

## Higher education experts head to Poland for key European conference

### European University Association (EUA) conference will open debate on autonomy and governance

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2007.** Hundreds of higher education leaders and experts from across Europe will gather in the Polish City of Wroclaw (25-27th October) to take part in a three day-conference and debate on two of the most crucial issues facing European higher education: the autonomy and governance of higher education institutions. As Europe looks to modernise its traditional university system to respond changes in its society and the economy, discussions between universities and the state are focusing on these two interrelated issues. This is why the European University Association (EUA), which represents nearly 800 universities across Europe, is organising a conference on this topic that will be hosted by the Wroclaw University of Technology. The event is scheduled to open with a presentation by the Polish Minister of Science and Higher Education.

Discussions on the different elements of university autonomy and accountability reflect the changing relationship between higher education stakeholders and the state. This relationship is rapidly changing in nations across Europe and this has a major impact on both the internal and external governance of all universities. France, for example, has just passed legislation that that will have a series of implications and changes for university governance and leadership over the next few years. The Wroclaw conference will take as its starting points key European policy processes, and national frameworks – which are not always in line with one another – and analyse their impact on institutional governance within an environment characterised by growing diversity in institutional missions.

During the debates and workshops, higher education leaders will discuss strategies for optimising institutional autonomy and ensuring accountability taking account of the overall European policy context and the ‘modernisation agenda’ for universities. They will also be encouraged to identify ways in which university leaders can enhance their steering capacity using examples of good practice from across Europe.

Professor Tadeusz Luty, Rector of the Host University and Council Member of EUA, said: “Wroclaw is an ideal place to create an inspiring atmosphere in which to debate the issues facing us and, hopefully, produce an insight into the rapidly changing relationship between universities and the State and the impact these changes will have on institutional governance.”

To find out more about the conference, please visit: <http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=wroclaw>

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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.

For further information, please contact:

**Andrew Miller, Press officer**, tel : +32 2 788 53 19, or Mobile/GSM: +32 473 748 785

email: [andrew.miller@eua.be](mailto:andrew.miller@eua.be)

**You can also visit our website at [www.eua.be](http://www.eua.be)**

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