



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

STRONG UNIVERSITIES FOR EUROPE

The achievements of European Universities in the last 60 years

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1. The first 30 years

- As early as 1955 the European Conference of University Rectors was convened, in Cambridge
 - 100 Rectors present – main topics autonomy & the role of universities in society in the still post war context
 - Under the auspices of the Western European Union and the Council of Europe
- 1964 saw the creation of the Standing Conference of University Rectors (CRE)
 - To advise European universities on questions of common interest
 - Be available for consultation by governments on university matters
 - To make recommendations to national & international organisations
- the 'Liaison Committee', to become the Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences, founded in 1973

...two European university associations



Confederation of European Union
Rectors' Conferences



Association of European Universities
(CRE)

2. A first wave of European integration (1970s - 1990s)

- the first politician to talk about universities - Edgar Faure in May 1968
- Launch of the first EU pilot programme in 1976 – by 1986 over 600 joint study programmes involving 500 universities
- The arrival of Delors and the landmark decision of the European Court of Justice (Gravier decision) - paved the way for Erasmus and the other first generation mobility programmes in 1987/1988
- Launch of the research framework programmes in 1984 but with only a very small programme to support fundamental research

3. The game changing examples of ERASMUS and TEMPUS

- Universities benefited enormously from the opportunities offered by ERASMUS
 - ✓ ERASMUS's objective was to underpin a true 'Europe of the Citizens'
 - ✓ Universities embraced the programmes and made it their own
- The fall of the Berlin wall gave further political impetus to pan-European cooperation and mobility
- The TEMPUS programme was a major vehicle of support for greater East/West integration
 - ✓ Universities were once more enthusiastic supporters of this initiative
 - ✓ TEMPUS continued to support 'Joint European Projects' beyond the boundaries of the EU, in different forms, until 2013

4. University Values: the creation of the Magna Charta Observatory

- The Magna Charta Universitatum was signed by 388 Rectors on 18 September 1998 and now has over 800 signatories in 85 countries
- Established by the University of Bologna and the CRE
- Principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy - as guidelines for good governance and self understanding of universities in future
- Institutional autonomy as a prerequisite for the effective and efficient operations of universities, in their study, teaching and research
- Seen as a standard of belonging to an international community sharing the same values and purposes

5. The late 1990's - towards a 'Union of Knowledge' and the Bologna Process

- Treaty of Amsterdam 1997 – towards a 'Union of Knowledge'
- Increase in university enrolments, importance of highly trained work force, focus on research, and lifelong learning, and the importance of quality assurance
- 1998 - the Sorbonne Declaration, the Lisbon Recognition Convention ... 'harmonising higher education systems in Europe?'

6. One higher education association for Europe

- The European agendas of the CRE and the Confederation became increasingly more similar as the CRE moved into the policy sphere
- Both organisations represented the same universities, hence there was a need for action
- A merger task force was established in 1998, and after a long and painful process the EUA was established in March 2001 in Salamanca
- Objective – ‘promoting the development of a coherent European system of higher education and research’

Salamanca
31 March 2001

The Merger



**Confederation of European Union
Rectors' Conferences**



EUA

European University Association



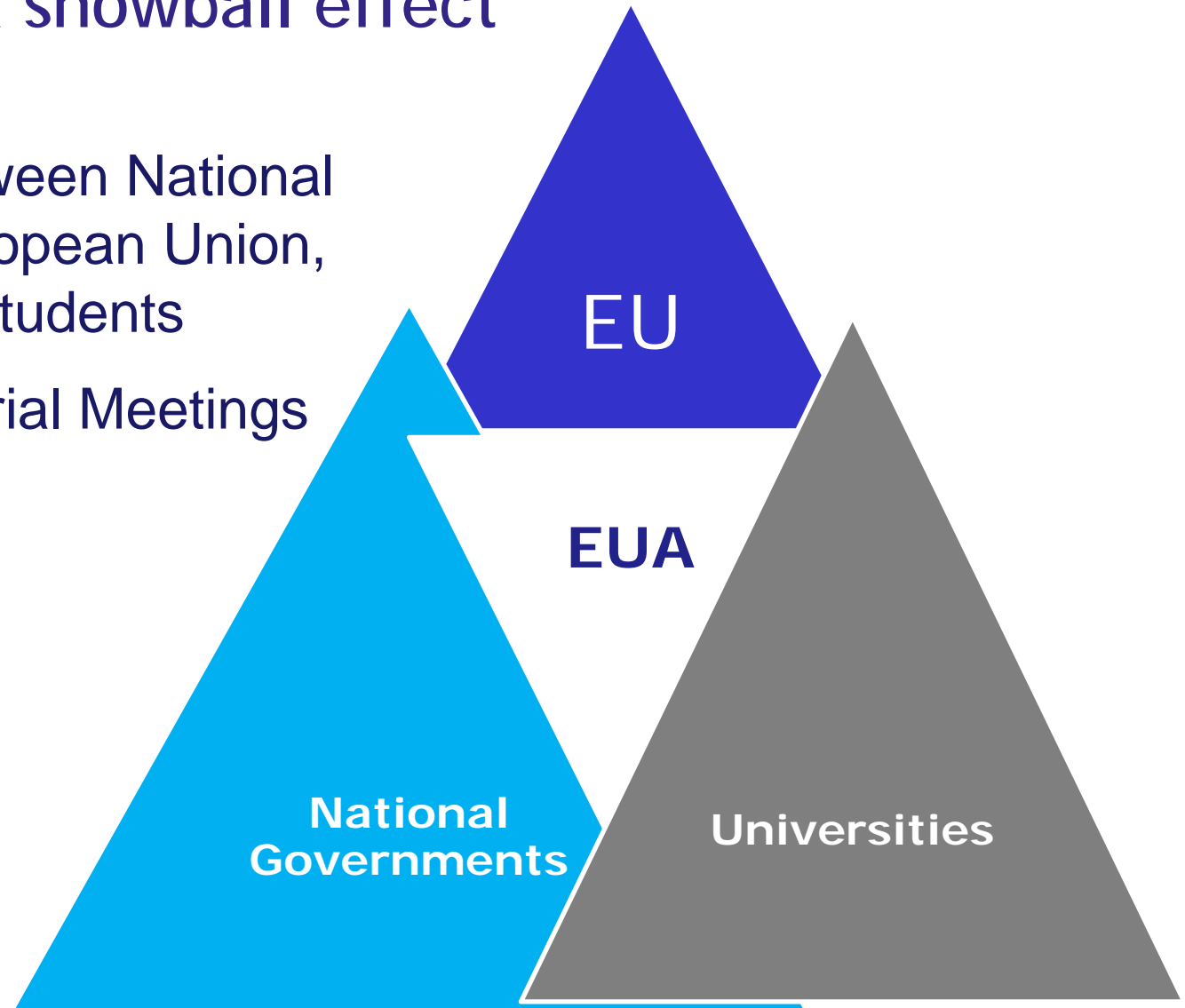
**Association of European Universities
(CRE)**

7. One association to enhance the profile of European universities

- **Shaping & influencing** the design, implementation and agenda of the European HE and Research Area by raising new issues and structuring the debates
- **Impacting** the Bologna Process at the political level through advocacy & identification of major trends in Education and Research
- **Supporting** a growing number of members in developing their specific roles and missions

8. Bologna snowball effect

- Cooperation between National Governments, European Union, Universities, with students
- Biannual Ministerial Meetings
- Trends Report



9. The launch phase - the first 5 years: university achievements

- **Shaping the Bologna Process: universities working on**
 - Influencing the Bologna Ministerial meetings – importance of the TRENDS reports
 - Quality Culture + European Dimension of QA
- **Opening up the discussion on the research role of universities**
 - Central role of doctoral education
 - Commission support - 2001 Conference Commissioner Busquin
- **The importance of internationalisation** - starting with policy statements on the GATS, jointly with ACE and AUCC

10. Major changes in higher education systems and policies (2005 - 2010)

- Managing higher participation rates
- Internationalisation and the growing importance of knowledge-led economies
- Reflected in 2 main European policies
 - ✓ From the Bologna process to the European Higher Education Area - 2010
 - ✓ The Lisbon Process, including the Modernisation Agenda for Universities
- Leading to major policy change at national level affecting
 - ✓ External QA, autonomy, funding and research policies
 - ✓ But also the shape and size of many higher education systems
 - ✓ Degree structure and their acceptance on the labour market

11. Present Challenges and achievements

- A changed context since 2010: negative demographic trends, impact of the economic crisis etc. but also growing importance of ICTs, and awareness of the strategic importance of internationalisation
- Greater attention being paid to international rankings and to institutional positioning in general
- The 2015 Trends report also shows that universities are responding to these challenges in the field of learning and teaching – and that there is a growing interest in learning and teaching in universities in many countries

12. Present challenges and achievements (cont.)

- The funding of universities, almost a decade since the financial crisis broke – universities in many countries are still feeling the pinch
- The importance of research funding for European universities, amid worries about the future funding of the next Framework Programme (FP9)
- The disparity in situation of universities in different parts of Europe
- The threats to European collaboration and solidarity from issues such as Brexit or Trump's executive orders risk undermining open exchange and mobility

13. The importance of the debate on the future of Europe

- In this context the debate on the future of Europe is crucial
- It is will be importance for universities to make their voice heard
- What do the different scenarios outlined by President Juncker mean for higher education and research?
- EUA will be addressing these issues at its upcoming Council meeting with the Presidents of our national associations – we look forward to your contribution to the next phase of our common European journey!