

2022 EUA Annual Conference

University values: what, why and how?

28-29 April 2022, hosted by Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary

Session overview

Thursday 28 April, 11.15-12.00

Spotlight on Ukraine

Lecture Hall, Level 1

Chaired by Michael Murphy, President, European University Association (EUA)

This session provides an overview of the situation of the university sector in Ukraine as well as an opportunity to discuss and share information on ongoing initiatives to help Ukrainian peers and refugees. It is open to all conference participants.

- László Borhy, President, Hungarian Rectors' Conference
- Jerzy Lis, Rector, AGH University of Science and Technology, Poland
- Olga Porkuian, Rector, Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University, Ukraine
- Kseniia Smyrnova, Vice-Rector for International Cooperation, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

Thursday 28 April, 13.30-15.00

Official Opening and Plenary Session I: Academic freedom – from policy to reality

Lecture Hall, Level 1

Opening by Michael Murphy, President, EUA; Tibor Czigány, Rector, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary; and László Borhy, President of the Hungarian Rectors' Conference

Plenary chaired by Amanda Crowfoot, Secretary General, EUA

Drawing from international frameworks for civil liberties, this session will address the role of academic freedom in safeguarding broader democratic values, ensuring self-reflection and striving for continuous societal enhancement. The session will also explore what universities can do in practice to ensure that academic freedom is and remains a lived reality.

- Vincent Blondel, Rector, University of Louvain, Belgium (*joining remotely*)
- Adam Bodnar, Dean of Faculty of Law, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw, Poland
- Christian Ehler, Member of European Parliament
- David Kaye, Director of International Justice Clinic / Co-Director of Fair Elections and Free Speech Center, UC Irvine School of Law, United States / former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (*joining remotely*)

Thursday 28 April, 15.30-16.10

Conference participants have the choice between four presentations. NB, not all proposal authors listed below may necessarily be present at the session:

Safeguarding academic values: Examples from the UNICA network and the University of Helsinki

QBF11, Level 1

Chaired by Monika Steinel, Deputy Secretary General, EUA

The University of Helsinki has recently established a new strategy (2021-2030), which is based on our core values: of “truth”, “bildung”, “freedom” and “inclusivity”. These values constitute the core of our identity, the basis of our objectives and our value-based judgements for navigating good and bad. They constitute the foundation of our operations and interaction, while also guiding our choices and reforms. Active engagement as a member of the UNICA network — an institutional network of universities from across European capital cities — is a key means of promoting the safeguarding of academic values. Collaborating with other universities in a shared vision of academic values enhances individual institutional resilience, empowers the impact of the network collectively, and strengthens the concept of, and need for, democratic societies. In my presentation, I will shed light on how being a part of the UNICA network is a form of guaranteeing and promoting the safeguarding of academic values.

- Hanna Snellman, University of Helsinki, Finland/UNICA network

[Embedding the value of collaboration throughout the university. The UPC Nexus24 Programme](#)
Room QAF14, Level 0

Chaired by George Sharvashidze, Rector, Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia

Recognising the value of collaboration is central to the success of any sustainable solution or strategy. To achieve this, work practices must depart from siloed approaches, emphasise the value of knowledge exchange and embrace transdisciplinarity beyond the rhetoric. The UPC Nexus24 programme was established in 2014 to overcome organisational fragmentation and build collaborative communities across UPC. The programme aims to integrate collaborative practice into the university’s work culture by demonstrating the benefits of collaboration in carrying out project work. The first five years focused on mainstreaming collaborative work models among the university’s administrative staff. Today, this culture can be extended to include the UPC academic community, with the broader purpose of transitioning away from discipline-centric perspectives to encourage a progressively inter and transdisciplinary approach.

- Didac Ferrer Balas, Polytechnical University of Catalunya, Spain
- Lourdes Reig Puig, Polytechnical University of Catalunya, Spain

[Strategic Framework instead of Strategy – an institution-wide approach to drive values into reality](#)
Room QAF15, Level 0

Chaired by Sunniva Whittaker, Rector, University of Agder, Norway

Universities need strategic values, yet both the institution and its proponents respect and uphold autonomy as a cornerstone of university missions. Hence the results of university-wide strategic value discussions are often repetitive, lacking in relevance, difficult to distinguish from similar exercises at other universities, and easily lost in promotional brochures. This presentation shows how, by using a university-wide “strategic framework” instead of “a strategy”, the characteristic of autonomy can be integrated and applied to its advantage. The strategic transformation undertaken at the University for Continuing Education Krems will be used to highlight success factors, challenges, and difficulties of value-based change processes. The process serves to showcase how strategy can be implemented and communicated at many governance levels. This can benefit both executives and staff members who are supported in their day-to-day decision-making, as well as affording university leaders the opportunity to shape strategy, culture and identity in various contexts of institutional governance.

- Friedrich Faulhammer, University of Continuing Education Krems, Austria

- Stefan Sagl, University of Continuing Education Krems, Austria

[From academic publication to independent scientific magazine: the case of *Il Bo Live*, University of Padua](#)

Room QAF16, Level 0

Chaired by Patrick Lévy, Professor, Université Grenoble Alpes, France and EUA Board member

Il Bo Live is a magazine published by the University of Padua, the digital heir of the *Il Bo* newspaper founded in 1919. With a current average of 230,000 unique monthly readers, *Il Bo Live* contributes to building scientific citizenship outside academia by closing the gap between science and broader society. It is a thoroughly independent cross-media magazine produced by a dedicated newsroom of professional journalists. It investigates issues affecting society, from natural sciences to humanities, from art to politics and economics, with an analytical approach. The magazine doesn't focus on the university's research activities, but it relies on researchers, from Padua as well as from other universities and research institutions, to ensure a plurality of content, albeit under the banner of scientific rigour. It is an open newspaper with an outspoken editorial line, challenging all forms of racism and promoting inclusion, in line with the university's own vision and active policies.

- Gioia Lovison, University of Padua, Italy
- Elisabetta Tola, *Il Bo Live*, University of Padua, Italy
- Telmo Pievani, University of Padua, Italy

Thursday 28 April, 16.30-17.30

[Plenary Session II: Nurturing a culture of open and respectful debate](#)

Lecture Hall, Level 1

Chaired by Anne Lequy, Rector, Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, Germany and EUA Board member

Against the backdrop of debates around “cancel culture” and “de-platforming”, this session will look into the potential ramifications of such trends for freedom of speech in European universities: What can universities – and other actors – do to ensure free expression? In addition, what is the role of university leadership in such endeavours?

- Martina Darmanin, President, European Students' Union
- Éric Fassin, Professor, University Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint Denis, France
- Iain Gillespie, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

Friday 29 April, 09.30-11.00

Conference participants have a choice between two sets of two presentations each. There will be a break of 10 minutes in between each pair of presentations, allowing participants to switch rooms, if desired.

[Negotiating contested values: Building a new university embedded in and responsible for its region](#)
QAF14, Level 1

Chaired by Paul Boyle, Vice-Chancellor, Swansea University, United Kingdom and EUA Board member, and Josep Garrell, Rector, Ramon Llull University, Spain and EUA Board member

Negotiating contested values: Building a new university embedded in and responsible for its region

The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) is one of the largest educational institutions in Norway, with 17,500 students. During the period 2019-2023, the multicampus HVL embarked on a strategic pathway to build a new university with a profile clearly orientated towards professional and working life. Three values are central to this mission:

- 1) Challenging: We question the status quo by promoting decisiveness, critical thinking, and the ability to reflect.
- 2) Sharing: Through dialogue with society and each other, we contribute to the growth of new knowledge.
- 3) Closeness: We work closely with professional fields and will continue to develop our studies in the best interests of the region.

Informed by concepts such as the entrepreneurial, engaged and knowledge-based university, this session will reflect on and discuss our experiences in taking HVL's identity and values based on applied science further when building a "full" university.

- Gunnar Yttri, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Ridvan Cinar, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Lars Martel Antoine Coenen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Margareth Eilifsen, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Caroline Graave Nakling, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Bodil Kjesbo Risøy, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Jill Merethe Loga, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway
- Christine Øye, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway

followed by:

[Addressing the crisis of academic freedom in European higher education: The "Fundamental Values of Higher Education" Project](#)

For more than a decade, Europe has been experiencing a crisis of governance in higher education, including a crisis of academic freedom. A particular endeavour has taken shape to address this crisis, in the form of what could be called a "Project on the Fundamental Values of Higher Education". This is an impactful development, not studied so far. It consists of coordinated efforts to re-codify and put in place EHEA-wide monitoring mechanisms for academic freedom, university autonomy and other key aspects of the governance of higher education which are framed as "fundamental values", rather than human rights, fundamental rights or regulatory principles. In a remarkable result already, a new, adapted and common European conceptual reference for academic freedom was adopted in 2020. The paper discusses the nature of this ongoing project, its main objectives, dimensions, action lines and actors involved, in the broader context of the crisis of academic freedom.

- Liviu Matei, King's College London, United Kingdom

[A new Magna Charta: the featured values and how universities might embrace them effectively](#) Room QAF15, Level 0

Chaired by Francesco Ubertini, Professor, University of Bologna, Italy and EUA Board member

The Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU), signed in 1988, aimed at celebrating the deepest values of university traditions. Since then, over 900 universities from over 80 countries have signed it. MCU principles and values remain relevant, but the world has changed, as has society's expectations of universities. Hence, a multi-national group was formed to review the Magna Charta Universitatum, leading to a new version that was adopted in 2020. This new declaration strives to be responsive to and resonate with contemporary challenges and concerns, recognising the more global nature of universities' activities and the wider range of their local responsibilities. In the session, findings from the review and the key differences in the new Magna Charta will be shared, as well as the Living Values methodology that the Magna Charta Observatory has been developing for universities, to define their core values and to promote their active engagement in accordance with these values.

- Astrid Söderbergh Widding, Stockholm University, Sweden
- Sijbolt Noorda, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

followed by:

[Pandemics as an opportunity to review university values: the case of Masaryk University](#)

Masaryk University's mission and vision are built on respect for core values: mutual respect as the basis of internal culture, solidarity and partnership in all negotiations, freedom and responsibility. However, as the pandemic has evolved, social responsibility, as a value, has attracted increased attention. Among the many steps taken to address this during the pandemic two deserve a closer look: 1) *MUNI helps Volunteer Centre* – Volunteering is not only a way of helping others, but also a tool for self-development and the promotion of shared values. In recognition of its activities, the volunteer centre received the European Citizen's Prize for 2021 awarded by the European Parliament. 2) *MUNI BioPharma Hub* – Masaryk University decided to take a comprehensive approach in responding to critical societal challenges, combining life sciences with social and economic disciplines. Building a modern facility using synergist effects from the existing infrastructure will enable multidisciplinary development in the fields of pharmacy, biotechnologies, molecular genetics etc.

- Martin Bareš, Masaryk University, Czech Republic
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Friday 29 April, 11.30-12.45

[Plenary Session III: Values in global cooperation](#)

Higher education and research thrive on collaboration and universities are therefore by nature collaborative entities. The Covid-19 pandemic, during which universities around the world remained connected in order to find solutions to a shared challenge, is but the latest occasion that demonstrated this. Universities' choice of partners is often guided by their strategic objectives as well as their values, and this latter factor becomes particularly central when considering partnerships around the globe. This session will discuss the mechanisms universities have in place to engage in partnerships that bring true added value, and the role values play in these mechanisms.

- Peter-André Alt, President, German Rectors' Conference
 - Carsten A. Holz, Professor, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
 - Sijbolt Noorda, President Emeritus, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
 - Chaired by Ivanka Popović, Professor, University of Belgrade, Serbia and EUA Board member
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Friday 29 April, 14.30-15.00

[EUA Hot Topic Session: Leadership for autonomous universities](#)

This session will provide a snapshot of the latest developments in university autonomy throughout Europe, as EUA prepares to launch its renewed Autonomy Scorecard. The discussion will focus on the role of leadership in governance models. It will also be a chance to reflect on what might be fit-for-purpose in governance in the years to come.

- Marita Hilliges, Secretary General, Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions
- Kerstin Mey, President, University of Limerick, Ireland
- Marcin Pałys, Professor, University of Warsaw, Poland
- Chaired by Thomas Estermann, Director of Governance, Funding and Public Policy Development, EUA