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# **E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> European University Alliance enters next ambitious stage**

**Funding for further integration of the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> alliance focused on entrepreneurship, innovative and flexible learning within the regional context over next four years approved by the European Commission**

The European Commission announced the results of the call for further funding of European university initiative. The E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> alliance community welcomes the approval of the alliance next funding with a great excitement, but also commitment to addressing the shared, ambitious objectives of the alliance and shared responsibility of being a part of the key initiative in European higher education.

E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> stands for Engaged and Entrepreneurial European University as Driver for European Smart and Sustainable Regions. The alliance mission is to support development of respective rural, non-urban regions by addressing their needs of skills and talents, by acting actively within regional innovation systems, enhancing entrepreneurial competence and active approach to solving challenges related to digital, ecological, and economic advancement of the regions and their communities. The links of universities, but also their regions across Europe strengthens the potential of addressing global and local challenges, enhances the expert capacity and opportunities for mutual inspiration. The strategic, cross-European character of the alliance will enhance international experience and opportunities for students and life-long learners, enrich the study offer and lead to a stronger European identity.

The alliance brings universities and universities of applied sciences from nine European countries, but also almost 40 regional authorities, entrepreneurs, innovators from respective regions who have over the past year contributed to identification of priorities. The discussions led to four main mission areas of prior attention – “Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion for Regions”, “Digital Solutions & (Applied) Deep Tech for Regions”, “Resilient Economy & Innovation for Regions” and “Creative Industries for Region’s Identity”. The main domain of the alliance lays in further flexibility of learning and skills development within the

“Talent Funnel”, offering to more than 50 thousand students and other learners from the regions an entire system of different interlinked formats of inter-disciplinary, practice-oriented, entrepreneurship-driven learning in the international environment. This ranges from short learning “appetisers” through intensive learning and development events, Hackathons, Bootcamps to various types of Living Labs, micro-credentials and European internships up to several joint degrees within the above-mentioned areas. The user-oriented research and support of innovation capacity, start-ups, links between regional actors at local and European level is another crucial foundation of next activities. Yet, also development of several joint centres of applied research excellence, joint doctoral schools should enhance the research capacity within the alliance.

Feeling the responsibility, but also necessity to support cohesion and cooperation across Europe, the alliance invited also students and staff from three universities from Ukraine and three universities from Albania and Kosovo to join the activities as associated partners to experience and contribute to the alliance activities and learn from each other.

All partner universities see the transformative potential of the initiative, have experience the enhanced potential over the past years. While the first stage allowed to found the joint identity, values, strengthen the partnership, the starting period will allow building key structures and capacities for long-term strategic integration of the E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> alliance, build common foundation for quality, digital transformation, joint strategic development, and investment. The next years will then bring substantial widening of activities, range of those engaged.

We therefore invite all relevant stakeholders from our regions, students, staff, partners at European level to join us in this exciting journey over the next year with the aim to contribute to better life in European regions across the continent, to readiness of European society to address upcoming challenges by relevant future skills, competences, innovation capacity and cohesive networks and partnerships.

The E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> European University Alliance, founded in 2020, connects nine universities across Europe: St. Pölten UAS (Lead; Austria), UC Leuven-Limburg UAS (Belgium), Jamk UAS (Finland), Fulda UAS (Germany), Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (Hungary), Vidzeme UAS (Latvia), Saxion UAS (the Netherlands), Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal (Portugal), Politehnica University Timișoara (Romania).

# E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup>

Engaged and Entrepreneurial European University as Driver for European Smart and Sustainable Regions



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