



EURASHE ANNUAL REPORT 2024



EURASHE
European Association for the Applied
Sciences in Higher Education



Co-funded by
the European Union

EURASHE

European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (aisbl)

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Foreword from EURASHE President | Hannes Raffaseder

2024 was one of the best years in the recent history of EURASHE – at least the best I can remember! It saw significant growth in membership, activities and projects. In particular, I was very pleased to welcome 20 new members during the year, which means that our association grew by around 30%. In my mind, this reflects the value that EURASHE provides to its members, but also the increasing importance of applied education and research to all types of institutions, learners, and society overall.

The highlight of the year, certainly for me personally, was the Annual Conference that I hosted in St. Pölten. The 33rd edition of our flagship event attracted well over 200 participants, making it the largest to date. Its title, “Stronger Together: Fostering transnational cooperation among Applied Universities” summed up what we have achieved collectively in EURASHE: We have shown that our particular brand of higher education is growing because of the support we give each other, leading to a recent surge in transnational cooperation. The European Universities Initiative has certainly been the catalyst, but there is also a widespread confidence that applied universities can simultaneously have a local and international impact. A clear indication was given during the Conference with the launch of a UNESCO Chair Programme on applied higher education, by our partner Higher Colleges of Technology in the UAE.

Promoting and encouraging ‘applied university alliances’ is the main reason for launching the Sounding Board on the European Universities Initiative last year. Any member from an alliance can join the Sounding Board, including those without Erasmus+ funding. We are determined that this high-profile initiative benefits all members and the whole sector, which is why we will actively contribute to the FOR4EUALL Community of Practice. As the Initiative develops, we want to make sure that the benefits applied universities bring to the sector and our societies is fully reflected in the way alliances are assessed and funded.

While the theme chosen for EURASHE in 2024 was transnational cooperation, we also closely followed the main policy developments in the EU and wider European Higher Education Area. EURASHE actively shaped the Tirana Ministerial Conference and Communiqué. Much of this occurred in the lead up, during two meetings of the Bologna Follow Up Group. EURASHE emphasised the importance of lifelong learning to keep up with technological change and upskill our populations – this resulted in a whole paragraph being written into the Tirana Communiqué, and a breakout session during the Conference.

At the same time, we monitored the results of the European Parliament elections and the formation of a new European Commission. Its renewed emphasis on competitiveness will also be our focus in the years to come, a policy priority that requires a highly educated workforce in innovative and emerging economic sectors. This is why the new Commission's political guidelines include a Union of Skills – following up on the European Year of Skills that was the theme for the EURASHE Annual Conference in 2023.

What is clear is that EURASHE has a key role to play in the new policy paradigm and related projects - we count on your continued support!

Hannes Raffaseder, EURASHE President
March 2025





EURASHE ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Mission & Vision



EURASHE, the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education, was founded in Patras (Greece) in 1990 as an international association promoting and emphasising professional higher education (PHE). While EURASHE initially admitted only national organisations (such as councils of directors) as members, it later opened membership to individual institutions. Nowadays its members are colleges, polytechnics, university colleges, universities of applied sciences and universities with their professional trainings.

Three purposes were at the origin of EURASHE:

- to **promote the interests of PHE** at a national and European level
- to **cooperate internationally** on the development of PHE
- to **promote internationalisation** within its member institutions.

Mission

EURASHE's mission is to strengthen the impact of innovative, high-quality professional higher education and related user-oriented research in Europe by representing relevant higher education institutions and facilitating their multi-stakeholder cooperation and dialogue.

Vision

EURASHE strives to support the development and transformation of European society through professional higher education.

Strategy 2023-2025

This year, EURASHE has made significant progress in the implementation of its multi-annual strategy for 2023-2025, which is illustrated below. The priorities are aligned closely with the European Commission's agenda to ensure their relevance and impact on EU policies. The work done so far reflects a strong commitment to advancing the strategy and achieving its goals.

The overall objective of the strategy remains: **"EURASHE becomes a reference point for a wide range of policy makers and higher education institutions, who seek to harness the power of Professional Higher Education (PHE) to address the green and digital transitions"**. In 2025 EURASHE will design a new strategy for the period 2026-2028.

Local and Regional Impact

Mapping, regional development and impact, membership, local engagement.

Skills and talent for the future

Lifelong learning,
employability,
qualification
frameworks, recognition
of prior learning.

Quality assured, innovative institutions

Accreditation,
transparency tools,
rankings, labels,
European Standards
and Guidelines (ESG).

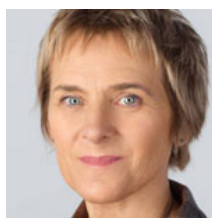
Demand led and challenge based research

Universities of applied
sciences, innovation,
regional development,
knowledge transfer.

Transnational Cooperation

European Universities initiative, alliances, mobility, Erasmus+

Board members 2023-2025



The Board of EURASHE met a total of ten time, including twice in person in 2024: at the Technological University of the Shannon (March) and at St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences (May), coinciding with the 33rd EURASHE Annual Conference.



Hannes Raffaseder, President, AT, St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences
Nijolė Zinkevičienė, Vice-President, LT, Vilniaus Kolegija University of Applied Sciences
Jon Altuna, Vice-President, ES, Mondragon University
Regis Debrulle, Treasurer, BE, Hogeschool Gent
Claudia Kreipl, DE, Fulda University of Applied Sciences
Liam Brown, IE, Technological University of the Shannon
Ulla Preeden, EE, Tartu Applied Health Sciences University
Luís Loures, PT, Portalegre Polytechnic University
Pascale de Groot, BE, AP Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool Antwerpen
Valentin Năvrăescu, RO, University Politehnica of Bucharest

Secretariat

The Secretariat is the head office in Brussels, from which the association is run on a day to day basis. In 2024, the Secretariat consisted of the following staff members:



Maja Momirovska, MK, Executive Officer
John Edwards, PT/UK, Secretary General
Jakub Grodecki, PL, Policy and Project Manager
Ana Duplava, RO, Policy and Project Officer
Matilde Revelli, IT, Communications and Events Manager
Dominik Koc, AT, Policy and Project Officer
Miranda Pastor, ES, Membership and Communication Officer
Marta Rodrigues, PT, Policy and Project Manager





Our members



EURASHE Membership increased substantially in 2024 from 60 to 80 members at the end of the year including 59 full members, 11 associate members and 10 affiliate members.

Full Members

Open to national associations of higher education institutions in the EHEA and higher education institutions within the EHEA.

Budapest Metropolitan University, Hungary

With its 7000 students, the Budapest Metropolitan University (METU) is the largest private university in Hungary, with two faculties: the Faculty of Business, Communication and Tourism and the Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries.

FH JOANNEUM, University of applied Sciences, Graz, Austria

FH JOANNEUM is an Austrian university of applied sciences with over 5,000 students across. It offers practice-oriented, research-based degree programmes in fields such as IT, engineering, health, business, media, and design.

HOGENT University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Belgium

HOGENT strives to excel in education, research, service provision and practice of the arts. Through the expertise of its staff and graduates and the valorisation of its research, HOGENT is making a valuable contribution to a critical, creative and open society.

IMC University of applied Sciences Krems GmbH, Austria

IMC Krems is an internationally focused University of Applied Sciences, with over 180 partner universities, 1,000 partner companies, and more than 3,700 students from 90 countries across six locations. It emphasises internationalisation, practical learning, and innovation.

International European University, Ukraine

The mission of the International European University is to provide "Valuable contribution to social development by generating, keeping and promoting cutting-edge knowledge based on international cooperation and education integration complying with freedom of thought and expression, integrity, as well as freedom from discrimination". With partnerships in 24 countries and a foreign student body representing 92 countries, the University holds a true lookout to the future and to its international dimension.

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Croatia

The Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, established in 2006, embodies a long-standing tradition of educational excellence and innovation, tracing its origins back to the 1950s. With a vision to be a central force in the intellectual, cultural, and economic development of the region, the university has continuously adapted its strategies to meet societal and educational sector changes.

Saxion UAS, The Netherlands

Saxion is a regionally focused university of applied science with an international orientation in education, research and entrepreneurship, with three locations in Apeldoorn, Deventer and Enschede.

Turku University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Turku University of Applied Sciences is a higher education institution of 13,000 experts, researchers, students, faculty members and teaching professionals creating solutions for a better tomorrow – both regionally and globally.

University of Applied Sciences Burgenland, Austria

From digitalisation to new forms of economics and leadership, from environmental, climate and energy topics to the major challenges in health and social issues, the range of courses on offer at the University of Applied Sciences Burgenland is wide. UAS Burgenland stands for practice-orientated higher education in

Eastern Austria and beyond. Practising internationality is one of the organisation's core values.

University of Huelva, Spain

The University of Huelva was founded in 1993 by popular demand. Since then its aim has been to provide quality teaching and research, as well as promoting economic, environmental and cultural developments in the city and province. Almost 12,500 students attend the University of Huelva including about 1300 carrying out post graduate studies.

V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine

According to the annual QS World University Rankings 2024, V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University ranks 691-700 globally, leading among Ukrainian universities in the QS global ranking for the last 10 years. Currently, the university consists of 26 schools and educational and research institutes.

Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Latvia

Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (ViA) is a state university founded in 1996, which offers 15 study programs in the faculties of Social Sciences and Engineering. Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences was founded in 1996 and in 2001 acquired the status of a state university. In 2002, it was accredited for an indefinite period. ViA offers high-quality and flexible study programs that successfully balance theory and practice. These are adapted to the current needs of society and changes in the labor market.

Wiener Neustadt Fachhochschule GmbH, Austria

The Fachhochschule Wiener Neustadt (FHWN) is a pioneering and expansive University of Applied Sciences in Lower Austria. Esteemed for its entrepreneurial spirit, crossdisciplinarity and commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), FHWN offers diverse degree programs. Across five faculties – Business, Engineering, Health, Training and Sport, and Security – students can choose from 44 bachelor's and master's programs in German or English.

Affiliate Members

Open to recognised individual higher education institutions and national associations of higher education institutions outside the EHEA. Institutions of higher education or national associations of higher education institutions within the EHEA that do not meet all full membership criteria. As well as international associations of higher education institutions and any other bona fide organisation active in the field of higher education worldwide.

Swiss Institute of Management and Sciences, Switzerland

Situated in Zug, Switzerland, the Swiss Institute of Management and Sciences (SIMS) is a private higher education establishment. SIMS offers programs ranging from the bachelor's to the doctoral levels in various disciplines.

University College of Bahrain, Kingdom of Bahrain

The University College of Bahrain (UCB) was founded in 2002 by Shaikh Prof. Khalid Bin Mohammed AlKhalifa. The University is a non-profit private institution of Higher Education, licensed by the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The University specializes in the subject areas of Business Administration, Information Technology, Communications and Multimedia.

Woolf Education Ltd, Malta

Woolf is the first global, collegiate university that allows academic groups and education organizations to sponsor the creation of constituent member colleges within the institution. Woolf exists to increase access to world-class higher education and ensure its global recognition and transferability – and Woolf's colleges are among both geographically and linguistically diverse. In the tradition of the universities of Oxford and London, Woolf's colleges cover the full spectrum of research and teaching from the undergraduate to doctoral level, encompassing disciplines from the humanities to the natural sciences.

Associate Private

Accreditation and Rating International Agency, Uzbekistan

The Accreditation and Rating International Agency (ARIA), established in 2004, is the first Uzbekistan non-governmental organization in the field of quality assessment of educational organizations and educational programs. ARIA focuses its activities on meeting the needs of all stakeholders, including students, their parents, academic staff, as well as educational organizations, government agencies, society, and employers in general.

Lifelong Education Institute, United Kingdom

The Accreditation and Rating International Agency (ARIA), established in 2004, is the first Uzbekistan non-governmental organization in the field of quality assessment of educational organizations and educational programs. ARIA focuses its activities on meeting the needs of all stakeholders, including students, their parents, academic staff, as well as educational organizations, government agencies, society, and employers in general.

Raimon Gaja Institute, Spain

Raimon Gaja, founder of the Raimon Gaja Institute, has shaped postgraduate training in clinical psychology and education across Spain and Latin America since 1982. With over 60 programs and 40,000+ students trained, his impact is profound. The Institute continues his legacy through Official University Masters in Psychology, Speech Therapy, Neuropsychology, and Education—designed to meet the real-world needs of today's professionals.

Steelcase GmbH, Germany

Steelcase is a global design and thought leader in the world of work. Along with our expansive community of brands, we design and manufacture innovative furnishings and solutions to help people do their best work in the many places where work happens. The Steelcase portfolio of brands provides access to a broad range of architecture, furniture, and technology solutions that help people work, learn and heal.

Associate Non-profit

German Association of UAS Professors, Germany

The Hochschullehrerbund hlb is the professional association of professors at Universities of Applied Sciences in Germany. Its task is to present the profile of a type of university that combines science, scholarship and practice to the public. It advises its members on all matters relating to the university teaching profession. It publishes the periodical Die Neue Hochschule (DNH) – a journal dedicated exclusively to university-specific topics.



Membership map

Benefits

1. Make your voice heard and promoted through direct representation towards policymakers

EURASHE represents its members and defends their interests towards European and national policymakers, in the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), in expert groups and initiatives set up by the European Union institutions, Council of Europe, and in cooperation with its partners in the E4-Group as well as other relevant actors in the European Civil Society Organisations. EURASHE reports, studies, statements and policy papers feed into policy debates on crucial issues relating to applied and professional higher education in Europe and beyond.

2. Belong to a forward-looking network of professional support and expertise

Be involved in working groups: EURASHE working groups, defined by members, address topics of interest for the applied higher education sector. The outcomes help members progress further and feed into the formulation of project funding proposals or policy recommendations, thus contributing to a sustainable development of the EHEA. Members are invited to join one or more of the groups.

3. Participate in and host EURASHE events

EURASHE events address issues of interest to professional higher education institutions and represent a valuable opportunity for education experts and professionals to network, share their perspective, best practice and exchange information. Events are hosted by members, which as well is an occasion to bring the international community to the local environment.

4. Access ad-hoc consultancy services

EURASHE offers expert support to its members on issues related to the adoption and implementation of the Bologna reforms at the institutional level in their specific national context.

5. Participate in interesting and innovative projects

EURASHE develops innovative and hands-on projects in response to the challenges facing European higher education. Our projects are usually involving the EURASHE members, other applied higher education institutions and stakeholders and aim at generating new models for tackling the economic and social challenges of today. Our approach is multi-disciplinary, politically independent and combines (applied) research and policy development with concrete initiatives.

6. Stay updated with news and information

EURASHE regularly disseminates the latest developments and expertise in professional higher education to its members and stakeholders through publications, studies, the website, social media and the monthly newsletter.

How to apply?

Applications for membership are examined and decided upon by the Board of EURASHE, which meets at least four times per year.

To be complete, an application file requires, duly completed and signed:

- EURASHE Membership application form and affidavit
- External QA Certificate for individual HEIs (compulsory for Full Members)
- Proof of legal existence
- Descriptive information



STRONGER TOGETHER

International Cooperation in Applied Universities



Policy highlights



2024 was a pivotal year for higher education policy. During the Belgian presidency from January to June, significant strides were made in preparing for the 2024-27 Bologna cycle, culminating in the adoption of the Tirana Communiqué in May. EURASHE was present at the Ministerial Conference in Tirana, delivering a powerful statement on the importance of applied higher education for regional development, relevance of Lifelong Learning and flexibility offered by Higher Education systems and institutions to answer the modern challenges linked to economic, demographic and technological change.

Meanwhile, the European Union made progress on its blueprint for a European Degree, aiming to enhance cross-border collaboration and recognition of qualifications. Additionally, the European Commission issued an important recommendation on fostering sustainable and attractive academic careers, supporting the next generation of educators and researchers, which EURASHE fully endorsed in policy position. Recognising the pivotal role of educators, EURASHE called for increased investment in teacher and trainer development to foster innovation and serve as role models within professional and applied education.

Bologna Process

In 2024, EURASHE continued its proactive engagement with the Bologna Process, contributing to the shaping of the new priorities for the 2024–27 work programme. Through participation in the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) and related structures, EURASHE advocated for stronger recognition of applied higher education's role in innovation, lifelong learning, and skills development. Throughout the year, EURASHE emphasized the importance of embedding flexibility, learner-centered approaches, and labour market relevance into European higher education reforms. EURASHE also promoted the concept of permeability between applied higher education and vocational education and training (VET), advocating for holistic, learner-centered pathways that enable students to move horizontally and vertically between education levels, supporting lifelong learning and employability. Our input to the Tirana Communiqué ensured that issues critical to applied universities were reflected in the overarching EHEA priorities for the coming years.



European Research Area (ERA)

At the beginning of 2024 EURASHE joined the ERA Forum as a formal stakeholder in the Higher Education Institutions category. This allows EURASHE to influence the development of the ERA, and in 2024 this included contributing to a new ERA policy agenda for 2025-2027. EURASHE also engaged in several of the actions under the 2022-2024 policy agenda, notably those related to higher education institutions, capacity building and synergies with the structural funds, and the reform of research assessment. The Association joined the Coalition for the Reform of Research Assessment at the end of 2023, and in 2024 submitted its application, which is a requirement for members within 12 months of joining the Coalition. Meanwhile, the EURASHE Secretary General has been advising one of the Horizon projects related to ERA Hubs, which analyses how the ERA can help regions develop their regional innovation strategies.

Vocational Excellence

Through the AIRinVET project and its broader policy work, EURASHE advanced the concept of vocational excellence and the integration of applied research in the VET and applied higher education sectors. In 2024, EURASHE supported the development of innovation ecosystems linking education, research, and industry, promoting Centres of Vocational Excellence as key drivers for regional development and green and digital transitions. The final AIRinVET recommendations, delivered at the project's closing conference, outlined concrete steps for strengthening public-private partnerships, enhancing funding streams, and embedding applied research within national and European VET strategies, reinforcing the value of professional and vocational pathways in achieving European education and innovation goals.

European Universities

In 2024, EURASHE strengthened its involvement in shaping the future of European University Alliances, particularly advocating for broader inclusion of applied orientated universities within the initiative. EURASHE founded and strengthened the relation between applied-oriented European Universities through the EURASHE Sounding Board of Alliances of European Universities Initiative (EUI). Through this forum and beyond – for example by becoming an External Advisory Board Member we provide active contributions to policy dialogues, EURASHE promoted the recognition of the diverse missions of higher education institutions and called for more targeted support for applied research, regional innovation, and practice-oriented education within alliances. EURASHE also planned (for early 2025) a dedicated Sounding Board meeting ahead of the Directors General for Higher Education meeting in Warsaw to highlight the strategic contributions of its members to the EUI.



33rd EURASHE Annual Conference ©EURASHE

Micro-credentials, Lifelong learning and HE flexibility

Micro-credentials remained high on the policy agenda in 2024, and EURASHE played an active role in promoting a pragmatic, learner-centered approach to their design and implementation. Building on the work of its Working Group on Micro-credentials, EURASHE advocated for flexible pathways that recognize short learning experiences and ensure their quality and portability across Europe. Throughout the year, EURASHE underlined the crucial role micro-credentials play in supporting lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling, particularly for adult learners and working professionals, aligning with broader European goals for a more adaptable, skilled workforce.

EURASHE urged for a European standard for micro-credentials, integrated in the qualification frameworks, with clear guidelines on quality assurance, stackability, and recognition, and advocated for interoperable digital credentials to support mobility and employability. We have worked on conceptualising and submission of multiple projects related with the role of Qualification frameworks and Lifelong learning strategies across Europe, which as well include the microcredential potential in this endeavours.

Skills & Recognition

In 2024, EURASHE advanced its commitment to building a single market for skills in Europe by supporting the automatic mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications and promoting the use of digital credentials to enhance mobility and employability. We placed a strong emphasis on social inclusion, advocating for the removal of barriers faced by disadvantaged groups, the validation of prior learning, and prioritising mental health and well-being. Efforts were also made to improve members' access to European funding, particularly through the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), and to encourage knowledge sharing on effective investment in education and skills.



Projects

Throughout 2024, EURASHE remained at the forefront of developing innovative, practical projects aligned with its ongoing strategy. These projects addressed the evolving needs of professional higher education, research, vocational education and training (VET), and broader societal challenges across Europe and beyond. The year also saw the successful completion of several initiatives, each contributing to the advancement of applied research, policy development and practical solutions within the sector.

EURASHE's projects continue to take a multidisciplinary approach, seamlessly integrating applied research and policy development with real-world initiatives. Moreover, EURASHE has played a crucial role in shaping these projects by serving on consultative and advisory boards, thereby ensuring that its actions align with the needs of the stakeholders and communities it serves.



AIRinVET

AIRinVET aims to drive European economic competitiveness and support the green and digital transition through the promotion of applied innovation and research (AIR) in vocational education and training (VET) for SMEs and industry.

We will identify VET centers involved in applied research (AR), conduct case studies, and develop tools that will help SMEs engage in applied research. By collaborating with regional innovation agents, we are working towards building a brighter future for R&D.



ATHENA

ATHENA responds fully to one of the main Erasmus+ programme priorities: Inclusion and Diversity. By developing a set of recommendations on integrating accessibility and design for all into the HE curricula, we want to make another step forward in promoting equal opportunities, access and social inclusion of people with disabilities.



BWSE FOR2030

The project aims to update the Bologna with Student's Eyes (2020) publication by analyzing current educational challenges and implementing reforms from a student perspective, in collaboration with stakeholders. While students across EHEA still support the Bologna Process, a critical review is needed to enhance coherence in higher education systems.

This 9th edition, BWSE FOR2030, will present findings and recommendations to help countries advance Bologna reforms. It supports external researchers and promotes cross-border and interdisciplinary cooperation to address societal challenges through education.

Peer-learning activities will engage various Bologna Process actors to identify problem areas and solutions for the post-2030 period. A final conference will gather key stakeholders to review outcomes and shape the future of the Process.



Engage All

EngageAll promotes inclusive higher education by empowering students – especially those from underrepresented groups – through volunteering and civic participation. It develops key skills such as leadership and active citizenship while fostering diversity and inclusion.

Innovations include tools to recognise skills gained through volunteering, a student ambassador programme, and a course validating civic engagement. EngageAll positions universities as drivers of democracy and social impact.



HUCO Labs

Across Europe there is a diverse and fragmented approach to the provision of skills for Research and Innovation (R&I) at Level 5 and 6 of the European Qualifications Framework. Based on an analysis of the status quo, the Collaborative Hvet-University-Company Labs for Research project (HUCO Labs) will develop a training model and standards to equip Mid-level Technicians at EQF level 5 and 6, with a key set of R&D related skills that can make them competent to work with teams of researchers and entrepreneurs.

Through two pilot pathways (EQF 5th and 6th) in advanced manufacturing, the results will be scaled up through the establishment of a European Platform or 'coalition of the willing' among training providers to develop such integrated skills across different innovative sectors of the economy. This Platform will also boost transnational cooperation through 'Technological European Villages for Technicians' that will also integrate university researchers and companies to develop a new model of innovation ecosystem.



QA-FIT

The QA-FIT project aims to gather comprehensive evidence and reflect if and how the current EHEA framework of the ESG is perceived to limit the responsiveness of quality assurance to trends and innovations in higher education, and if and how there should be more room for development of alternative approaches to quality assurance.



Meridies

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WIN4SMEs

WIN4SMEs aims to boost workplace innovation in SMEs by strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and knowledge transfer. It tackles key challenges like skills shortages, low VET participation, and misaligned training. With 20 partners from 9 countries and 70 associated organisations, the project will establish Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) on Workplace Innovation in 7 countries.

The project will design and implement tools and programmes across vocational, further, and higher education (EQF levels 3–6), sharing outcomes with partners. A Ukrainian partner will promote and apply results locally. WIN4SMEs ultimately supports SME resilience, agility, and sustainability in a changing world.

3-IN-AT-PLUS

3-IN-AT-PLUS

3-IN-AT-PLUS takes up the results of the Bologna Process Implementation Report 2020 and the priorities of the Rome Communiqué (2020) and draws from the suggestions of the Austrian national Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) to ensure focusing on the needs of the target group. For three years, the project will contribute to realizing the vision of an “inclusive, innovative and interconnected EHEA” on a national and international level.

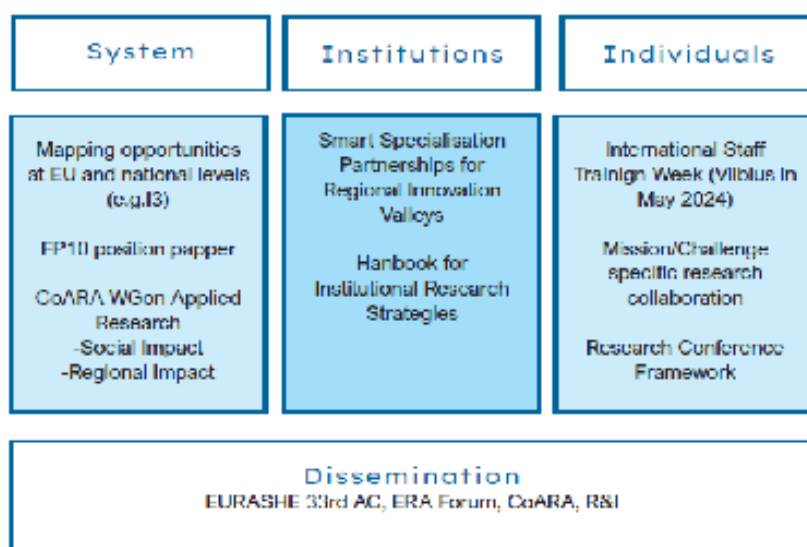
EURASHE Communities of Practice

The EURASHE Community of Practice model

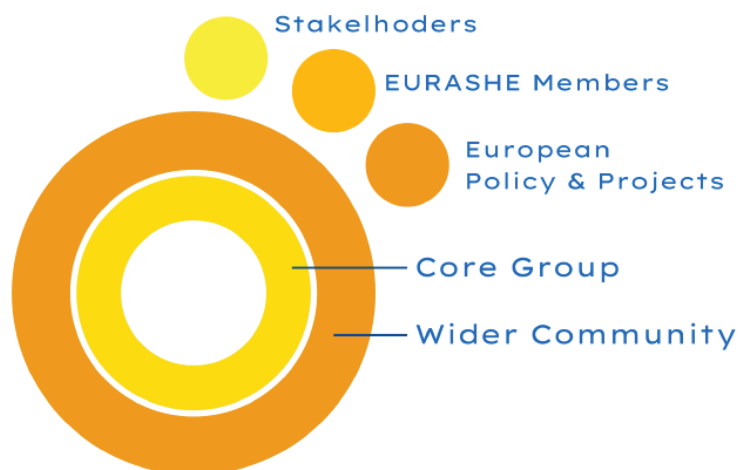
The EURASHE Communities of Practice were established and some re-established in 2022 and have been strengthened this year. There are currently three Communities that work on the three horizontal priorities of the 2023-2025 strategy (Skills, Quality of HE and Applied Research). The Communities of Practice are open to both EURASHE members and non-members, and the structure is illustrated in the figure below. A core group meets more regularly while the wider group benefits from virtual forms of cooperation and information sharing as well as online meetings.

Research Community of Practice

Launched in Fulda two years ago, the Community has developed gradually in 2023 and 2024. The Core Group met in Tartu, Estonia in February as well as several times online. There were two online meetings of the wider group, including a webinar with the European Commission on the Research Competence Framework. A work plan was defined in the early part of the year, with activities divided across three levels; the system (meaning the regulatory and funding environment), the institution (related to how each institution organises itself), and the individual researcher (how he or she develops competences and networks). The work programme is displayed in the work plan below:



Quality Assurance Community of Practice



In 2024, the EURASHE Quality Assurance Community of Practice (QA CoP) is a vibrant forum for staff from higher education institutions (HEIs), policymakers, and professionals interested in quality assurance (QA). This community aims to facilitate informal peer learning and exchange good practices, significantly contributing to capacity building within the field. Throughout the year, the QA CoP has focused on integrating new synergies and shaping the future Quality Assurance agenda in Europe, particularly from the perspective of Applied Higher Education.

Recognising the unique role and needs of Professional Education and Applied Sciences in the higher education landscape, the QA CoP has tailored its efforts to address these specific sectors. The primary mission has been to reflect on ongoing developments, enable EURASHE to better formulate its advocacy on issues within the EHEA and the EEA while maintaining a close connection with institutional members and professionals.

Key topics of interest for the QA CoP have been determined by the community itself, reflecting both the evolving political landscape and the specific interests of its members. Additionally, as part of the E4 Group—which includes the European University Association, the European Students' Union, and The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education—EURASHE has continued its collaboration on the QA-FIT project, analysing sectoral perceptions towards the development of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. This initiative ensures that the QA CoP maintains a direct link between stakeholder representation and institutional needs, reinforcing its critical role in the European QA framework. In 2024 two in-person QA CoP meetings were held in March (Zagreb) at the Algebra University and in October (Vilnius) at Vilniaus Kolegija. We would sincerely like to thank the hosts, especially Dr. Ana Tecilazic and Regina Venckienė working at respective institutions.

Events & representation

Annual Conference

The 33rd Annual Conference “Stronger Together: Fostering transnational cooperation in applied universities” took place on 22-23 May at the St. Pölten University of Applied Science, Austria. It was the most attended event in EURASHE’s history, with over 220 participants taking part in panel discussions, breakout sessions, and an engaging social programme. This milestone demonstrated the growing engagement and influence of EURASHE across Europe and beyond.

Speakers included Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot, Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+ at the European Commission, and Pedro Teixeira, Full Professor of Economics at University of Porto and former Portuguese Secretary of State for Higher Education.

EURASHE Summer Cocktail

The annual EURASHE Summer Cocktail brings together European professionals, educators and industry leaders to network and discuss higher education in a relaxed setting in the heart of Europe. This year, we welcomed over 50 participants to Le Phare du Kanaal, a unique location on the canal in the Brussels city centre.

Higher Education expert Peter van der Hijden delivered a provocative keynote speech on European Universities Alliances, the European Degree, and micro-credentials, highlighting several actions that should be taken to promote transnational collaboration among higher education institutions.

Other events

The Seminar “Knowledge or Skills: What do university graduates (and economies) need?”, hosted by Aix-Marseille University, was another highlight of the year, bringing together a range of experts to discuss skills gaps in different parts of Europe. Another major development this year was the formation of the Sounding Board for the European Universities Initiative, a platform aimed to foster collaboration and innovation within European Universities Alliances. The Sounding Board officially met for the first time in July during a kick-off meeting in Brussels, hosted by EURASHE. Finally, we held several webinars (accessible from our ‘PHE at Home’ library) and in-person small-scale events, such as the “University Alliances Harnessing Talent and Skills in Europe’s Regions” workshop hosted within the frame of the European Week of Regions and Cities

Representation

Throughout 2024, EURASHE was engaged in various international events which underscore our Association's commitment to innovation, cooperation, and sustainability. Specifically, the role of EURASHE stood out in the following events:

- European Higher Education Area Ministerial Conference | Tirana (AL), 29 May
- European Week of Regions and Cities | Brussels (BE), October
- European Quality Assurance Forum | Enschede (NL), 14-16 November
- International Association of Universities International Conference | Tokyo (JP), 22-24 November

Total events where EURASHE was represented

YEAR	2024	2023	2022
EVENTS	135	212	175

Total events EURASHE organised

YEAR	2024	2023	2022	2021
EVENTS	19	14	12	12



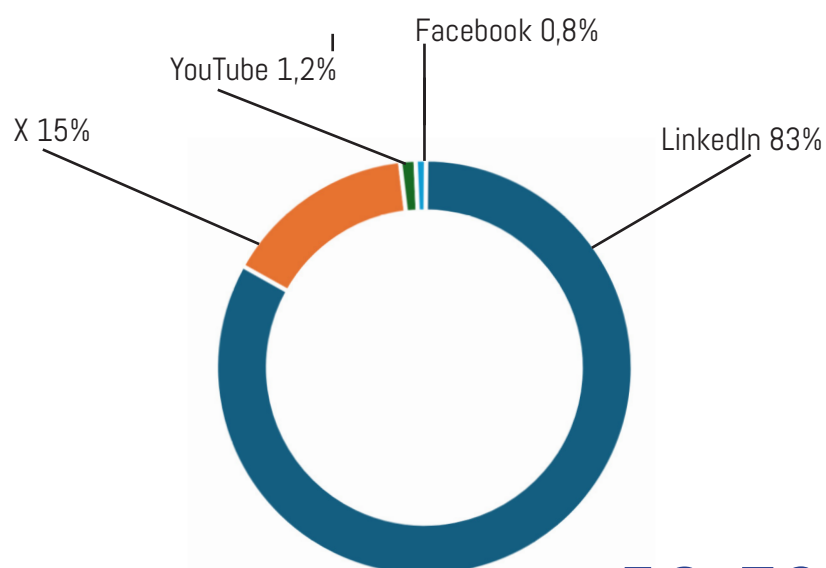
Digital engagement

EURASHE's visibility and engagement continue to grow year by year, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the EURASHE Secretariat and members in representing, promoting, and disseminating the association's work. In 2024, EURASHE has remained committed to modernising and refining its visual identity to better reflect its mission, impact, and significance.

To optimise our social media presence, in October 2024 we deactivated our Twitter and Facebook accounts due to low engagement. Instead, we are focusing on LinkedIn, which has proven to be our best-performing platform for reaching and interacting with our community.

In 2024, we introduced a new section on our website called 'Member News', featuring the latest updates from the EURASHE membership, ensuring greater visibility and engagement across our network. We also launched the 'PHE at Home' webinar library, allowing everyone to access EURASHE webinars directly from our website.

Charts based on the engagement



11.971
Total
followers

214.509
Total
social media
impressions

50.724
Website
sessions

7699
Newsletter
subscribers
by December 2024



EURASHE ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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