeds to implement macro-regional strategies across national borders (Adriatic, Alpine, Baltic and Danube)⁵. The geographical distribution of our universities ensures that we will have a transformative effect on Europe as a whole.

As research universities, we have structured our alliance around our numerous bilateral and multilateral collaborations in research. These illustrate the bottom-up links between our academic staff and laboratories. A knowledge-based society requires educational programmes built on challenge-oriented research. Our strong research collaborations and our long and profound tradition for connecting research and education are thus an ideal basis on which we can build a common core curriculum, which will provide students with rigorous research-based education.

It is on the basis of this analysis that we decided to create 4EU in 2017. 4EU was formalised in Paris on 10 March 2018, when the Rectors of Charles University, Heidelberg University, Sorbonne University and the University of

³ A healthy landscape of higher education and research is necessarily diverse: the mission of leading research universities is not the same as that of community colleges. All regions need to build and reinforce the different types of institution.

⁴ As defined by Eurovoc – the official EU thesaurus.

⁵ <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/eu-macro-regions>

Warsaw signed a *Declaration on the establishment of the 4EU Alliance* in order “to create a new quality of collaboration in research, teaching, education and administration and to establish the appropriate infrastructure that enables all activities from the four institutions”.

4EU further expanded in October 2018 by including two fully aligned new partners, Copenhagen and Milan, thus becoming 4EU+, whilst both reinforcing our cohesion and expanding our reach.

	Heidelberg ⁶		Charles		Sorbonne		Milano		Copenhagen		Warsaw	
Heidelberg ⁷			759	4	1206	7	1045	7	1086	8	200	3
Charles	759	4			787	3	677	2	728	4	646	5
Sorbonne	1206	7	787	3			1116	3	882	11	365	4
Milano	1045	7	677	2	1116	2			775	10	169	5
Copenhagen	1086	8	728	4	882	11	775	10			130	13
Warsaw	200	3	646	5	365	4	169	5	130	13		

Table 2: Number of co-publications / FP7 and H2020 projects between 4EU+ universities (2014-2018)⁸

⁶ Incl. Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg

⁷ Incl. Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg

⁸ Data is from Scopus. Each university is either the main or the second main university partner within their respective countries in nearly every single case (the main exception being Italy where both Charles and Warsaw Universities have a larger number of co-publications with eight other Italian universities, whereas the University of Milan is either the main collaborator or the second collaborator for Copenhagen, Heidelberg and Sorbonne Universities).

An active alliance

The potential of 4EU+ has been clearly demonstrated over the last couple of years during which we have:

- Consulted with our communities, analysed the main bottlenecks in deploying joint activities and refined the mission and vision contained in this document.
- Created specialised working groups for mobility, education and PR to elaborate joint approaches and projects.
- Approved a common budget with contributions from all six universities.
- Held regular meetings of our steering committee (vice-rectors) and rectors' assemblies every four months to define our strategy.
- Organised intensive collaboration of administrative staff from spring 2018 in various fields (EU, international affairs, research and study administration) with physical or virtual meetings at least twice per month.
- Held regular seminars and workshops from autumn 2017 around our multidisciplinary research programmes, enabling the four flagship programmes to be officially launched during four large-scale events in September and October 2018.
- Established an intensive doctoral school (the first session took place in Prague in 2018/19)
- Set up internal communication and dissemination channels (dropbox, sharepoint and others) available to a wide range of university staff.
- Implemented a common communication strategy.
- Organised a dedicated 4EU+ welcome week for students.

We have thus built a long-term comprehensive vehicle that embraces our institutions as a whole and aims to transform their current practices to better serve a common ambition.

Three key challenges

As leading research universities, each of our institutions is deeply engaged in tackling global challenges both in education, where we have been remodelling our programmes in terms of content and competencies, and in research and technology transfer, where we participate in five of the EIT's eight KICs. In the light of our institutional similarities, our shared missions and the remarkable level of research collaboration, the 4EU+ universities have a strong base for and see great potential in collaborating much more closely. Collectively we

have the resources to jointly address key challenges to provide high-quality student and staff mobility options and to strive toward a truly integrated European Higher Education Area. Together, we intend to transform the way we work by addressing three key challenges:

1. Boost meaningful mobility

Our universities have more than 30 years of experience in providing graduates with international academic experience and outlook. Thanks to the Erasmus programme, we have sent our students abroad and brought in international academics and students to internationalise our campuses and challenge our way of thinking and working together. “Internationalisation” has become a core value in its own right.

However, in line with the recent report by the European Commission on *European Transnational Collaborative Partnerships in Higher Education*⁹, we can clearly enhance our collaboration¹⁰ and substantially increase the number of exchanges of students and academics by:

- Better integrating our curricula in order to make mobility more meaningful for students in terms of education and employment prospects¹¹;
- Working on the educational structure by ensuring we have clear and well-integrated mobility windows within all degree programmes enabling students to move seamlessly between our institutions;
- Working on a selection of mobility options for both staff and students to cater for diverse needs and preferences and widen participation.

⁹ Karvounaraki, A., Subramaniam, S., Hristov, H., Ojala, T., Jonkers, K., Huisman, J., Goenaga, X. (2018), *Mapping of European transnational collaborative partnerships in higher education*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

¹⁰ Currently only five Erasmus+ projects compared to 89 Horizon 2020 projects include at least two of our institutions.

¹¹ European Union. (2014). *The Erasmus Impact Study. Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalization of higher education institutions*. Brussels: European Union shows that when choosing an Erasmus destination, students prioritise “having new experiences” and “meeting new people” over academic coherence; whereas the opposite is true when they select their home institution.

2. Increase inclusiveness and balance at a European level

Despite clear progress, European education and research networks, like the job market, remain largely defined by national borders and/or cultural and linguistic ones and are thus deeply unequal.

In the case of research¹², national and regional networks still dominate¹³ despite our strong collaboration network. More importantly, our different capacities to attract H2020 funding and gain visibility in international rankings are but a small symptom of the deep imbalance in terms of research and innovation potential of our countries, as indicated, for example, by the number of ERCs we attract per capita¹⁴.

The same is true for education, where mobility programmes such as Erasmus play a key role but are not able to address the ongoing brain drain from southern and eastern Europe towards northern and western Europe. This brain drain is often highlighted at the level of researchers¹⁵, but starts at Master's degree and PhD levels: whilst students who graduate from Milan, Prague or Warsaw often choose to pursue a Master's degree at Copenhagen, Heidelberg or Sorbonne, the reverse is not true. LinkedIn alumni data from our universities shows that student flows are almost entirely unidirectional and massive (up to 100 to 1 at PhD level in cutting-edge fields).

By integrating our core curricula and boosting the specificities and strengths of each of our campuses, we aim to rebalance these flows and increase inclusion at a European level.

¹² See: Hoekman, J., Frenken, K., & Tijssen, R. J. W. (2010). *Research collaboration at a distance: Changing spatial patterns of scientific collaboration within Europe*. *Research Policy*, 39(5), 662–673.

¹³ Currently the top 10 universities with whom Milan University co-publishes are all Italian, seven out of the top 10 for Sorbonne University are French, seven out of ten for Copenhagen are Scandinavian and four out of ten for Heidelberg are German. Charles and Warsaw are more open with, respectively, three and one in ten being from Central Europe. If one includes NROs and hospitals, then the co-publication networks are even more nationally/regionally top-heavy.

¹⁴ See for example, K. Kupferschmidt (2017), "At 10, Europe's 'excellence' fund faces calls for change), *Science* (data 2007-2016), which shows Denmark (with over 20 ERC grants per million inhabitants) ahead of France and Germany (with just over ten), Italy (just over five), the Czech Republic (just over one) and Poland (less than one). Results in terms of ERC per researcher or per capita are similarly unbalanced.

¹⁵ For example, Charles University is by far the leading Czech University in terms of ERCs, all grant holders are Czech and last year two out of eight chose to leave for institutions in Germany and Holland.

3. Develop a common challenge-based framework for education

The way in which educational programmes are conceived is currently undergoing a major shift in terms of both content and structure. The increasing pace of change and the growing urgency of addressing social challenges are making the traditional, one-off, discipline-based degree obsolete. In a world in which tomorrow's jobs have not yet been invented, students need lifelong learning, competency-based, challenge-oriented international programmes. They need to be able to personalise their education, choosing what to study and when, combining full degrees with micro-credentials. The fact that curricula are at the heart of an institution's identity means that such a shift is particularly complex to manage.

In this sense, working at the 4EU+ level is a major advantage, because it enables us to conceive and test radically new approaches, which can then be extended throughout our institutions. Building on our strengths as research universities, we have selected four flagship programmes (in fields linked to health, Europe, information science and sustainable development) and mapped our existing curricula in order to match courses and identify synergies around these four topics. These four flagships will form the basis around which both Bachelor and Master's degree programmes will be developed to ensure students have 21st-century skills built on a strong 4EU+ brand when graduating, combining research-based education, more diverse language skills as well as a strong global and European outlook.

Addressing these three challenges will enable us to develop a comprehensive mobility programme based on integrated academic programmes and closely linked to our research excellence. It will make mobility meaningful from an academic perspective by creating a common core curriculum and rebalance student flows, notably at the Master's degree and PhD levels, in order to boost brain circulation instead of brain drain and thus contribute to a more equal European Higher Education and Research Area.

It is an approach that is perfectly aligned with larger goals, such as the UN's 17 SDGs (notably Health, Climate, Life (biodiversity) and our core missions of Education and Innovation), the European Commission's 10 priorities (notably Jobs, Climate, Fairness and strengthening the global role of Europe) and, closer to us, those outlined by the Yerevan Communiqué, which highlights the key issues of learning and teaching, social inclusion and employability for the future of the EHEA¹⁶.

¹⁶ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/> ; https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities_en ; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/sites/eurydice/files/bologna_internet_o.pdf

Vision and key goals

Together, we aim to create a truly integrated European University System by 2025.

We will empower students, researchers and society as a whole, as we strive to address the great social challenges of our time, from social inequality and the value of knowledge to climate change and the impact of artificial intelligence. We will train critically thinking, fully competent citizens who embrace European values.

To do this we will define and implement, throughout our six institutions, a common approach to education, research and third-mission activities, on the basis of a shared set of core values: academic freedom, student-centred focus, access to higher education for all, interdisciplinary approach, innovative pedagogy, critical thinking and integrity and service to society. We will be European in identity and will lobby to become European in status too.

We will empower students by giving them full access to courses, research facilities, internships, grants, libraries, student accommodation and infrastructure from all six universities as part of their normal curriculum. They will share a single student experience based on common European values.

We will provide academic and administrative staff with incentives to teach, develop courses and research projects as well as work throughout the university system. It will imply defining common core curricula and competencies at the 4EU+ level and building shared platforms and services (such as infrastructure, housing, resource repository etc.). Innovative pedagogy will be promoted, evaluated and deployed when found successful.

Finally, for economic partners, NGOs and Social Partners, a single knowledge and technology transfer hub will facilitate access to both students and expertise across all six universities. This will also contribute to identifying skills and expected outcomes for students and workers (also for emerging professions). They will provide access to unique facilities related to their business and innovation challenges.

For all actors, 4EU+ will mean a new and shared identity that enables seamless mobility and integrates physical and virtual campuses. Implementing these goals and enabling sustainability will require building a truly integrated

university system with strong central governance¹⁷. In the long term, 4EU+ will require a modification of existing legal frameworks and an evolution of governance and funding models.

Key actions

To achieve these goals and ensure that 4EU+ will have a truly transformative impact, we have defined a set of key actions that will enable us to build an integrated educational programme. These actions are fully aligned with the ET2020 framework and in particular the four common objectives:

- Make lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improve the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- Enhance creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training.

Setting up common research-based core curricula

“Basic research leads to new knowledge, provides the scientific capital and creates the fund from which the practical applications of knowledge must be drawn, enabling basic pre-competitive R&D that will mature into harvestable technologies in the future”¹⁸. Research-based education is a fundamental component of this process. Our universities are recognised for the excellence of their education and research in a wide range of disciplines. This excellence is what makes it possible to build a strong interdisciplinary approach.

On the back of our strengths and vision, we have defined four flagship programmes aligned with the UN sustainable development goals:

1. Health and demographic change in an urban environment
2. Europe in a changing world: understanding and engaging societies, economies, cultures and languages

¹⁷ Up until now, all existing university systems have been either promoted and funded by a country/state or built up by a single central institution, which has progressively opened new campuses (interesting models in this context are the University of California or the campuses of RMIT).

¹⁸ Vannevar Bush, *Science the endless frontier, Report to President Roosevelt*, July 1945

3. Transforming science and society advancing information, computation and communication
4. Bio-diversity and sustainable development

Each of these flagships includes activities that are already funded by the budget adopted by the partners of our alliance. As part of the European Universities initiative, we will develop for each of them a common core curriculum, which students will follow in each of our six universities, alongside specific courses taught at one institution but available to all students, either physically or thanks to different blended learning approaches. This will form the basis of challenge-based degree programmes for which common diploma will be awarded.

This approach will be complemented by joint/double programmes (existing as well as new and unique cross-alliance degree programmes), joint doctoral schools, co-supervision of Master's and PhD theses, joint summer schools, shared courses, rotation of students, fab labs, etc.

Defining and developing shared competencies

4EU+ will define a joint graduate skills, competencies and values portfolio, which will correspond to the profile of a 4EU+ graduate (open-minded, multilingual, exposed to multiculturalism and plurality of views, entrepreneurial, critical thinker, data literate and socially engaged). This skills set will be based on the existing skills that each of our universities has defined and will progressively replace them. They will be key for a world in which careers are increasingly flexible and where lifelong learning is a necessity for everyone. Five of them are particularly important to us:

1. Multilingualism

Our six universities are committed to promoting their individual languages and to boosting their teaching in all our universities, be they popular languages such as French, German or Italian or less frequently taught languages such as Polish, Czech or Danish. This commitment is key at a time when English is the dominant language of communication between staff and students from our respective institutions and will necessarily be a key language of instruction for many of the new courses that we will develop within 4EU+. It will contribute to raising the level of understanding of European socio-cultural diversity.

2. Data literacy

Data literacy is a key skill in all fields and for all job profiles. As such, mastering the basics is as necessary as speaking English and must be a priority for all our students. 4EU+ will develop specific shared transversal courses based on those that already exist and grounded on the excellence of our teams in this domain, both on the core AI topics and on the applications.

3. Critical thinking

Data literacy requires not only technical skills but also a critical mindset: knowing how to interpret data and to distinguish facts from interpretation is more important than ever at a time when fake news is all too often at the heart of facts and evidence. 4EU+ will contribute to revitalising trust in academic expertise and to jointly addressing the challenges of tomorrow's world together with all stakeholders.

4. Entrepreneurship

Together with research-based education, we will reinforce the knowledge triangle by mobilising industrial partners and clusters that are associated with our innovation activities. We will systematically engage associated/affiliated partners (businesses, regional actors and civil society actors) in the process of course definition and create a shared pool of courses that develop/strengthen soft skills such as entrepreneurship. We will benefit from the experience of our members involved in EIT KICs (Copenhagen, Heidelberg, Sorbonne and Warsaw) in order to go beyond what has been already achieved in these contexts.

5. Social engagement

University-community engagement is key to ensuring that knowledge is developed, transmitted and applied for the public good. Students expect universities to be socially involved, and, at a time of growing social unrest around the distribution of wealth and power, it is our responsibility to ensure that this is the case – especially when many leading actors in both the public and private sector are alumni of our universities.

Promoting student and staff mobility

Sharing a common core curriculum and a common set of competencies will enable both students and staff to move between campuses whilst pursuing their activities. It will make it possible to guarantee automatic accreditation for courses at one university across all six campuses, thus immediately removing one of the key problems that Erasmus students currently encounter (notably in the sciences). It will also ensure that mobility is meaningful from an academic perspective and not only from an experiential one.

Each campus will develop courses under the main curriculum to support our education framework. This will multiply the educational offer and create a common 4EU+ portfolio of courses accessible to all students, initially across our four flagship programmes and eventually throughout our institutions. By doing this, we expect students to build individual paths, combining courses from our six universities and turning 4EU+ into a fully integrated, student-centred university with flexible environments for students, faculty and staff. This approach will make it possible to greatly increase blended mobility.

Finally, we will facilitate mobility by establishing mobility windows between the 4EU+ universities. This will help organise mobility independently of our respective academic calendars and entourage, facilitate mobility within our associated partners network and target (but not limit!) Erasmus+ programmes and other supportive instruments (European as well as national) to 4EU+.

We also expect that a truly integrated educational portfolio will have a similarly strong impact on academic and administrative staff mobility. We will encourage this and define a common framework programme for this purpose.

Enabling conditions

The actions outlined above will be boosted by our strong commitment to develop an enabling framework, complete with platforms, joint positions, common evaluations and strong governance.

Pooling expertise and platforms

The success of our key actions and the long-term goal of building a true university system both require a solid infrastructure at the 4EU+ level. To build this, we have started by mapping our respective infrastructure and relevant infrastructure policies. This will enable us to identify best practices and resources to which we will give access for all researchers, students and staff at the 4EU+ level. Simultaneously we will develop a common online platform that gathers information and content of all 4EU+ teaching activities, including not only syllabi but also all course information such as teachers' portfolios.

Integrating existing platforms and building one at the 4EU+ level will be challenging and time-consuming, but it is clearly a prerequisite for the long-term success of our project. It will form the backbone of a flexible learning and working environment, provide open access to resources, at least within 4EU+ and potentially more widely, and enable the sharing of infrastructure for 4EU+ students and staff. It will also enable us to harmonise our practices with the open science and open data standards that are being developed by the European Union.

Joint faculty and administrative positions and sharing best practices

We will create a limited number of joint faculty and administrative positions in order to accelerate the integration process and develop specific actions. In parallel, we will boost the skills and capabilities of our staff at the 4EU+ level by sharing best practices, providing access to resources and encouraging staff mobility.

We have established working groups to identify critical issues and resolve major bottlenecks in order to harmonise best practices and deepen the support provided to the faculties. This has already started, for instance within the Rector's Offices, the European Offices, the International Mobility and Admission Offices and the libraries.

Implementing a common evaluation framework

If we establish a common approach to our educational programme, we will need a common evaluation framework and certification process. The latter depends on national agencies, however, the market for quality evaluation is expanding and some of our universities are now allowed to choose EQAR accredited agencies to evaluate our programmes. We will lobby to ensure that this will be allowed at all six universities soon.

We will also ensure that our institutions undergo the same certification procedures such as Euraxess' HRS4R (Human Resource Strategy for Researchers).

Governance

In order to transform our organisations, we have decided to implement a true university governance for 4EU+ rather than a project governance. This governance is fully embedded within the governance of each of our institutions, thus reinforcing cohesion, diminishing the risk of conflict and increasing strategic decision-making power. It is a strong governance model, structured around the following bodies:

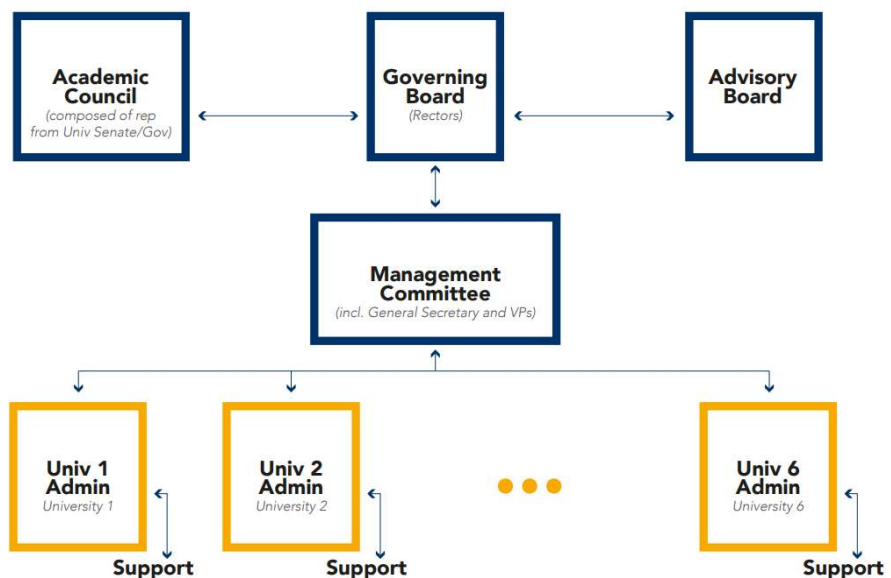
- **Governing Board:** the decision-making body responsible for defining the vision, mission, strategy and common values of 4EU+. It is composed of the presidents/rectors of the six universities, one of whom will be designated as President of 4EU+ under a rotating scheme.
- **Academic Council:** has an advisory and consultative role and provides input to the Governing Board. It is composed of representatives from the Academic Councils or Senates of each university, including members of staff and students.

- **Management Committee:** composed of the Secretary General and the Vice-Rectors/Vice-Presidents responsible at each university for overseeing the development and implementation of the 4EU+ vision, mission and collaboration plan.
- **External Advisory Board:** provides non-binding but informed guidance to the other governing bodies. It is a team of experts including representatives of 4EU+ associated and external partners as well as other European networks.

4EU+ is run by a permanent management team under the leadership of the Secretary General, who is responsible for driving, executing and monitoring the yearly activity plan. This team coordinates support and management services, including education and staff mobility, in order to facilitate collaboration, simplify administrative processes, overcome obstacles and respond swiftly to new initiatives and emerging issues concerning the alliance.

Actions are locally implemented within each university by a 4EU+ team placed directly under the administrative authority of each university's Operating Officer. This ensures that the management and administrative structures of 4EU+ are tightly interconnected.

4EU+ has a central office, currently located in Paris, and a budget to ensure day-to-day operations, fully financed by the six universities. Further funding is being raised from different sources¹⁹, including competitive calls and by pooling resources in key areas.



¹⁹ 4EU+ has already received funding from the Polish Government and the National Agency for Academic Exchange.

Open to the world

For centuries, our universities were academic republics with their own laws and courts, and a remarkable degree of academic freedom. Students and professors used to circulate freely across political borders, with scholarly networks crisscrossing the continent. Lobbying for increased autonomy in our existing countries and for a new *parens scientiarum*²⁰ to build 4EU+ are natural steps at a time of increased globalisation. It is part of our contribution to building Europe.

As universities, we have always been open to the world and each of our institutions has a wide range of partners in both the private and public sector. 4EU+ will enable us to transform these partnerships and involve them at a European level, in particular in crucial fields such as innovation, entrepreneurship, future skills or lifelong learning. To do this we will benefit from our experience as partners in most of the Innovation Communities of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (Climate, Digital, Food, Health and InnoEnergy).

We have engaged in dialogue and collaboration with representatives of European and local institutions, global organisations, entrepreneurs, professional associations, non-governmental organisations, national and local governments and their administrations etc. and have invited them to join 4EU+.

This wide network of partnerships can be represented as an ever-widening circle, which spreads out from 4EU+ to include associated partners, external partners and society at large. It will create new opportunities for students, researchers and staff by bringing critical mass to specific topics and fields, enabling or creating new fields by combining capabilities.

4EU+ thus aims to serve as a landmark for the European Higher Education and Research Area, boosting access to best practices and lessons learned to other institutions and to society.

It is, without doubt, an ambitious even visionary project, but it is also realistic and, more importantly, necessary.

²⁰ The papal bull that guaranteed the independence and self-governance of Sorbonne University in 1231.

4eu+



CHARLES
UNIVERSITY



UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386



SORBONNE
UNIVERSITÉ



UNIVERSITY OF
COPENHAGEN



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI MILANO



UNIVERSITY
OF WARSAW