

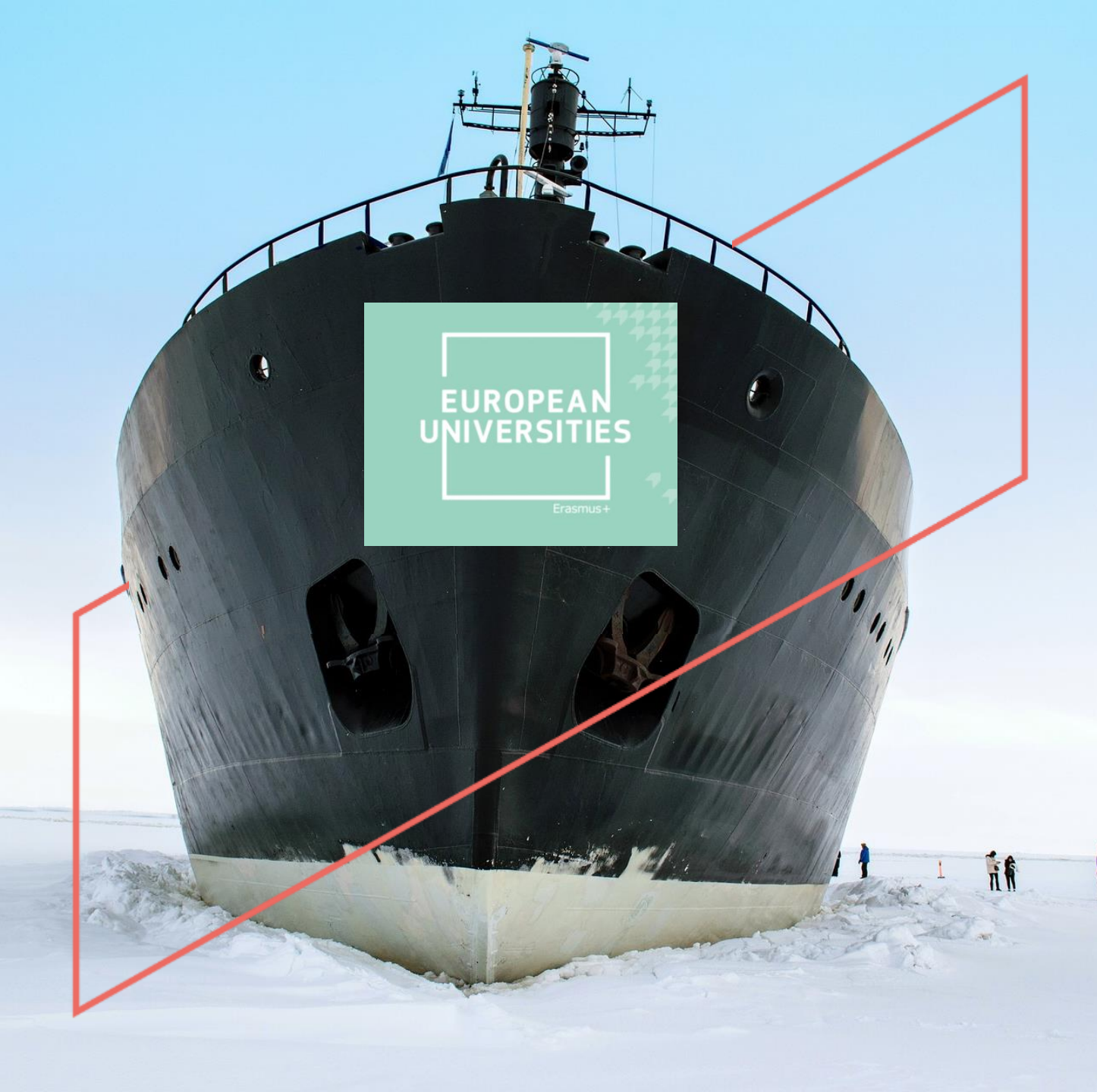
CHALLENGING  
CONVENTIONAL  
THINKING



# Rethinking European degrees

Olga Wessels, Head of ECIU Brussels' Office

27 05 2022



## European Universities as icebreakers

## European University Alliances as strategic direction

- European University Alliances as testbeds for change
- Need for national support to overcome critical obstacles
- Need for political will to realise structural changes





# Objectives FOREU

The 41 European Universities Alliances come together in informal groupings, under the umbrella of the Forum of European Universities (FOREU).

- **FOREU1** brings together 17 Alliances and **FOREU2** 24 Alliances.

**FOREU was established** to exchange best practice and share challenges and success stories in implementing our long-term strategies.

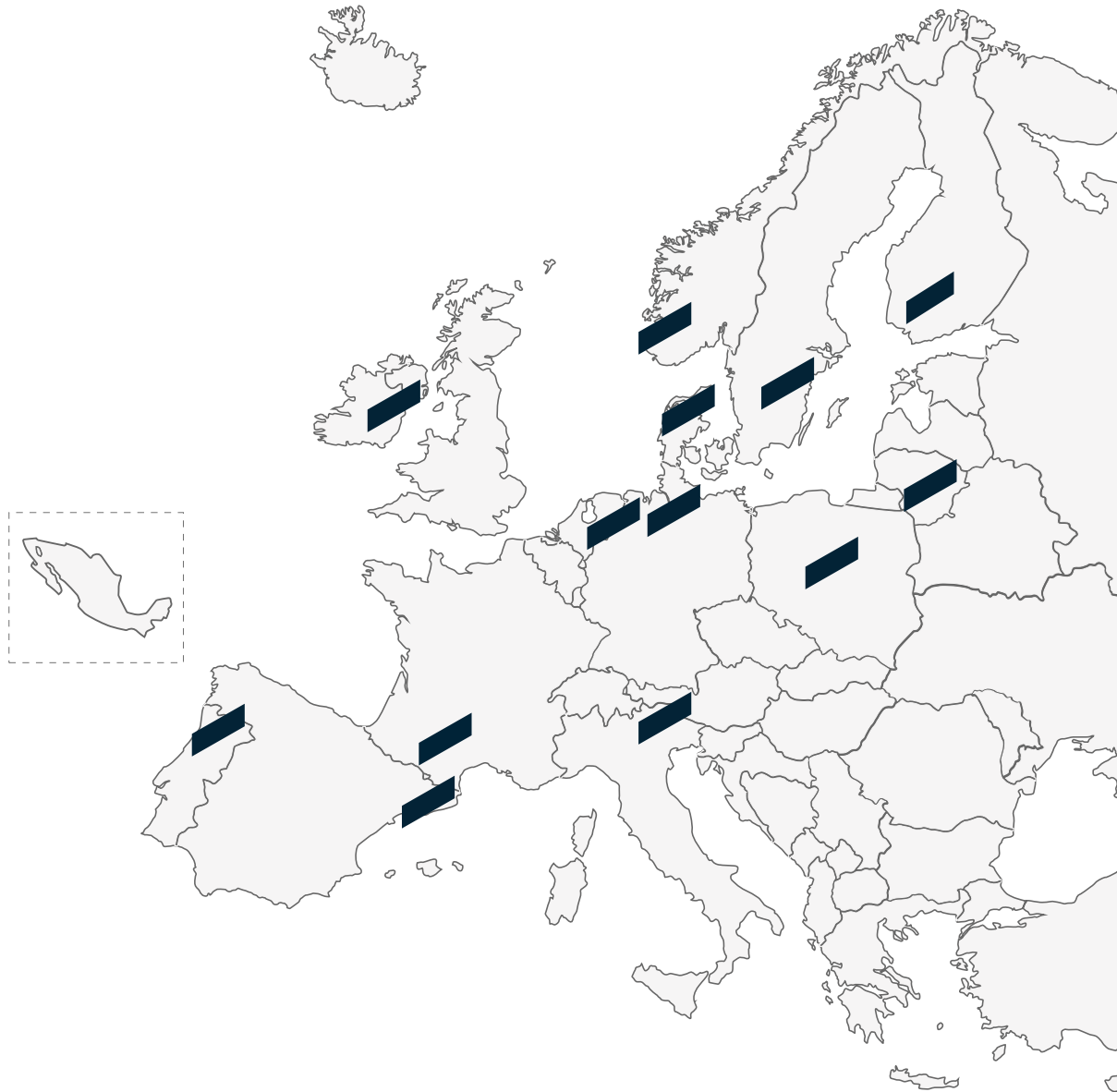
Specifically, the alliances come together to:

- share information;
- benchmark the process of ongoing projects;
- collaborate on project activities and dissemination actions;
- monitor the process of the European Universities Initiative as a whole;
- join advocacy efforts at the European and national level.

## FOREU 1 Subgroups

- Legal Entity and Governance
- Multilingualism
- European Degree
- Research and Innovation
- Project Managers
- Digitalisation and IT





UNIVERSITY  
OF TWENTE.



UNIVERSITY  
OF TRENTO



**UAB**  
Universitat Autònoma  
de Barcelona

GROUPE  
**INSAI**

**UI** University  
of Stavanger

**li.u** LINKÖPING  
UNIVERSITY




**TUHH**  
Hamburg University of Technology

**DCU**  
Ollscoil Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

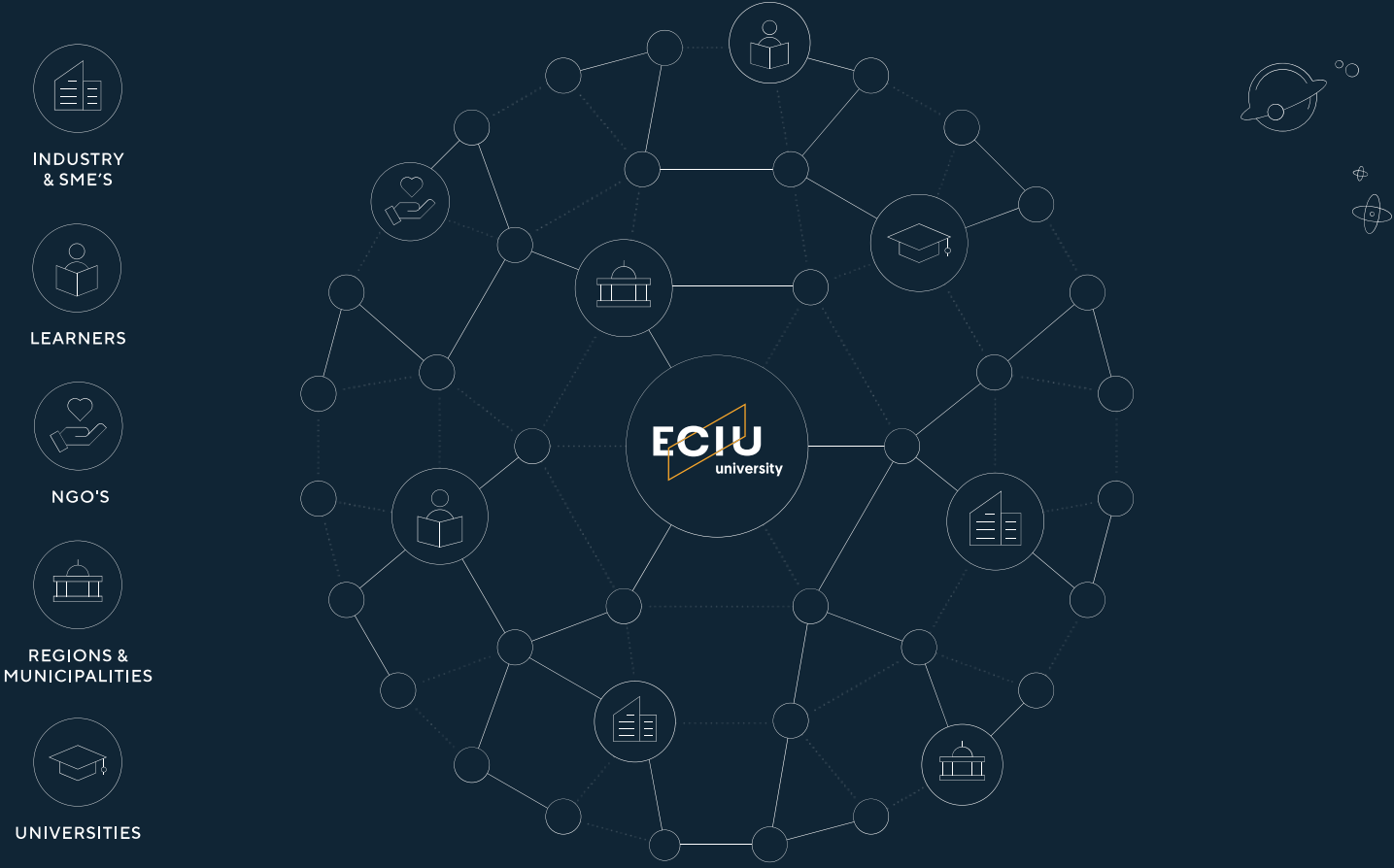
**TJ** Tampere University

**AALBORG UNIVERSITET**

 Lodz University of Technology

 Tecnológico  
de Monterrey

# ECOSYSTEM (AGORA)



“

We are laying the groundwork towards a European degree, more students having seamless and embedded mobility experiences, and more flexible and modular learning.



**MARIYA GABRIEL**  
COMMISSIONER

# European Degree should stand for...



- Embedded mobility
- Multilingualism
- Innovative pedagogies
- Academic rigour
- Student-centred learning
- Challenge-based/experiential learning
- Exposure/ engagement with research
- Interdisciplinarity
- Alignment with future labour market needs
- Modularisation and flexibility
- Self-customisation of study track
- Civic engagement
- More?

# NEED FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE



Climate Change



The Sustainable Development Goals



Societal Impact



Standard Degree is not enough



Skills gap



Learners Demand for truly international and interdisciplinary education

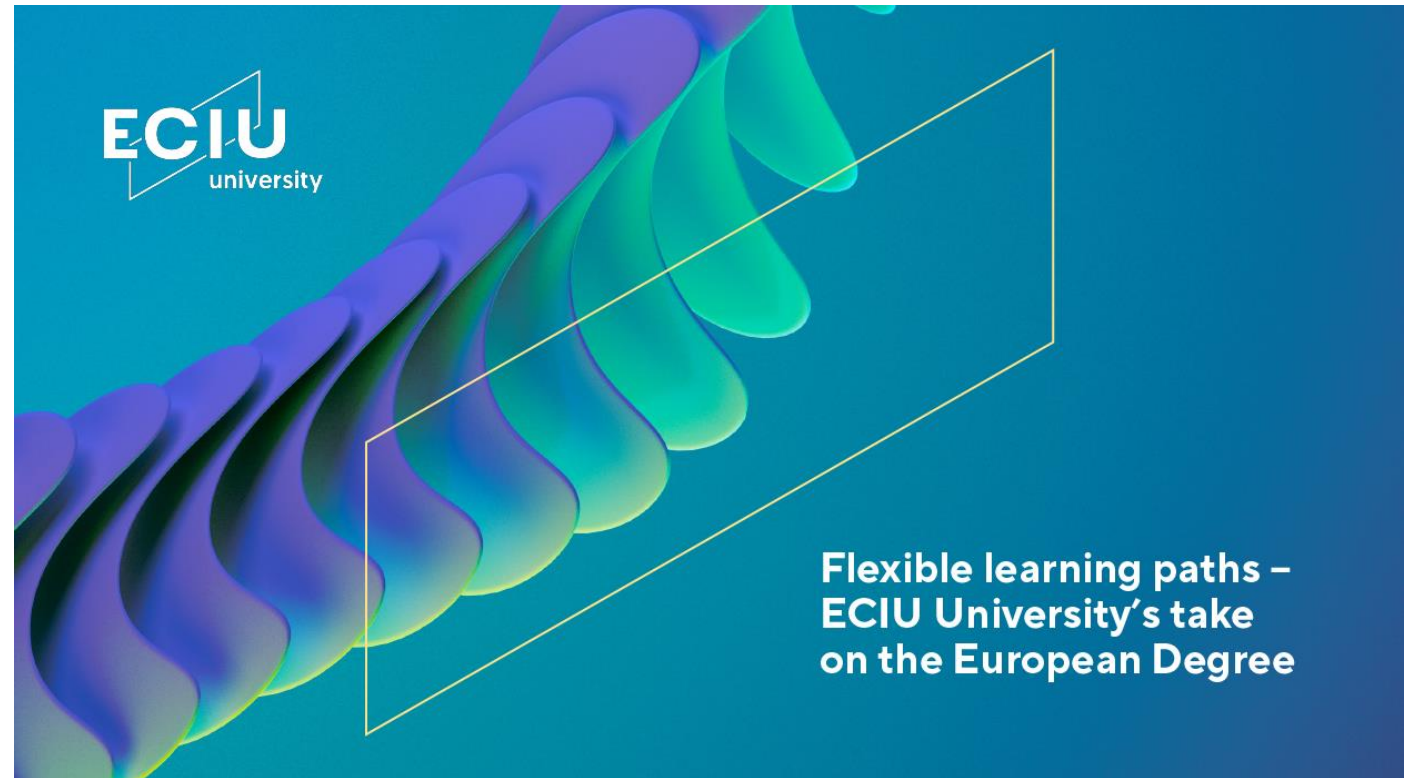


Learners need On-Demand Access to specific/ad-hoc learning

European Degree as a [digital competence passport](#)



- Stackable micro-credentials
- Living document
- Need for quality assurance at the European level



# Individualized Life-Long Learning Pathways with Challenges and Micro-modules

- 1** Real-life challenges come from industry, society and university on SDGs

---

- 2** Teams of diverse learners and researchers are formed

---

- 3** AI assigns micro-modules to the challenges for skills and competence development

---

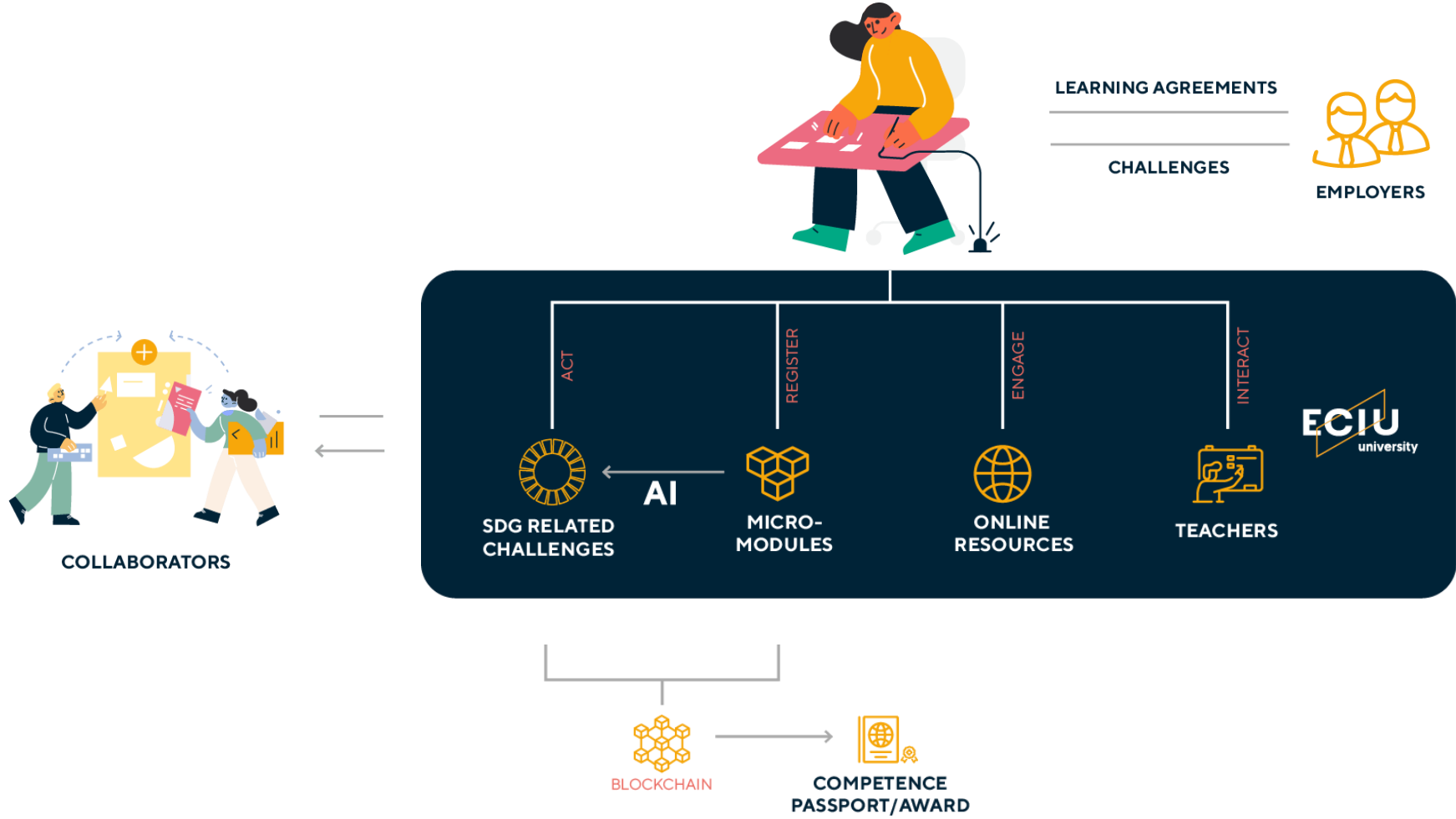
- 4** Gained skills and competences are stored in a digital competence passport

---

- 5** Micro-credentials accumulate into competence passport (or in a degree)

---

# EDUCATIONAL ARCHITECTURE FOR INDIVIDUAL LEARNING



# SUPPORT OF OUR BUSINESS STAKEHOLDERS

## **AIRBUS**

Aerospace Sector, Germany

## **CISCO**

Networking hardware and software, The Netherlands

## **SANDOZ INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS**

S.p.A – Gruppo Novartis, healthcare company, Italy

## **INTEL**

Technology, Ireland

## **ERICSSON AB**

Technology and service provider to telecom operators, Sweden

## **HELLA**

Automotive supplier, Lithuania

## **LYSE GROUP**

Energy and telecommunication, Norway

## **PONSSE**

Production and sales of forest machines, Finland

## **SUEZ ENVIRONMENT**

Water and waste sector, Spain

## **NXP**

Semiconductors, Germany

## **ENGINEERING INGEGNERIA INFORMATICA SpA**

Information, Technology sector, Italy

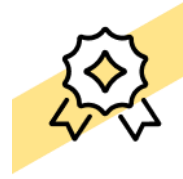
## **IGNITIS GROUP**

Energy Company, Lithuania

## **SICK AG**

Sensor Intelligence, Germany

# KEY ELEMENTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY



Stackable, credit-bearing and quality assured micro-credentials



Platform solutions for the storage, sharing and portability of micro-credentials



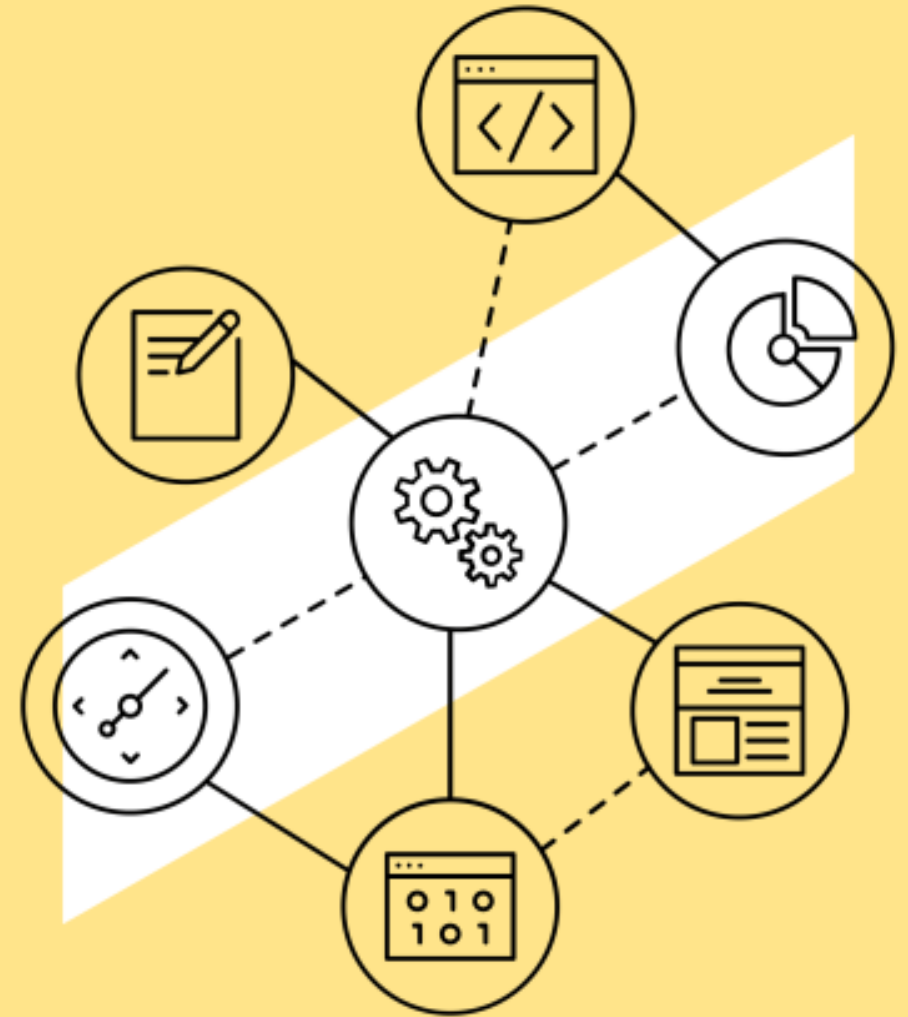
An open co-creation model and challenge-based learning approach

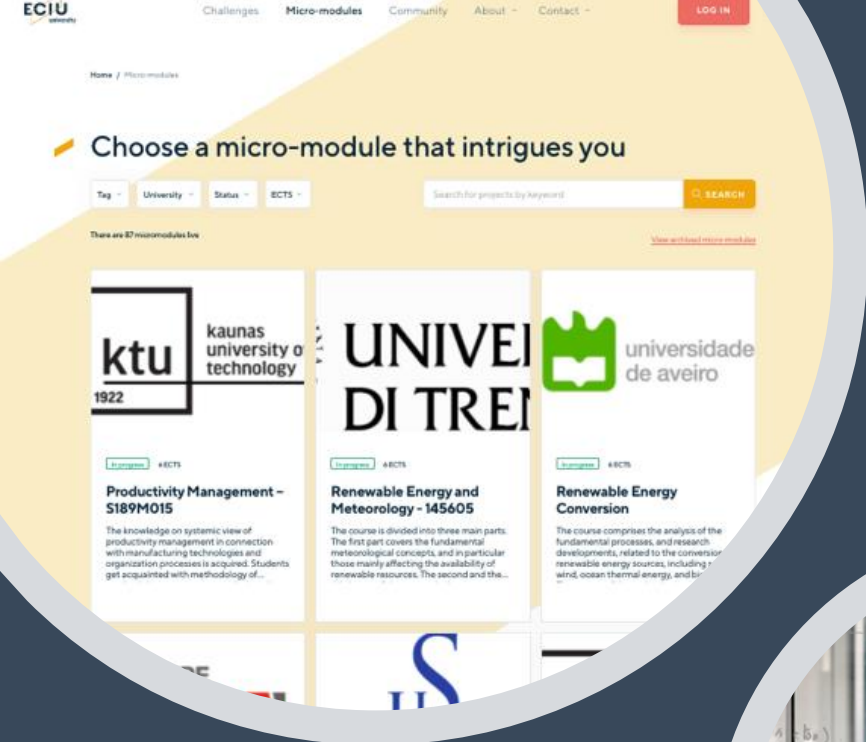


Skills and competence recognition

# MICRO-CREDENTIALS

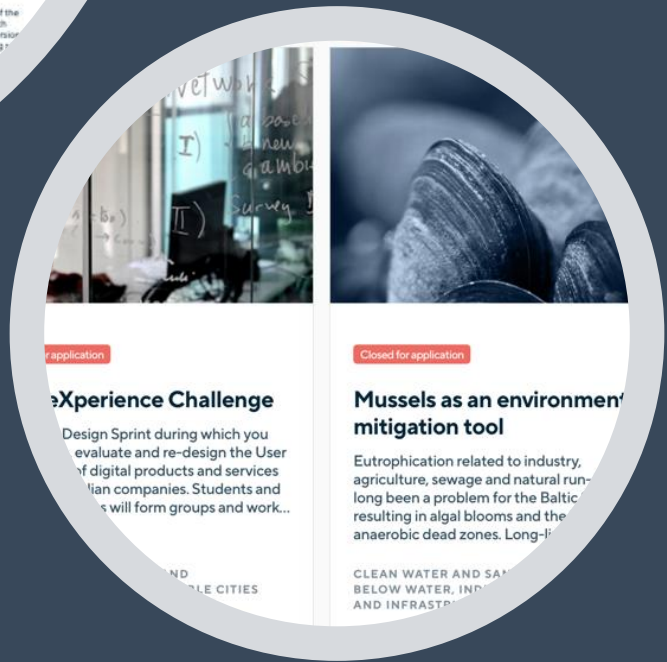
A micro-credential is a proof of the learning outcomes (skills and competence recognition) that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience. These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent standards.





# ECIU University learning opportunities

- **Piloting with Challenge-based learning activities**
  - May or may not attach with existing study programs
  - Often extra curricula activities that do not carry credits
- **Piloting with Micro- and standard modules**
  - Includes learning offerings from ECIU University partner universities
  - SDG11- and language-learning related modules
  - Includes assessment of the learning outcomes
  - Micro 1-3 ECTS, Standard up to 8 ECTS
  - Provided in online or in a hybrid setting

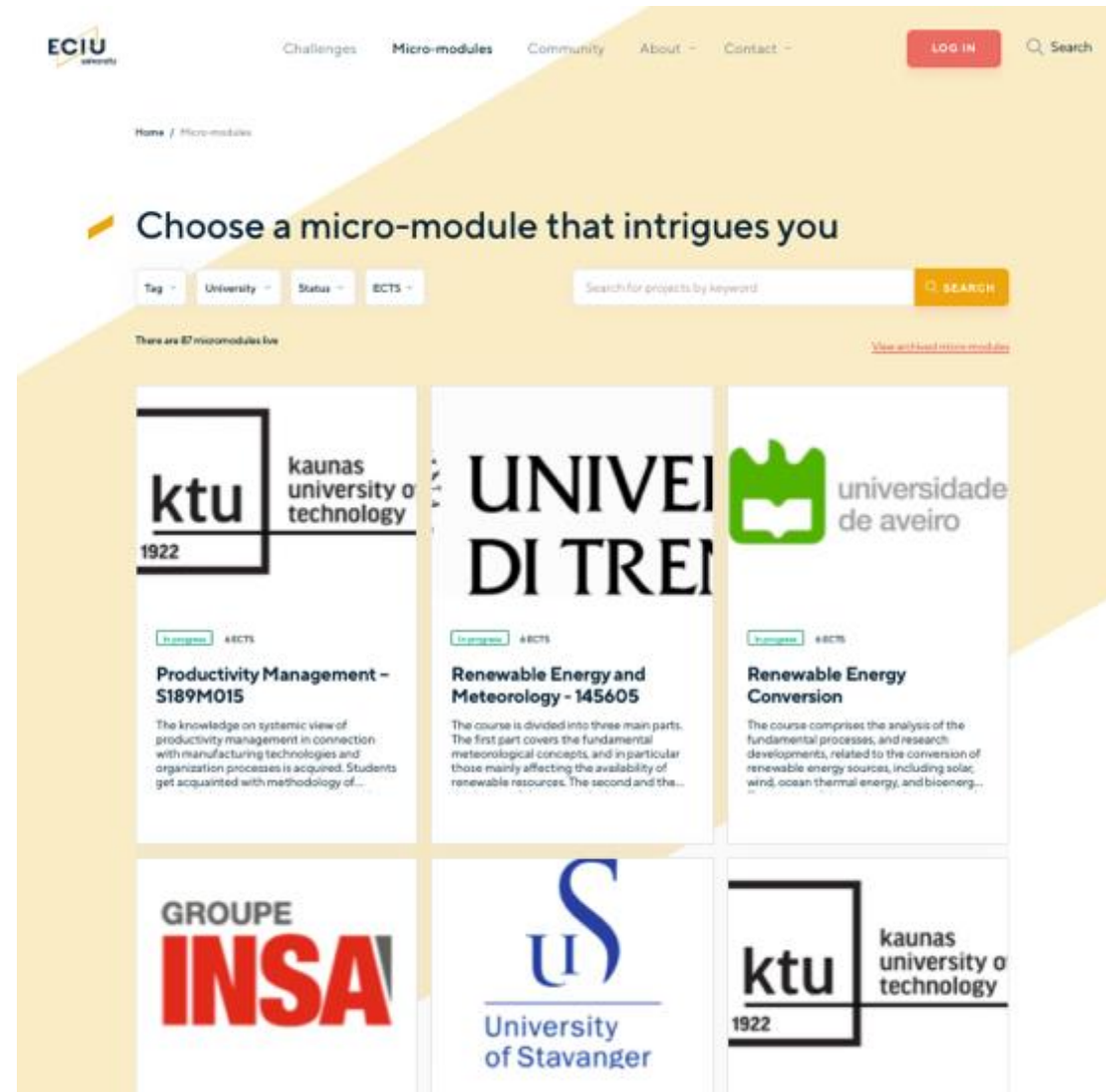


# Micro-modules

- *"A **micro-module** is a short learning experience that is formally assessed and supports learners to fill their knowledge gaps and boost their capabilities in order to successfully engage in ECIU University challenge-based activities."*

## Characteristics (2021-2022):

- Provided by an accredited institution or program (currently via ECIU network)
- Preferably **1-3 ECTS** (or unbundled from a larger module)
- Is preferably master's level, but can be also bachelor's level
- Preferably addresses specific and limited set of learning outcomes
- Is of one of the following types: 1) SDG11, 2) Language learning, 3) supports online learning (e.g., intercultural competence)
- Priority for **online** provision, offline possible
- Provided in **English**



The screenshot displays the ECIU website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ECIU logo and links for Challenges, Micro-modules, Community, About, and Contact. A 'LOG IN' button and a search icon are also present. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'Home / Micro-modules'. A main heading reads 'Choose a micro-module that intrigues you'. Below this, there are filters for 'Tag', 'University', 'Status', and 'ECTS', along with a search bar labeled 'Search for projects by keyword' and a 'SEARCH' button. The page indicates 'There are 17 micro-modules for you' and provides a link to 'View all listed micro-modules'. The main content area shows a grid of six micro-module cards. Each card features the university logo, the course title, and a brief description. The visible cards are: 1) ktu (kaunas university of technology) 1922, Productivity Management - S189M015 (4 ECTS); 2) UNIVERDI TREM, Renewable Energy and Meteorology - 145605 (4 ECTS); 3) universidade de aveiro, Renewable Energy Conversion (4 ECTS); 4) GROUPE INSA; 5) University of Stavanger; 6) ktu (kaunas university of technology) 1922.

# ECIU approach on European Digital Credentials for learning

## European Digital Credentials for Learning

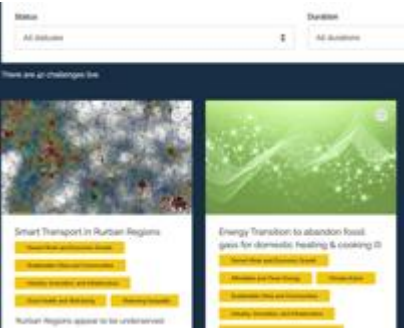
European Digital Credentials for Learning are statements issued by an organisation to a learner, documenting their learning.

### Individuals

- can build an online portfolio to track all of their learning while being in full control of their data
- can easily reuse their credentials to get a job or apply for further training all across Europe
- can present and have their credentials verified at any point in their career, even if the institution who issued them closes, or if the data used to create them is lost



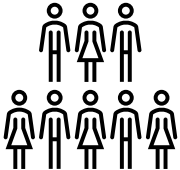
ECIU micro-modules



ECIU challenges



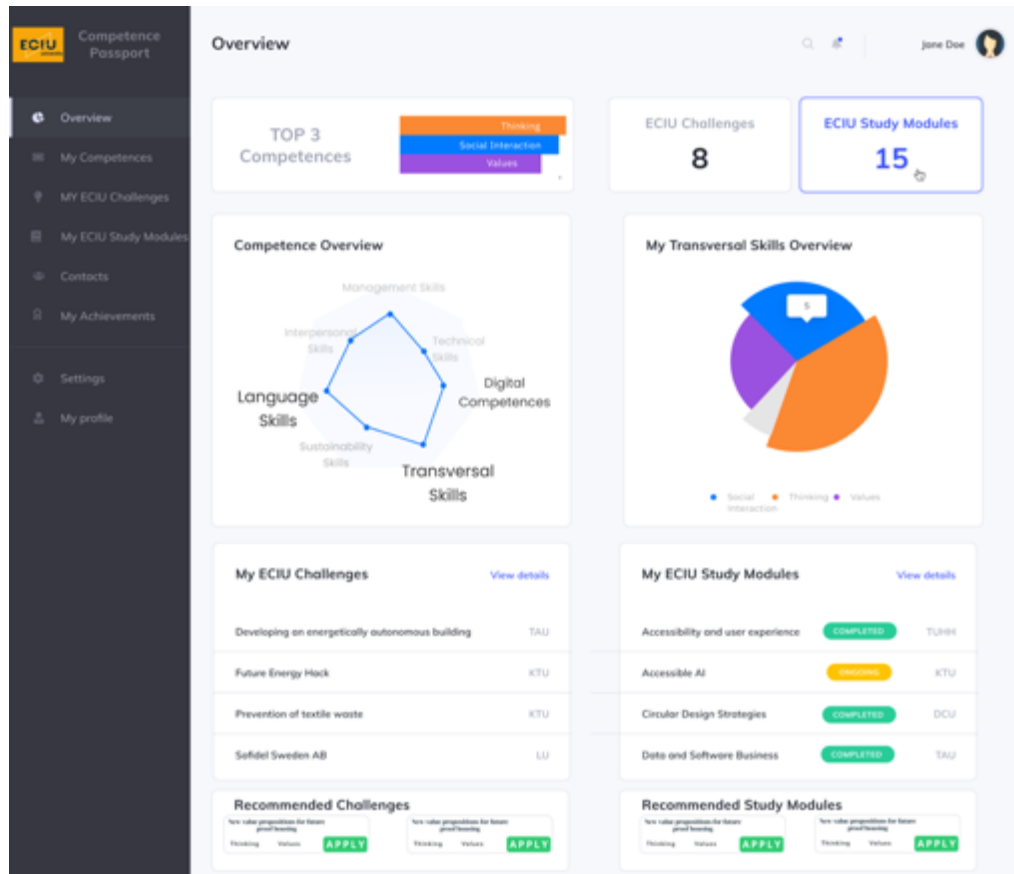
Digital credential as a proof of learning



Learners store digital credentials in their own competence passport

*12 ECIU partners onboard Europass EDCL early adopter programme to develop competence and know-how in digital credentials*

# Digital credentials stored in ECIU competence passport



- Capturing verifiable digital credentials over time?
- Displaying accumulation of competence?
- Allowing learners to decide ways to use the information related to digital credentials?

# INVITATION

2022: The Year of the Micro-Credential

17 June 9:30–11:30

Online Event

Key note by  
Commissioner  
Schmit



Big online event 17 June:  
More information on  
[www.eciu.org!](http://www.eciu.org!)

# MICRO-CREDENTIALS WHITE PAPER

- 01 Definition and standards
- 02 Quality assurance
- 03 Credits and recognition
- 04 Storage and portability
- 05 Successful uptake

More information can be found in the ECIU University micro-credentials Whitepaper  
[Download here](#)

# NINE NEEDS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL UPTAKE OF MICRO-CREDENTIALS

- 01 Living common language
- 02 Commitment to rigorous academic standards
- 03 Stronger focus on demand driven and co-constructed micro-credentials
- 04 Comprehensive programme of professional development
- 05 Targeted funding round to foster innovation
- 06 Significant investment in institutional taught leadership
- 07 Serious commitment to collaboration
- 08 Stronger community of European developers
- 09 Greater investment and commitment to research

“

Setting goals for  
2030 -  
Let's dream big, for our  
students, and for society



Olga Wessels  
Head ECIU Brussels' Office  
Coordinator FOR-EU  
[Olga.wessels@eciu.org](mailto:Olga.wessels@eciu.org)

Olga.wessels@eciu.org



The ECIU University is an EU-funded initiative that creates a ground-breaking and innovative educational model on a European scale.

[www.eciu.org](http://www.eciu.org)



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of the ECIU University content does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.