

## EUA Action Plan and Work Programme 2006/2007

### I. Introduction

EUA's Action Plan and Work Programme for the next biennium take account of

- the political context in Europe that increasingly views universities as being an essential element in building Europe's future
- the development of an EUA vision and strategy for European universities
- the priorities and commitments included in the Glasgow Declaration
- the need to balance policy action with activities targeted towards a growing and ever more diverse individual membership

In 2006/2007 EUA will:

- *Promote policies* that will enable universities and other higher education institutions to respond to growing expectations regarding their contribution to the future development of Europe
- *Advocate these policies to decision makers* at different levels, ensuring that the voice of universities is heard and that individual members are aware of policy debates that will impact on their development
- *Develop its knowledge and expertise through projects* that involve and benefit individual institutions while also underpinning policy development
- *Strengthen the governance, leadership and management* of institutions through a mix of activities targeted at mutual learning, exchange of experience and the transfer of expertise
- *Seek to enhance the impact and visibility of the association's work* on behalf of its members
- *Consider its own future development* by means of a review of its membership criteria and governance structures, as foreseen in Article 12 of the Articles of Association

### II. Developing EUA as an association

#### Objectives:

- Comply with the provisions of Article 12 of the statutes to review the Articles of Association no later than five years after its creation
- Ensure that the association's membership, structures and operating procedures are appropriate to its mission, goals and objectives

#### Actions:

- Reconcile as far as possible EUA's two sets of statutes at the 2006 General Assembly
- Establish a Statutes Review Group at the 2006 General Assembly with the mandate to report back in 2007 with proposals for action on EUA membership and governance structures
- In line with statutory requirements - assure the annual organisation and follow-up of:
  - 5 - 6 Board meetings (plus additional Presidency meetings)
  - 3 - 4 Council meetings
  - 1 General Assembly

Key Partners: National Rectors' Conferences, individual members and other associations of higher education institutions

### **III. Promoting Policies and Projects for Europe's Universities**

#### **1. Universities' contribution to Europe**

Objectives:

- Advocate the linkage between different policy agendas, especially the Bologna reforms and the research and innovation goals of the Lisbon Agenda
- Push for a redefinition of the relationship between universities and governments to take account of the growing importance of universities in reaching Europe's goals
- Promote systematic involvement of the sector's representative bodies in consultation and decision making processes at national and European level
- Ensure that universities with their increasing diversity of missions address the challenges of global competition while maintaining a commitment to access and social cohesion.

Policy Actions:

- Pursue high level dialogue with European political actors (EP, EC, national governments) on the increasingly pivotal role of universities
- Continue to ensure that EUA's biannual conferences correspond to demand, bring visibility and are useful as policy development tools
- Develop appropriate strategic partnerships.

The Organisation of Biannual Conferences as follows:

- March 2006 – hosted by the University of Hamburg, Funding Strong Universities: Diversification, Student Support and Good Governance
- October 2006 – hosted by the universities of Brno focusing on the role of universities as catalysts in promoting regional development
- March 2007 – Fourth EUA Convention of European Higher Education Institutions - hosted by the Portuguese universities in Lisbon
- October 2007 - tbc

Key Partners: European institutions (EP, EC, Council), national governments, national RCs, individual members

#### **2. Empowering Institutions and Enhancing Quality**

Objectives:

- Promote understanding of the link between a systematic quality culture, the scope of autonomy and adequate funding levels in raising the overall quality of Europe's universities
- Demonstrate that universities are committed to developing, embedding and mainstreaming an internal quality culture that fits their respective institutional mission and objectives (cf. also Section IV)
- Support the development of creative and innovative institutions.
- Continue the 'E4' partnership at European level in order to enhance accountability procedures that strengthen the overall quality of Europe's universities.

Policy Actions:

- Pursue E4 cooperation concentrating on the establishment of the Register and Register Committee and the launching of the Quality Forum as a regular event
- Continue EUA's own quality working group to support the work in the E4 and develop an activity to support the regulated professions by contributing to their understanding of the different European processes that affect them.

Projects:

- *Creative Universities*

The objective of the project is to enhance the creativity of universities in Europe by identifying and benchmarking good practices in governance that foster creativity. The project is targeted at

university leaders, academic and administrative staff in different types of institutions. As with the Quality Culture project in the past, the work will be done by higher education institutions working together in networks.

▪ *Quality Forum*

The QA Guidelines adopted in Bergen include reference to the establishment of a European Forum for Quality Assurance. This forum - an EUA proposal – is intended to provide the QA and HE communities and stakeholders with an annual opportunity to discuss key higher education trends and their implications for quality assurance in order to develop a shared understanding of a European dimension for quality assurance. The Forum will meet for the first time in 2006, in Germany.

▪ *QA for Joint Degrees*

The twin objectives of this project are: to examine how the Guidelines for Institutions running joint degree programmes produced within the EMINEM Project (2005) are implemented; and to consider how institutions running joint programmes are able to articulate their internal quality enhancement activities with the requirements of external, national QA agencies.

Key Partners: ENQA, ESIB, EURASHE, key university networks

### **3. Funding European Higher Education and Research**

Objective

- Advocate the importance of public and private investment in education, innovation and research for Europe

Action

- Through the EUA's Financing Working Group pursue the objectives and different activities as indicated in the Terms of Reference adopted by the Council in Uppsala in October 2005

Projects

- *Funding of higher education and research in Europe*

The Working Group will prepare EUA's contribution to the debate on funding higher education, and thus allow the association to impact on policies at the institutional, national and European levels. To do this EUA needs to elaborate its own evidence-based policy positions and recommendations. The group will concentrate initially on reviewing institutional funding systems in different national settings and on addressing transparency issues, taking account of recent UK experience.

### **4. Implementing Bologna**

Objective:

- Refocusing the Bologna reforms to reflect the importance of implementation at institutional level

Policy Actions:

- Advocate the role of universities and other higher education institutions in ensuring the success of the Bologna reforms by enabling their implementation at institutional level
- Represent the sector in the BFUG and in all BFUG Work Programme 2005/2007 groups and activities up to the May 2007 London Ministerial Conference
  - External Dimension
  - Data collection, social dimension and mobility
  - Stocktaking
  - European Qualifications Framework
  - E4 follow up of the Bergen quality procedures and guidelines
- Support institutions in new Bologna countries in the implementation of the Bologna reforms

- Feed into the consultation process in relation to the new EC programme on LLL
- Respond on behalf of universities to different EC consultation processes and to the EU legislative agenda on education and training

Projects:

- *Trends V*

Trends V will combine the methodology of Trends III and IV. The project has been launched by addressing a questionnaire – based on, and thus allowing comparison with the results of the 2002 questionnaire – on different aspects of the Bologna reforms to higher education institutions in all 45 Bologna countries. On the basis of an analysis of the responses to this broad survey of attitudes to the Bologna reforms a series of institutional site visits will be organised – once more using a team of researchers from different backgrounds - in as many countries as possible. If time and resources permit, regional debates enabling focus-group discussions on emerging issues will also be organised.

- *EUA Follow-Up Report on Doctoral Programmes for the London Ministerial Conference*

The Bergen Communiqué asks EUA to prepare a report on doctoral programmes for the London Ministerial meeting in 2007. Working together with the Austrian and French governments, EURODOC and ESIB, EUA will follow up the Salzburg recommendations by focusing on (1) programmes - transparency, supervision and assessment, research progress/duration, transmission of skills & competences etc.; (2) institutions – creating critical mass, structured doctoral programmes and research capacity, promoting interdisciplinarity etc.; and (3) the role of the state, in relation to funding issues, the changing profile of PhD students, and improving the attractiveness of research careers. Finally, the groups will investigate horizontal issues such as mobility and the European dimension, and the importance of ‘joined up’ governmental thinking in improving doctoral programmes and enhancing career perspectives.

- *Publication of a Bologna Handbook (together with Raabe Publishers)*

The objective of this handbook is to create a practically-oriented and flexible tool which will support higher education professionals - academics and administrators at institutional, faculty and department levels - in understanding, introducing and implementing all aspects of the Bologna Process. The publication will consist of a series of specially commissioned articles concerning the full range of Bologna action lines to be written by leading practitioners and experts in each relevant field, and will concentrate on the actual implementation of specific elements of the Bologna Process within higher education institutions. Examples of good practice will be identified and used. Designed as a hands-on tool the Handbook will be in A4 loose-leaf binder format, containing a structured collection of articles and a CD-Rom. The first edition of the handbook that will appear in mid 2006 will contain between 20-25 articles, and will be supplemented 3-4 times per year by an additional 6-7 articles and a new CD-Rom.

- *Coordination of the national teams of Bologna Promoters*

EUA has been awarded a contract by the European Commission to coordinate the national teams of Bologna Promoters that have been established at national level across the EU25. The specific objective is to prepare materials and case studies and to organise a series of training seminars which will provide a European dimension and a comparative perspective on key Bologna issues. EUA will make sure that the materials prepared are made available to all its members. EUA will implement this project together with EURASHE, ESIB, the Tuning Project and the EAIE.

- *Priority for South Eastern Europe*

As a continuation of support to universities in South Eastern Europe a conference will be organised at the University of Vienna under Austrian Presidency (March 2006). The objective is to demonstrate the importance, for the development of the region, of investment in higher education and research, and specifically of investment in the universities. In addition EUA will also continue to monitor closely the development of higher education across the region.

Key Partners: National RCs, BFUG members, European Commission, ESIB, EURODOC, ENQA

## **5. Research and Innovation in Universities**

### Objectives:

- Advocate for universities as key research actors for Europe
- Strengthen the core function of European universities in providing research training and assuring early stage researcher careers
- Ensure the optimal participation of universities in FP7 at all levels and in all actions
- Encourage further collaboration between universities and enterprise and business

### Policy Actions:

- Represent universities in policy fora at European level
- Contribute to FP7 development and implementation – through follow up of the results of the 2005 working groups on the European Research Council, mobility and funding issues
- Develop links to the ERC Scientific Council
- Respond as required to EU consultation processes and legislative proposals

### Projects:

- *Doc Careers*

The project will explore the relations between doctoral training, career development and employability prospects for young scientists, focusing on the need to incorporate demands from a highly diversified labour market in the planning of doctoral training; by introducing case studies among employers, and by looking at mobility as an inter-sectorial as well as a cross-border activity. It will be complementary to the doctoral programme follow-up activities in the Bologna process that will concentrate on the further development of the 10 Recommendations adopted in Salzburg in 2005.

- *“Responsible Partnering”*

In order to foster a wider endorsement of the 2005 Guidelines agreed amongst universities, public research organisations and enterprises the four partner organisations (EUA, EIRMA, EARTO and PROTON), in collaboration with EC DG Research, will organise two “validation workshops” and will also collaborate on the planning of a session on Responsible Partnering to be held at the European Business Summit on 16-17 March 2006. The Guidelines will be revised to take account of the results of these discussions and it is envisaged that this will form a sound framework for the future development of new EUA initiatives to promote more university-enterprise collaboration.”

Key Partners: European Commission, the ERC, ESF, EIRMA, EURODOC, national research organisations

## **6. Regional Development**

### Objectives:

- Identify the specific contribution of universities to social, cultural and economic development at regional level across Europe

### Actions:

- Promote ‘third leg’ activities of universities in relation to both teaching and research with a particular emphasis on their contribution to regional development
- Investigate how different types of networking and partnerships between universities, governments and private sector partners at regional and/or interregional level contribute to the building of strong knowledge regions
- Identify the particular role of universities as catalysts for regional development through a case study based analysis of selected knowledge regions in Europe
- Present and discuss the results of these activities at EUA’s October 2006 Conference in Brno.

Project:

- In preparation for the Brno Conference and the Lisbon Convention EUA will conduct a study on the rise of knowledge regions investigating how universities contribute to building creative environments and functional networks for the knowledge society at regional level. This analysis will be based upon in depth analysis of a small number of regions in different parts of Europe.

**7. European universities in the world**

Objectives:

- Inform and explain developments in European universities to international partners and promote cooperation
- Communicate the achievements of European higher education and contribute to enhancing its attractiveness
- Consolidate partnerships and promote dialogue with universities and university associations at international level

Actions:

- Develop a strategic plan and determine EUA priorities based on an inventory of existing activities
- Maintain and, where appropriate, further develop relations with university associations in other regions of the world
- Continue to situate the QA debate in a global context, for example through continued membership of the International Commission of CHEA

Projects:

- Organisation in Barcelona of the next meeting of the Transatlantic dialogue with the American Council on Education (ACE) in October 2006 on the topic "access, funding and affordability";
- Organisation, together with the American Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), in Salzburg, of a Europe/US graduate education summit in September 2006, with the intention of launching a global dialogue on ongoing reforms in graduate education and doctoral training in 2007;
- Inauguration of EUA/CUIB cooperation through an event to be organised in Oviedo, Spain, in April 2006, as input to the EU-LAC summit being organised under Austrian Presidency in May 2006.

Key Partners: ACE, CGS, IAU, ACU, CHEA and university associations in other regions of the world

**IV. Building strong universities: institutionalising good governance, leadership and management**

Objectives:

- Support individual members' institutional development
- Respond to increasing demand for services from a growing and ever more diverse membership
- Promote and develop the IEP as a strategic tool for institutional and higher education system development
- Promote the professionalisation of HE staff as essential to institutional development

Actions:

### **1. Institutional Evaluation Programme**

- The Institutional Evaluation Programme continues to grow as one of EUA's flagship activities. The programme supports institutional development by looking at the institutions' capacity to adapt to a changing environment and is managed independently by its own Steering Committee. In addition to continuing to respond to individual institutions' request for evaluation, in 2006/07 (17 institutions in 2006), agreements have been reached with the Ministries and Rectors' Conferences in Slovakia and Portugal to review Slovak and Portuguese institutions over the next two years. In response to the continuing high profile of and demand for the programme a considerable investment has been made in further professionalising the expert panels and developing policy guidelines to deal with the requests emanating from governments that ensure that the Programme continues to serve EUA members.

### **2. University Leadership and Management**

- Building on experience with organising Management Seminars for many years and the success of the more recent workshop series "Managing the University Community" EC support will be used over the next two years to further develop a series of activities targeted at strengthening the professional leadership and management competence in European HE institutions. These activities will address different leadership levels: governors/board members, rectors and vice-rectors, heads of administration and other senior decision-making officers. Three different types of initiative are planned:
  - Continuing the workshop series "Managing the University Community" with 2 annual events - for 2006 (1) on Fundraising, hosted by Istanbul Technical University in February 2006 and a second event in December 2006
  - A Leadership Seminar comprising two modules in 2006 (June and November 2006)
  - A European Briefing Day for External University Board members (Leuven, May 2006)

## **V. Enhancing impact and visibility**

Objectives:

- Promoting the visibility of European universities and the role of EUA as a representative body at European level with an increasing number of partners
- Targeting communications more precisely and diversifying information to adjust and adapt to a growing and more complex membership
- Improving expertise and enhancing credibility in policy discussions by increasingly becoming a reference source for information on European universities and their work

Actions:

- Improve the visibility of European universities and EUA's activities by consolidating lobbying actions in Brussels at different levels (e.g. improved contacts with political actors, more participation in high-profile events, where relevant, together with national Rectors' Conferences, consolidating press networks etc.)
- Strengthen existing information and communication flows with both collective and individual membership through the introduction of :
  - a newsletter in the form of regular policy briefings on key European issues targeted specifically at national RCs in order to provide information on 'hot topics' at European level that will in turn facilitate policy formulation at national level
  - a specific workspace for national Rectors Conferences that will – on the basis of work already done - allow EUA and its collective members to share information among each

other on their national situations, as well as on key developments and projects of common interest

- an improved and more interactive EUA database and website: to allow on-line responses to surveys on key topics and to provide a better tool for identifying the needs and interests of different actors within member institution
  
- Build the EUA as the gateway to information on European universities, starting with the sharing of information on the Bologna process:
  - For the European audience – by developing specific documentation on the Bologna process using work done for the Bologna promoters project and the Bologna handbook initiative
  - For audiences outside Europe – by developing specific information brochures in collaboration with NAFSA, EAIE and national organisations.
  
- Further develop the technical architecture behind EUA's electronic communications to allow for the introduction of new functionalities, to support better the flow of users and to manage electronic tools more efficiently
  
- Continue established activities, in particular the successful twice monthly EUA newsletter and different publications' series.

Brussels, 18 January 2005