

Press release – 23 February 2012

Universities as key players in the future of energy research:

Survey results presented today at first meeting of European Platform of Universities engaged in Energy Research, Education and Training (EPUE)

The European University Association (EUA) will today present the results of a survey that examines the research and education/training capacities of European universities in the field of energy. The survey, which is based on a questionnaire completed by 165 universities across nearly 30 countries, has been carried out as part of EUA's development of a European Platform of Universities engaged in Energy Research, Education and Training (EPUE). This pan-European platform is holding its inaugural meeting at Delft University of Technology this week (23-24 February).

According to the survey findings, more than 20,000 academic staff (including researchers and doctoral candidates) within universities are currently active in energy research. These researchers are not only working in the fields of science, engineering and technology, bio-sciences or medical/life sciences, but also in economics, social sciences and the humanities. The [survey results](#) also indicate that universities have a high level of investment and external funding in energy research and postgraduate programmes.

EUA Deputy Secretary-General Dr John Smith said: "Our work with EPUE demonstrates the distinctive role that universities are playing in the development of sustainable, secure and competitive energy technologies. Not only does it highlight the level of cutting edge research that universities are carrying out, it also highlights the key role they have in training and recruiting the best young talent for careers in the energy sector."

EUA-EPUE is the first initiative of its kind. It aims to be a platform for coordination, cooperation, exchange of best practice, and a voice for the university sector in the energy field at EU level. It is already recognised by the European Commission and other main European policy actors as a facilitator for universities' contribution to and engagement in the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-PLAN), the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA) and the "Europe 2020 Strategy".

The inaugural meeting of the platform in Delft will therefore bring together experts from many of the universities that have responded to the survey and other universities with an interest in the energy platform. The main objective will be to explore ways of organising the university sector in this important "grand societal challenge" field to ensure that characteristic university attributes such as fundamental research and training, and collaborative activities with industry partners, are properly included in forthcoming EU energy activities in Horizon 2020.

Discussions will also focus on a number of key issues including the future role of universities in the Horizon 2020 energy activities and in the EU energy policy framework of the Energy Roadmap 2050. The event will discuss best practice in energy research, education and training and research collaborations with industry partners. The survey carried out by EUA has indicated that many universities active in energy research carry this out with a wide range of external partners.

To find out more about the event and the European Platform of Universities engaged in Energy Research, Education and Training, please visit the [event website](#).

To see the event programme, please click [here](#).

The presentation of the survey findings can be downloaded [here](#).

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The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe. EUA's mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research.