



Network of Universities  
from the Capitals of Europe



University  
of Cyprus

## UNICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2012 University of Cyprus, 25-27 October 2012

### PARALLEL DISCUSSION GROUP MEETINGS\* (\*as listed in the programme)

**Important:** there is no pre-registration for the parallel meetings. The participants can make their choice upon registration on Thursday, 25 October.

#### UNICA Green Academic Footprint

Jorulf Brøvig SILDE, University of Oslo, Chair of the UGAF Group

The Universities in the Capitals of Europe have a unique potential to contribute towards how to solve the global challenges regarding environmental sustainability. Whether we talk about international cooperation to promote sustainable development and combat poverty, climate change, CO<sub>2</sub> emission and air pollution, or we focus on biodiversity, natural resources, renewable energy and sustainable consumption, the capital cities and the universities have several of the keys to the solutions.



Within the UNICA Network we already have the UGAF Pledge, we have a website ([ugaf.eu](http://ugaf.eu)) serving the sustainable cause, and we have a working group. What more would one wish for?

**A lot.**

This parallel session will be used to explore how to go on to strengthen the environmental sustainability efforts within our universities. To look for how to make environmental sustainability mainstream. To present a few tools and resources. And to invite universities to join in with whatever they have or not have.

**Probably quite a lot.**

As the UNICA Green Academic Pledge says: *We are the universities in the capitals of Europe. We acknowledge that Environmental Sustainability is at our core mission and as universities, we have a unique potential and capacity to enhance knowledge and understanding, and provide necessary skills and innovation.*

**43 universities can make a difference.** Join us in this parallel session to see what can be your university's part in this. And your own. Welcome!

## **UNICA Working Group “UNICA-MED” (Cooperation with Southern Mediterranean Universities).**

**Luciano SASO, Deputy Rector for International Mobility, Sapienza University of Rome,  
Member of the Steering Committee**

The recent “Arab Spring” brought the attention of all European Institutions, and in particular of the universities, to the Southern Mediterranean area. While facing new challenges, Southern Mediterranean higher education institutions will equally play a vital role in strengthening academic values, participation, and the democratic processes in the region. The European Commission recognizes that the political & economic stability in the Mediterranean basin, region where three continents converge, is vital not only to the region itself, but to Europe as a whole. New proposals and programme schemes have been put forward to strengthen the Euro-Mediterranean partnership ([http://www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed/index\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed/index_en.htm)). A constructive dialogue between European and South Mediterranean Universities is needed and can be stimulated through the creation of a platform that fosters academic exchange & discussion at all institutional levels.

Several organizations are already fully aware of the importance of this historical moment and are very active in organizing events, initiatives and projects in the region. Among them, there are the Union for the Mediterranean (<http://www.ufmsecretariat.org/en/>), UNIMED (<http://www.uni-med.net/>) (EMUNI (<http://www.emuni.si/en/>), EMUI (<http://www.emui.es>), TETHYS ([http://www.tethys-univ.org/fr/un\\_tys\\_reso\\_part\\_en.php](http://www.tethys-univ.org/fr/un_tys_reso_part_en.php)) CMU (<http://www.cmungo.org/>).

Conscious of all that, Sapienza University of Rome proposed the creation of the working group UNICA-MED for all UNICA Members with the general aim of promoting a Mediterranean University Plan of Action (MUPA) in cooperation with Southern Mediterranean Universities from the capital cities. The objectives of the plan are to develop new policies and strategies for internationalisation and modernization of university research, education and administration in the area, both to the benefit for EU Member and non-Member States, in line with the UNICA Network’s mission statement (<http://www.unica-network.eu/content/unica-mission-statement>).

At the meeting of the UNICA-MED working group in Cyprus, all the participants will be invited to briefly describe their current collaborations with Southern Mediterranean universities from the capital cities and to make suggestions and proposals in order to identify the specific areas of research, education and administration policies where the cooperation can be better developed and to define together other specific goals.

## University Career Centres and Their Role in Internationalization

**Jean-Pierre DE GREVE, former Vice-Rector International Policy, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Member of the UNICA Steering Committee**

The workshop aims at investigating how career centres can contribute to the internationalization within the UNICA Network. The following topics will be discussed:

1. Diversity of tasks of career centres
2. The new 'ERASMUS for All' plan of the European Commission with regards to career development.
3. The backyard of the career centre: universities and companies

Universities act as motors for economic growth by stimulating entrepreneurship, new business, and more incubators for graduates, etc. For this, higher education community must work closely with all stakeholders involved. Career Centres ensure the employability of the future graduates. International work experience can enhance that employability. In the discussion group we investigate how UNICA members can help each other to offer this to the students, or better in case we already do so.

## Alumni Relations Offices: Role, Tools and Strategies

**Marisa LABIRI, Coordinator of the Promotion and Development Section of the University of Cyprus**

Universities in Europe today seem to have difficulty in either “serving” their alumni and/or “involving” them effectively in their activities or gaining their support. And although large amounts of money are spent for buildings, research, publications and all sorts of events, the important, not only in numbers, alumni group is often overlooked by University authorities.

During this session we will explore the **why's and the how's** regarding alumni involvement and University investment in time, human resources and money.

With the assumption that the University and its alumni are partners for life, we will address the following questions and see how these issues are addressed in different academic institutions:

- *Approaching large numbers can definitely be costly for any University but is it worth it? What is the academic community's opinion? What is the administration's opinion?*
- *What is the role of students and parents? Should we take them into consideration in our programs?*
- *Should we ask alumni for money, via our fundraising activities, and when? What is the culture in Europe? What is different when we are dealing with state-funded Universities?*
- *What are the tools the Alumni Relations Office can use in order to achieve the University's goals?*
- *How can we involve alumni?*
- *What is the relationship of the Alumni Relations Office with other entities in the University?*

Earning alumni allegiance in today's challenging environment is directly connected to earning government support and public respect. Universities in Europe need to realize that their alumni can be their best ambassadors and their worst critics.

Join us for this parallel session to share your experiences, ideas and opinions regarding alumni relations at your academic institution and help us reach some useful conclusions about best practices.