



UNICA mission and vision 2022

UNICA PRESENTATION

UNICA is an institutional network of universities from the Capital cities of Europe, founded in 1990, and currently made up of 51 universities from 37 European Capitals, combining the strength of over 180,000 University staff and 2,000,000 students. UNICA membership map includes countries in the European Continent, particularly countries in the Council of Europe and countries integrating or seeking to integrate the European Union.

The common feature of UNICA member universities is their strategic location in European Capital cities and regions, a distinctive characteristic which involves specific opportunities and creates certain challenges for these universities.

The proximity to political and administrative structures and the urban location, where governmental power meets youth and innovation, make UNICA Members key actors in the social, cultural, economic life and in the development of the city and of the country as a whole, and represents an opportunity for Universities to support decisions and policies that contribute to the creation of a Europe based on social understanding, global collaboration, and sustainability.

UNICA VISION AND VALUES

Leveraging on UNICA's Members' unique position in the European Capitals and their proximity to political and administrative structures, our mission is to be a driving force in the development of the European Higher Education and Research Areas and empower our Member Universities to unlock their full potential, putting knowledge, research, and innovation at the service of the needs of our societies and of the coming generations.

UNICA is committed to acting as a catalyst in the advancement, integration and cooperation of Member Universities throughout Europe. To achieve these aims, UNICA promotes activities based on the following **core values and principles**:

- a. **Academic values:** we believe that strong and impactful academic communities are grounded in core Higher Education values, namely academic freedom, institutional autonomy, accountability, equitable access and social responsibility;
- b. **European integration:** we believe in the power of democratic values and support the idea of a European mindset based on the respect for human dignity. We work towards further integration of the European Higher Education and Research Areas as a means of advancing European integration;
- c. **Sustainable development:** we consider universities to be privileged pit stops in the route of knowledge and innovation fluxes, with the potential to become facilitators of sustainable development by enabling the scientific, collaborative, and entrepreneurial mindset that leads to solutions for common concerns of societies today, while minding the needs of future generations;



- d. **Collaborative mindset:** based on the rationale that global challenges require global solutions, we believe in a concerted approach that brings together academia, industry, decision-making bodies, and civil society for transformative change. This entails the idea of open science for the benefit of society;
- e. **Sense of community:** we strive to build a community of universities that embraces the concept of ‘advancement by sharing’ and is accomplished in an open environment that voices the needs and ideas of all members in academic communities, from university leaders to students.

UNICA MISSION

The cultural diversity and “living lab” aspects of Capital cities, the proximity to governing bodies, their technological, cultural and innovative capacity, and the opportunities they provide as powerful economic and commercial centers, create a special environment for UNICA Members. As capital-based Universities, UNICA Members face similar issues but have also the opportunity – and responsibility – to maximize their potential and play a crucial role in supporting our societies to address global challenges and shaping a better future.

UNICA aims at building on the specific profile of its Members to widen and strengthen international collaborations, engage academic leadership, and facilitate networking among academic communities through understanding and sharing between its Members throughout the European Higher Education and Research Areas.

In particular, UNICA aims at:

- a. providing a forum in which the Members can reflect on the needs of strategic change in university research, education, administration, innovation, and societal engagement;
- b. carrying out member-driven activities, the content, format, and frequency of which depend substantially on the Members’ engagement and interest. Working Groups on selected topics are one of the main instruments for encouraging the cooperation of Member Universities and play an essential role in the organization of UNICA activities;
- c. addressing the needs and voice the positions of the different actors in the academic communities, including university leaders, administrative and technical staff, and students;
- d. articulating the views of Member Universities to decision-making bodies at the national, regional, and municipal governments, and internationally (including to the European institutions);
- e. at the European level specifically, providing its Members with information on European initiatives and programmes, and supporting them in developing co-operative projects. As an institution itself, UNICA is active in the field of European projects, both as coordinator and partner;
- f. joining efforts with other networks and institutions operating in the area of Higher Education and Research for collaborative ventures or appeal to governing bodies for solutions to common concerns.