



MINUTES

UNICA General Assembly 2018

Comenius University in Bratislava

Thursday, 15 November 2018, 09:00-13:00

I. Welcome address by Professor Karol Micieta, Rector of Comenius University in Bratislava

Rector of Comenius University in Bratislava Prof. Karol MICIETA welcomes the UNICA President, Members of the Steering Committee, and the representatives of UNICA Member Universities.

II. Opening of the General Assembly by Professor Luciano SASO, UNICA President

UNICA President Prof. Luciano SASO thanks Rector of Comenius University in Bratislava Prof. Karol MICIETA for the hospitality, welcomes the participants, and briefly presents the programme of the General Assembly. He declares the UNICA General Assembly 2018 open.

III. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda is adopted without any changes.

IV. Adoption of the Minutes of the UNICA GA 2017

The minutes of the administrative UNICA General Assembly 2017, hosted by Eötvös Loránd University Budapest, 16 November 2017, are adopted without any changes.

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT - UNICA ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

UNICA President Prof. Luciano SASO presents the UNICA Annual Report 2017-2018.

Full presentation available [under this link](#).

UNICA Activity Report 2017-2018 publication available [under this link](#).

UNICA President highlights:

- The summary of **UNICA Facts & Figures 2017-2018**, showing the impressive number of activities and initiatives carried out by UNICA, as well as the excellent average evaluation rate (4.5/5) of UNICA meetings by the participants;
- The **raised number of meetings for academic leaders from UNICA Member Universities**, which was one of the goals of his Presidency:
 - UNICA is organizing three formal Rectors Seminars in addition to the one held on the occasion of the annual General Assembly and one-two informal gatherings per year on the occasion of the EUA annual conference and similar events well attended by UNICA Rectors and Vice-Rectors;
 - The UNICA Rectors Seminars in 2018 have been all very successful in terms of both participation and content quality;
 - The Rectors Seminar 2018 "Legacy of Democracy, Humanism and Responsibility" in Prague (co-organized by UNICA, Coimbra Group, Europaeum, and LERU) also laid the basis to foster a strategic partnership with other European university networks;
- The **UNICA Student Conference 2017**, hosted by Sapienza University of Rome in cooperation with other three Universities in Rome (Tor Vergata, Roma Tre, and Foro Italico), brought together more than 200 students representing 38 UNICA Member Universities and 30 countries. A new initiative allowed two winning student fora to apply for co-funding from UNICA for the implementation of their project, and resulted in the UNICA "Green Your University" award, launched by the team of the winning project "Green Students Hub". The winning project was supported by the UNICA Green Working Group, as well as by the ULB and by UNIL, which provided also co-funding.
UNICA President underlines that the Student Conference is an event peculiar to UNICA and **encourages Member Universities to apply for hosting & organisation of the next edition**, scheduled for 2019;
- the **increased activity of UNICA in the field of European research policy**:
 - organisation of the high-level Conference "Shaping the social impact of European research: policies, strategies, funding" (Brussels, November 2017), organized in cooperation with other networks, and of the 13th EU Research Liaison Officers meeting (Belgrade, October 2018);
 - Active role in discussions on the future European Research & Innovation framework programme (joint statements with other networks and the [Prague appeal](#) signed in October 2018 by Coimbra Group, EUROPÆUM, LERU, UNICA and Charles University);
- The organization of the **first joint meeting of Chairs of the UNICA Working Groups** with the UNICA President and the Members of the Steering Committee, which provided the opportunity to discuss on how to foster synergies between different UNICA Working Groups

and the goals, needs, achievements, and areas for further improvement of UNICA Working Groups;

- The **European projects**: UNICA has been very active in the past 10 years (partner in 30 EU projects, including 10 projects as project coordinator and 1 as co-coordinator); 37 UNICA member universities have participated in EU projects with the involvement of UNICA; project proposals often raise from the activities and sharing of experiences within UNICA Working Groups;
- The **more effective communication** through the website, the monthly newsletter and the social media channels. UNICA President encourages UNICA member universities to share with UNICA news and events that they want to promote and disseminate.

VI. UNICA FINANCIAL STATUS

Jacques LANARÈS (UNICA SC member, University of Lausanne) presents the UNICA financial documents, the 2017 accounts and balance and the Auditor's Report 2017. He stresses that UNICA finances are stable, thanks to the sound financial management of the UNICA Secretariat. The financial result of 2017 is entirely in line with the budget and the report made by the auditor confirms the situation.

Jacques LANARÈS explains that between 2009 and 2013 a significant amount of UNICA annual funding came from EU projects, and this extraordinary income allowed UNICA to expand the number of the Secretariat staff, as well as the activities, publications and Working Groups and to build up the reserve. UNICA is currently using the reserve to achieve balance as the funding from EU projects has decreased and the contribution of VUB to the salary of UNICA Secretary General could not be continued. To protect the reserve, the 3rd staff member has not been replaced in 2018.

The General Assembly:

- approves unanimously the 2017 accounts and balance,
- takes note of the Auditor's Report 2017,
- takes note of the 2018 financial situation (up to 15 October, 2018).

VII. MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership fee 2019

The proposed **UNICA membership fee 2019 amounts to €5,900.**

The membership fee is indexed every year according to Belgian law on the basis of the average inflation rate.

Calculation: EUR 5.800 + (5.800*0,02 average inflation rate) = EUR 5.916 rounded up at EUR 5.900.

Vote: The membership fee 2019 is approved unanimously.

B. Membership withdrawals

The UNICA President informs the Assembly about the decision of the **Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3** to withdraw from the network due to the restructuring of the University. The General Assembly acknowledges with regret the withdrawal and wishes them the best of luck for the future.

C. Membership reapplication

UNICA President Luciano SASO presents the re-application of the **Universidad Autonoma de Madrid**. UAM was a founding member of UNICA and decided to withdraw in 2015 due to the financial constraints of the university. The university continues to meet the membership criteria, many UNICA member universities cooperate with UAM, and UAM membership will also be an added value for the other UNICA members based in Madrid.

Vote: The re-application of the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid is accepted unanimously.
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D. Candidates for UNICA membership (in alphabetical order by country)

The following candidacies for UNICA membership are presented. The UNICA President & Members of the Steering Committee affirm that the Candidates meet the UNICA criteria for membership, that their application was in accordance with the UNICA membership policy, and give positive recommendations on their application.

1. University of Rome “Foro Italico”, Rome, Italy

Antonio RENDAS (UNICA SC member, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa) presents the candidacy of University of Rome “Foro Italico”.

“Foro Italico” is the fourth public university in Rome. The network of UNICA member Universities in Rome is a quite unique example of longstanding cooperation and successful joint initiatives (as the UNICA Student Conference 2017), already involving “Foro Italico”. Based on these joint activities the Rectors from the three UNICA members in Rome enthusiastically support the candidacy. “Foro Italico” is the only Italian and one of the few European universities fully dedicated to sport and to scientific disciplines related with exercise. The university offers the three levels of degrees according to the Bologna Process and is strongly committed to interdisciplinary research, including basic sciences. There is also a strong internationalisation component expressed in 112 co-operation agreements with EU and non-EU Universities. Despite its specialisation in sports and exercise, “Foro Italico” is an open university linked to many other disciplines both in teaching and research.

Although not fully comprehensive, the University's candidacy has the approval of the Steering Committee in view of its quality, its multidisciplinary and international commitments to higher education and research, social engagement, and of the added value to the network of UNICA universities located in Rome.

Vote: The candidacy of University of Rome “Foro Italico” is accepted unanimously.
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2. Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN), Moscow, Russian Federation

UNICA President Luciano SASO presents the candidacy of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN). The University's candidacy meets the formal criteria for UNICA membership as RUDN is a large, comprehensive and international university. It is compliant with the Bologna Process and approx. 15% of its degree programmes are taught entirely in English. In 2015, RUDN

joined the “5-100” Russian Excellence Initiative for Higher Education and Research. RUDN has a strong international commitment, with about 30% of international Students and about 250 agreements with foreign HEIs and research centers. It is a Member of several important networks and associations (EUA, EUA Council for Doctoral Education, Black Sea University Network, Association of the Francophonie Universities - AUF), as well as a signatory university of the Magna Charta Universitatum. The application for UNICA Membership is also strongly supported by the Higher School of Economics.

For all the above-mentioned reasons and in view of the significant added value that RUDN could bring to the UNICA network in terms of new projects and international activities, the candidacy has the approval of the Steering Committee.

Ivan PROSTAKOV (Vice-Rector, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow) confirms the support of HSE to the candidacy. RUDN is a very internationalizing university since it was founded in the 60s to welcome international students. HSE has an excellent cooperation with RUDN, and they are very active. The Rector of RUDN previously worked for the Russian Ministry of Education, and had an important role in reforming HE in Russia.

Vote: The candidacy of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia is accepted unanimously.

VIII. REPLACEMENT OF OUTGOING STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER

UNICA President informs that due to personal reasons Sonja SNACKEN (Vice-Rector, Vrije Universiteit Brussel) had to resign from the Steering Committee. He expresses his best wishes and sincere thanks for her commitment to UNICA over the past months.

He announces that Caroline PAUWELS (Rector, Vrije Universiteit Brussel) has submitted her formal candidature to replace Sonja SNACKEN, and that the candidature is officially supported by the other UNICA member university located in Brussels, the Université libre de Brussels.

According to article 13 of UNICA Statutes stating that “at least one member of the Steering Committee should be of Belgian nationality and be proposed by a University located in Brussels”, the replacement of the Brussels representative at the Steering Committee is a specific case and does not require a vote from the Assembly.

The replacement of the outgoing Steering Committee member with Caroline PAUWELS is therefore immediately effective.

IX. WORK PROGRAMME 2018-2019 & SHORT PRESENTATIONS BY HOSTS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

UNICA President Luciano SASO presents the Network's Work Plan 2018-2019.

Full presentation available [under this link](#).

UNICA Work Plan 2018-2019 publication is available [under this link](#).

UNICA President Luciano SASO outlines the focal points for UNICA in the academic year 2018/2019:

- The added value of metropolitan, urban universities
- UNICA as a forum for academic leadership
- Continuous competency development & peer learning for university staff

UNICA President Luciano SASO announces the UNICA events scheduled in 2019 and invites UNICA Member Universities to use the UNICA calendar, which lists all the upcoming UNICA activities together with their target audiences. He mentions that all the events 2019 have hosts except for the EU Research Liaison Officers meeting, and encourages UNICA member universities to apply for the hosting of this event.

Invitations to forthcoming UNICA meetings

- UNICA President Luciano SASO invites to participate in the Rectors Seminar “Shaping the University of the 21st century, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 28 February-1 March 2019”, which will also include a session on the new European Universities initiative;
- Miloš JUDAŠ (Vice-Rector, University of Zagreb) warmly invites UNICA members to participate in the Rectors Seminar which will take place in May 2019 in the framework of 350th anniversary celebrations of the University of Zagreb. The Seminar will focus on the added value and the novel forms of inter-university cooperation and explore the background for the growing interest in topics of digitalization and education. The Seminar will also look at the specific benefits of cross-border and inter-institutional partnerships, including joint efforts to prepare universities and member states for Industry 4.0.
- Ina Druviete (Vice-Rector, University of Latvia) and Alīna Gržibovska (Head of International Relations, University of Latvia) announce the Rectors Seminar that will take place in September in the framework of the 100th anniversary of the University of Latvia and present the website www.lu.lv/english with the programme of the celebrations;
- Ivan PROSTAKOV (Vice-Rector, National Research University Higher School of Economics) invites UNICA Members to the upcoming EduLAB 2018. He highlights the fact that it will be the first UNICA event hosted by Higher School of Economics; the meeting will focus on Innovation in Teaching and Employability and UNICA participants will also have the opportunity to attend (free of charge) eSTARS - eLearning Stakeholders and Researchers Summit 2018, the international research conference dedicated to academic and applied aspects of online education.
- UNICA President Luciano SASO draws attention on two important new initiatives:
 - The Seminar for Vice-Rectors/Vice-Presidents Research: Urban research universities addressing global challenges, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 7 February 2019
 - The UNICA-IAU Joint MASTER CLASS on Internationalisation for Vice-Rectors/Vice-Presidents for International Affairs, Centre for Advanced Academic Studies, University of Zagreb in Dubrovnik, 7-10 April 2019

Denis DAFFLON (Head of International Relation Office, University of Lausanne) gives a **presentation on the UNICA Green Working Group and announces the UNICA Green Workshop 2019** “Sustainable lifestyles - What role can universities play?”, University of Lausanne, 6 - 8 March 2019.

Environmental Sustainability is at the core mission of the Working Group and participating universities commit themselves by subscribing the UNICA Green pledge. The Green core Group

currently includes 13 UNICA member universities and its chairs are elected among the core group members for two years. Since 2015, UNICA Green also includes non-UNICA partners in the core group activities.

Denis DAFFLON presents the **UNICA “Green your university” award**, launched by the winners of the UNICA award for the best project submitted by the two winning Students Fora at the UNICA Students Conference 2017. The winning team has worked in 2018 to set up an award which will acknowledge the best students sustainable project led in UNICA universities. He encourages UNICA member universities to promote the award to their students. The deadline to apply is December 15, 2018. The winner will be invited to present their project (in person or virtually) and receive their award at the UNICA GREEN Workshop 2019 in Lausanne.

UNICA President Luciano SASO lists the **projects** UNICA is involved in as coordinator or partner and invites UNICA member universities to consider that UNICA can play an important role both in dissemination and in the search for partners.

X. Approval of the UNICA budget 2019

Jacques LANARÈS (UNICA SC member, University of Lausanne) presents the budget proposal for 2019. He explains that this is a conservative budget based on previous years and that in order to minimize the amount taken from the UNICA reserve more income coming from EU projects was allotted for salaries of the UNICA Secretariat staff. He reminds that due to less income from projects the 3rd staff member was not replaced in 2018. However, he stresses that in order to ensure stability and the management of all UNICA activities, three staff members are needed.

Vote: The Budget 2019 is approved unanimously by the General Assembly.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019 AT KING'S COLLEGE LONDON, PRESIDENT & STEERING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

UNICA President Luciano SASO announces the UNICA General Assembly 2019 & Rectors Seminar “Creative Entrepreneurship: leading the next generation”, which will kindly be hosted by King’s College London, 28-29 November 2019.

He reminds that the General Assembly 2019 will also feature the UNICA President & Steering Committee elections.

UNICA President closes the UNICA General Assembly and thanks everyone for their participation.



