



Network of Universities
from the Capitals of Europe



UNICA IRO working group



UNICA IRO GROUP MEETING 2022

Brussels, 4-6 May 2022

Format: face-to-face meeting

Venue: University Foundation, Rue d'Egmont 11, 1000 Brussels

Introduction

Higher Education in Europe has undergone remarkable transformations in the last years. These transformations have forced International Relations Office across UNICA universities to quickly adapt their services to new practices and methods of working. Important chapters that pushed for such transformations include the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the implementation of digital methods for teaching, learning and mobility; the urgency for universities to embed a sustainable mindset in their mission and to actively contribute, along with other actors in society, to achieve the UN SDGs; attacks to humanitarian and academic values and the consequent refugee crisis, including the recent one in Ukraine, and, on a more positive note, a new Erasmus+ programme with a budget of some €26 billion that offers more mobility and cooperation opportunities.

All these changes and challenges make international cooperation in Higher Education even more important than before. Despite the pandemic, UNICA continued promoting cooperation through virtual meetings and events, and constant communication with members about ongoing changes in the European higher education set.

Now, two years and many lessons later... it's time for the IRO Group to meet face-to-face again!

The UNICA IRO meeting in Brussels is an opportunity for UNICA IROs to discuss common challenges associated to transformations in European Higher Education, and share good practices and solutions to overcome them.

May the 4th (to the 6th) be with UNICA, in Brussels!



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Programme

Overall chair: Minna Koutaniemi, Head of the International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation at the University of Helsinki, Coordinator of the UNICA IRO Group and IRO Observer to the UNICA Steering Committee

DAY 0 – Wednesday, 4 May

18:30 – 20:00 Venue: University Foundation	Welcome reception Welcome words by Luciano Saso , UNICA President and Minna Koutaniemi , Head of the International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation at the University of Helsinki & Coordinator of the UNICA IRO Group
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DAY 1 – Thursday, 5 May

09:00 – 09:30	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
09:30 – 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Welcome words and overview of UNICA activities by Luciano Saso, UNICA President (15')Welcome and introduction by Minna Koutaniemi, Head of the International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation at the University of Helsinki & Coordinator of the UNICA IRO Group (5') <p>Tour de table (10')</p>
10:00 – 13:00	Session 1- What's new in Erasmus+ ?
	Chair: Vratislav Kozák , Director of International Relations, Charles University
10:00 – 10:15	Introduction to the session by the Chair (15')
10:15 – 11:00	Keynote speech by Nadia Manzoni , Team Leader, DG EAC, Higher Education Unit, Erasmus+ (30')
	Q&A (15')
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break & networking game



11:30-12:30	<p>Presentations panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implementing BIP courses for students at the University of Iceland</i>, by Nanna Teitsdóttir, Project Manager, University of Iceland (15') • <i>Virtual and Blended Mobility and Blended Intensive Programmes</i>, by Carmen Oglakci, Director for International Relations, and Teodora Monica Fulga, Erasmus+ Officer, Bucharest University of Economic Studies (15') • <i>Transition from Erasmus to post-Erasmus: new structures of student mobility with UK partners at FUB</i>, by Gesa Heym, Erasmus Institutional Coordinator, Freie Universität Berlin (15') • <i>Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility: experiences of the University of Helsinki</i>, by Raisa Asikainen, Specialist, International exchange services and education cooperation, University of Helsinki (15')
12:30 – 13:00	Discussion (30')
13:00 – 14:00	Buffet lunch
14:00 – 17:00	Session 2 - "IROs & the European Universities initiative"
	Chair: Gesa Heym , Head of Student Mobility Unit, Freie Universität Berlin
14:00 – 14:15	Networking activity with UNICA (15')
14:15 – 14:30	Introduction to the session by the Chair (15')
14:30 – 15:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Civis, a European Civic University: quality evaluation of student mobility</i>, by Claudia Fiorani, International Relations Officer, Sapienza University of Rome (15') • <i>Educational cooperation</i>, by Vratislav Kozák, Director of International Relations, Charles University (15') • <i>Joint and multiple degrees</i>, by Minna Koutaniemi, Head of the International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation at the University of Helsinki & Coordinator of the UNICA IRO Group (15')
15:15 – 15:30	Short break
15:30 – 16:30	<p>Breakout discussion groups, facilitated by the speakers of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility • Educational cooperation • Joint and multiple degrees
16:30 – 17:00	Reporting from the groups to the wider audience and discussion (30')
17:00 – 19:30	Free time
19:30	Dinner at Restaurant "Les Filles", Rue du Vieux Marché aux Grains 46



DAY 2 – Friday, 6 May

09:00 – 09:30	Morning coffee
09:30 – 11:00	Session 3 - “IROs in crisis situations: from emergency response to well-being on campus”
	Chair: Minna Koutaniemi , Head of the International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation at the University of Helsinki & Coordinator of the UNICA IRO Group
09:30 – 09:40	Introduction to the session by the Chair (10’)
09:40-10:10	Emergency response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alina Cristovici, Head of the International Office, University of Bucharest: Initiatives of the University of Bucharest to support and host Ukrainian students, staff, and refugees (15’) • Klementyna Kielak, Deputy Head, International Relations Office, University of Warsaw (15’)
10:10-10:25	Discussion (15’)
10:25-10:45	Well-being on campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk by Geert Schelkens, Psychologist/psychotherapist, BRUCC - Brussels University Consultation Center and Psygroup International Joint Practice Brussels (20’)
10:45-11:00	Case studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khaola Al Rifai, Coordinator UNISTAR Project, Vrije Universiteit Brussel: Presentation of the Erasmus+ strategic partnership project “UNISTAR - UNIVERSITY STAff for Refugees” (10’) • Alexandra Duarte and Laura Colò, UNICA Secretariat, Presentation of the Erasmus+ Project “Mindfulness Practices for Students in Society - MP4s” (5’)
11:00 – 11:15	Discussion (15’)
11:15 – 11:30	Short break



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11:30 – 13:00	Session 4 - “SDGs - Sustainability as new approach at HEIs”
	Chair: Minna Koutaniemi, Head of the International Exchange Services and Education Cooperation at the University of Helsinki & Coordinator of the UNICA IRO Group
11:30 – 11:35	Introduction by the Chair (5’)
11:35 – 11:55	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Universities and Sustainability - Driving Positive Change</i> by Matthew Lawson, Senior SRS Learning, Teaching and Reporting Manager at the University of Edinburgh & Coordinator of the UNICA Green & SDGs Working Group (20’)
11:55 – 12:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk by Riccardo Trobbiani, UN Coordination Officer at UN Brussels, United Nations Environment Programme (20’)
12:15 – 12:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guido De Wilde, Manager, International Students Affairs, University of Amsterdam, Presentation of the Erasmus+ Project TICKET for a more international and inclusive university for the 21st century (10’)
	Discussion (20’)
12:45 – 13:00	Conclusions and wrap-up of the UNICA IRO meeting by Minna Koutaniemi (15’)
13:00 – 14:00	Farewell buffet lunch
15:00-16:30	Optional social programme: Guided visit to the House of European History