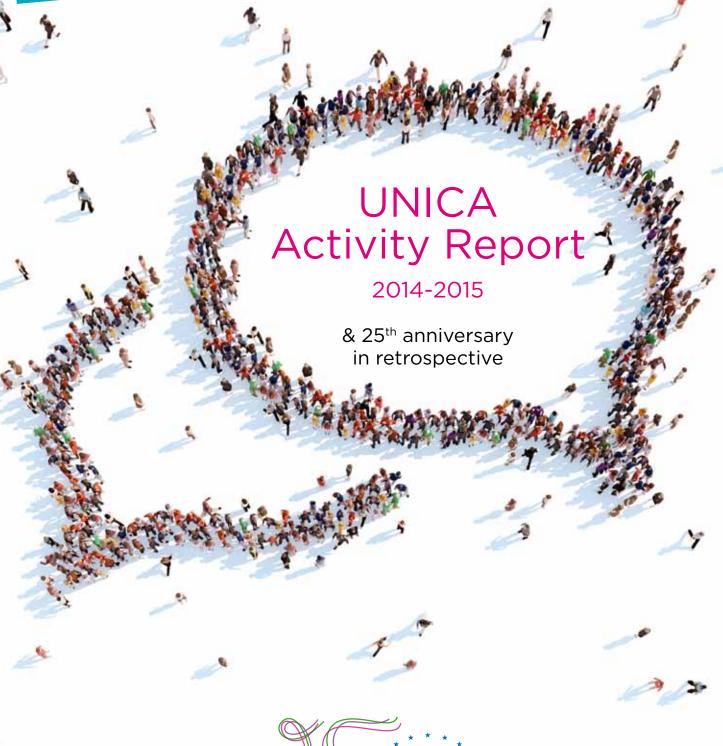
Sharing, learning, adding value



UNICA,

Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe





WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT WHY UNICA?

Anniversaries are a time for reflection. It is time to ask *What* and *How* and *Whv*.

What does UNICA do?

The network has evolved by leaps and bounds over its 25-year history. It started as a small group of 15 Universities at the heart of Europe with a need for networking and cooperating, building on their distinctive features of location and quality. Networking and cooperating is what we do for twenty-five years, but networking extended to Universities from countries that were not yet part of the European Union and today it extends from London to Ankara, from Reykjavik to Nicosia, from Lisbon to Moscow. It embraces 46 Universities from 35 countries. What a network! And as our reach expanded, so did our "What" ambitions. We share knowledge and best practices, we promote internationalisation and mobility, we study our educational processes, share in research and development, collaborate on policy, we reach out to Universities in neighbouring countries. These are the things we do, and in doing them we add value.

How does UNICA do it?

The energy of the network is astonishing. With a lean core staff in Brussels and minimal membership fee, hardly a week goes by without some major UNICA activity organised on one of our campuses. Twenty-five years ago, *How* we did it was with the General Assembly, the International Relations Officers annual gathering and the Steering Committee meetings. As our "What" grew so did the "How". Working groups were formed holding annual meetings and specialised workshops, a Bologna Laboratory was established and evolved into EduLab, we started joint projects with the European

Commission and other international organisations, took active roles in the European University Association, collaborated with likely minded networks from Europe and other continents. We got our own office space, web presence, a newsletter.

But the most important question to ask is "Why". It is the core of who we are, why we do what we do and why we do it our way. The "Why" drives us forward for twenty-five years.

Why UNICA?

Because we *believe* that Universities in the European Capitals are a catalyst for building a Europe of social understanding, global collaboration and sustainable development. Because we *believe* in the power of democratic values manifested at the national capitals, where governments meet the youth and the intellect of society. This is why we do what we do and we will continue doing it with unbounded vigour and unflinching enthusiasm, Rectors and Vice-Rectors, International Relations Officers and administrators, our faculty and students, our Secretariat and the Steering Committee.

This is my last message as UNICA President, and I thank you all for the rare privilege, the great honour and the unique opportunity to serve for eight years this unique network.

Professor Stavros A. Zenios UNICA President

University of Cyprus, Nicosia, 1 October, 2015

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YEARS OF UNICA IN RETROSPECTIVE



RESEAU DES UNIVERSITES ES CAPITALES EUROPEENN

soussignés, réunis à Bruxelles à l'initiative du Recteur de l'Université L. les M. Georges Verhaegen, les 24 et 25 janvier 1990, à l'occasion de la créa a des Universités des Capitales Européennes marquons notre accord de principe ifs de ce réseau tels que présentés en annexe et déclarons notre intention d'ble à l'élaboration et au renforcement des coopérations interuniversitaires en rignement, de recherche, de haute administration et de diffusion de l'informa 2 cette structure.

e souci d'assurer à ce réseau à la fois une certaine cohérence et le maximum de vité et d'efficacité, nous approuvons le principe de l'organisation des activi en groupes opérationnels : un groupe de coordination générale et des groupes coordonnés, chacun, par une Université différente.

Fait à Bruxelles, le 24 janvier















UNICA: AN EXCITING CHALLENGE

By Chantal Zoller, UNICA Secretary General 1990-1998



The Europe of knowledge and higher education comes into being in the late 1980s. It is the period

when Universities realise they need to rethink their position in the context of new societal developments. They feel that a new dynamic has been set in motion and they ought to be a part of it.

At Université libre de Bruxelles, Rector Georges Verhaegen encourages the members of the academic community to reflect on the future of the "Alma Mater" and its role in the city, Europe and the wider world. A **common conclusion** emerges from the discussions: the necessity to cooperate, network and build upon our distinctive features, that is our location in the heart of Europe, our expertise in European studies and the quality of our research and teaching.

The next steps are taken quickly, led by a core group of four people: Rector Verhaegen, his advisor Claude Truffin, Pierre de Maret (future Rector and future Member of the UNICA Steering Committee) and myself. In late October 1989, invitations are sent for a brainstorming meeting on 25 January 1990. The meeting's aim is to discuss the possibility of establishing a **network of universities that share a common denominator**: universities that are comprehensive, located in European capitals, and that combine

education and research following the Humboldtian model. The idea gains momentum and thus the network is created on the basis of these "institutional" and "capital" dimensions that will be from now on the major drivers of the Network's activities and working groups. Georges Verhaegen is elected President of the Network at the first Steering Committee meeting.

This event might seem insignificant nowadays. However, under the circumstances of the time, the founders of UNICA took a step that was innovatory, important and meaningful. Back then, except for offices tasked with organising scientific trips for university professors, International Relations Offices virtually did not exist. Everything still needed to be done in order to tackle programmes like Erasmus, Lingua and Commette launched by the EU, and changing people's mindset was certainly not the easiest challenge to surmount.

The creation of UNICA fitted in with the willingness to face strategic stakes together and to find joint solutions to the problems universities located in the capital cities of Europe were confronted by (related to the size of the institution, student accommodation, multiculturalism, living costs, etc.). Throughout the next years, UNICA became a platform for policy dialogue, bringing together university leaders around institutional questions, an interface for academic experts in urban issues (dealing with concerns such as public health, racism, and xeno-

phobia), and a high-level **discussion forum** on issues of strategic importance to universities. Administrative staff also benefitted from networking opportunities, in particular related to the management of EU programmes.

We should not forget the **pioneer role** UNICA played by opening its membership to universities from EFTA and Central and Eastern Europe as from 1992, long before these countries were eligible to take part in the EU programmes and before they joined the European Union.

The UNICA Network was also the first one to set up an **exchange programme for university administrative staff**, years before the European Commission introduced it in the framework of the Erasmus Programme. The UNICA programme had a clear objective: provide the university administration staff with the opportunity to go abroad and discover how the Rector's Office, Student Welcome Desk, or Research Management Office operate at other European institutions.

Finally, the **development of student mobility** also reflects great credit on UNICA: Within three years, between 1993 and 1996, **600 students** from UNICA Member Universities could benefit from it. An "all-disciplines" Erasmus programme was initiated inside the Network, allowing each participating institution to send and receive students from different faculties and disciplines: It is the close cooperation established between International

Relations Offices of the Network that ensured the qualitative monitoring of the programme. This good practice of **ongoing dialogue between university professionals and institutional leaders** was shaped during several seminars and brought together Rectors/Presidents, Deans, as well as members of UNICA working groups to "decode" the management of European Union programmes. The meetings

played a crucial role in clearing up the way for the SOCRATES programme.

During the maturity phase, the UNICA Network has reached new milestones by **initiating cooperation with peer university networks** such as the Coimbra Group, Compostela Group, and the SGroup Network and by joining the **stakeholders' platform of the European Commission**. Being

now part of the group of important stakeholders, UNICA has been able to exert influence and ensure that the Europe of universities strengthens UNICA Member Universities and does not act against the institutions' real needs and expectations. UNICA has continued to keep its doors open to new members and new ideas, pursuing the values of universality and democracy.

UNICA'S 25 YEARS ON A TIMELINE

The story started with a thought...

The UNICA story starts more than 25 years ago, when four members of academic community of Université libre de Bruxelles imagined something that had not existed yet: They pictured a network of universities from the capitals of Europe, sharing, learning, and adding value...

1989 "The first time the idea of UNICA came to me was in 1989," recalls Pierre de Maret, former Rector of Université libre de Bruxelles and former Member of the UNICA Steering Committee.



"At the time I was the Counselor for Research and International Relations at ULB, and I was on a mission for the European Commission to assess the integration of Portuguese universities in the context of the Erasmus programme. On the flight back, I remember thinking that it would be very useful and beneficial to create a network between the universities of the capital cities of Europe."

January 1990 The first meeting of the Network takes place on 24-25 January 1990. The founding act of UNICA is signed by the Rectors and Presidents of Université libre de Bruxelles, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Universiteit van Amsterdam. Freie Universität Berlin, University College Dublin, Sapienza University of Rome, University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne Paris 1, University of Copenhagen, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid,

Universidad Complutense de

Madrid, and University College London. Georges Verhaegen, then Rector of Université libre de Bruxelles, is elected first President of the Network at the end of the first Steering Committee meeting.



Towards the end of 1989 Towards the end of 1989, Georges Verhaegen, then Rector of ULB, and his team personally contact universities around Europe and invite them for a brainstorming meeting. As Georges Verhaegen explains, "We wanted something more - not

just momentary cooperation between colleagues of two universities in punctual disciplines, but rather university-wide cooperation between a number of institutions benefitting from similar advantages but also facing similar problems".

June 1990

In June 1990, the newly founded Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe gains an acronym "UNICA" and a logo.



UNICA'S 25 YEARS ON A TIMELINE

1991 The UNICA General Assembly decides to open the UNICA membership to universities from EFTA and Central Eastern Europe countries as from 1992. Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (Hungary) and the University of Warsaw (Poland) are the first institutions from Central and Eastern Europe to join the Network in 1993.

1998 The General Assembly in Vienna approves new Statutes of the organisation, a fact that allows UNICA to submit a request for the legal status of an international non-profit association based on Belgian law.

1999 UNICA launches its first initiative aimed at competence development of university administrative staff: The "Administrators Mobility Programme" offers grants for study visits and job shadowing activities. The first staff exchange within the programme is organised between the University of Bucharest and the University of Amsterdam.

November 1999 Gunnel Engwall, then Vice-Rector of Stockholm University, becomes the first female President of UNICA.

1995 UNICA International Relations Officers meet for the first time on 7-9 September at the University of Lausanne. In the same year, first Assistant is recruited to work in the UNICA Secretariat.

February 1999 The first
UNICA newsletter
is sent to Member
Universities

"At my first encounter with the group of International Relations Managers in Lausanne (think capital of canton) back in 1995, it struck me that we were entering a lively and well-integrated family with no division between north, south, east and west, and sharing a long list of common concerns: the strategic importance of the location of the office of international relations on campus, how to get - and keep - academics involved in such a decentralised environment, how to manage student mobility with limited resources (...). For each university, UNICA is a laboratory for benchmarking and exploring solutions on a larger scale than at our own institutions. Individually, we have all benefited and become better managers of higher education."

Hélène ULLERØ, former Head of the International Office Department of Education and Research Administration at the University of Oslo, for the Spring 2000 issue of the EAIE FORUM 2000 On the initiative of Freie Universität Berlin, the first UNICA Student Conference takes place on the main campus of FU Berlin, 21-25 November. 230 student delegates from 24 Member Universities develop a memorandum "The Making of Europe - Guidelines for European Policy in the 21st Century" which summarises their visions about Europe's

future and policy recom-

mendations in various fields of European policy.

2002 Jolanta Urbanikowa (University of Warsaw) assumes the role of the first UNICA IRO Observer to the Steering Committee.

November

2002 The General Assembly at the University of Cyprus decides that the focus of UNICA's policy should be placed on the development and implementation of the Bologna Process and thus **lays** the foundation of the UNICA Bologna Lab. The first UNICA Bologna Laboratory Coordinators meeting is held in July 2004.

"The medium-term goal (of the UNICA Bologna Lab) is to safeguard mobility in newly emerging educational structures, to arrive at good criteria for the mutual recognition of qualifications within the network, and to develop a sizable number of joint UNICA degree programmes in different academic fields and on different levels as well as to establish comparable measures of quality assurance. The ultimate aim, however, must be to establish UNICA as the most competitive Higher Education network in Europe and as a competent global player."

Arthur METTINGER, former UNICA President & Chair of UNICA Bologna Lab in the May 2003 edition of the UNICA Newsletter



2007 Two projects coordinated by UNICA: PRIUM - Promoting a model of Integrated University in the fYR of Macedonia and Information Project on Higher Education Reform II are approved for funding by the European Commission. This allows UNICA to increase the number of activities for the Members, give more visibility to the expertise of Member Universities, and strengthen the capacity of the UNICA Secretariat.

Within the same year UNICA moves its office from the ULB and VUB campuses to the building of the University Foundation in the Brussels city centre. It is now closer to European institutions and organisations active in the HE area.

2009 The 1st UNICA Entrepreneurship Competition for Students and Young Researchers is organised with the financial support of the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation. The competition awards three teams from Member Universities: University College Dublin (HeyStaks Technologies, 1st price), University of Ljubljana (Uniki, 2nd price), and Freie Universität Berlin (Parelectrics, 3rd price). The competition was repeated in 2011 and awarded first place to Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (Upcload, later Germany's Start-up of the Year 2011). Freie Universität Berlin (Laubwerk) and the University of Cyprus (VI Scientific) took second and third place respectively. The ideas of the Competitions' finalists proved to be both innovative and sustainable: They were all turned into successful businesses that go from strength to strength!



2006 Developed since 2004, the 4Cities initiative – Joint **Euromaster in Urban Studies** receives funding in the framework of Erasmus Curriculum Development Grant. The programme is set up by 6 Member Universities: Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Université libre de Bruxelles, University of Copenhagen, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, and University of Vienna. First students enrol in the 4Cities Master in the academic year 2008/2009 and graduate in September 2010. 2008/2009 and graduate in September 2010. In 2012, the 4 Cities is among 30 applications selected as Erasmus Mundus programmes out of a total of 177 applications submitted. By September 2015, six cohorts of students will have graduated from the programme.



2008 UNICA becomes collective associate member of the European University Association. The Network is granted collective associate membership in the EUA's Council of Doctoral Education only the year after and in September 2009, the first UNICA PhD MASTER CLASS on doctoral supervision is held at the Centre for Advanced Academic Studies of the University of Zagreb in Dubrovnik.



2010 UNICA wins the call for tender for the "Information Project on Higher Education Reform III". The coordination of this EC Service Contract, along with the coordination of two LLP projects: ExchangeAbility and European Campus, considerably raises the visibility of the Network and allows the UNICA Secretariat to expand. Within the entire duration of the Contract (2010-2013), UNICA organised 4 TEMPUS Thematic Seminars, as well as 3 Higher **Education Reform Conferences** (180 participants each) and 4 University Study Visits for HER experts from TEMPUS countries at UNICA Member Universities. The activities involved nearly 70 experts from **UNICA** Member Universities and the HER Virtual Community for Bologna and HER Experts brought together more than 1,000 users.



2012 Inspired by the development of the UNICA Green Academic Footprint initiative, University of Oslo organises the first eco-certified Student Conference. In the same year, the first "transcontinental" Seminar of UNICA: The Rectors Seminar "Europe-Canada: The future of academic cooperation" is hosted by Université libre de Bruxelles and Vrije Universiteit Brussel in cooperation with the European Network of Canadian Studies (ENCS). The Seminar prompts the discussion on the UNICA policy for cooperation with partners outside Europe. The "Criteria for engagements outside the European area" are adopted by the General Assembly in Rome in 2013.

October 2013 In the framework of the IMOTION LLP project, UNICA launches the Staffmobility.eu platform that centralises information about training activities for university administrative and technical staff. As of September 2015, over 180 staff training schemes have been announced on the platform.

February

2013 Launched on the initiative of summer & winter schools' organisers from Member Universities, the Summer & Winter School Portal (www.unicasummerschools.eu, www.unicawinterschools.eu) attracts more than 2,500 individual users within the first 3 weeks. It now lists more than 200 programmes from 25 UNICA Member Universities and continues to attract about 5,000 individual users per month, most of them from Germany, Italy, Belgium, Czech Republic, India, Brazil and the United States.



2014 To take stock of the dynamic development of the EHEA, UNICA Steering Committee engages in works and consultations on the revision of the UNICA Mission Statement, with the final aim of presenting the new UNICA Mission & Vision at the 25th anniversary General Assembly 2015.

ESTAB-LISHMENT OF UNICA WORKING GROUPS

1995

International Relations Officers

2001

Scholarly Communication (Librarians)

2003

UNICA Bologna Lab (now EduLab)

2006

EU Research Liaison Officers

2008

PhD Officers

2011

UNICA Green Academic Footprint (now UNICA Green)

PR & Communication

2012

UNICA-MED

"The very weak baby born 25 years ago (was it premature?) turns out to have become a very fit and active young adult. When I left UNICA years ago, I thought the child was still somewhat anaemic, but when I read the UNICA bulletin now, describing all the joint activities, I feel comforted, and I think that due credit should be given to all those who nurtured, fed our Network and made it grow!"

Georges VERHAEGEN, former Rector of ULB and UNICA President (1990-1996)

WHAT'S BENEATH UNICA?



"UNICA is **Working together.**Working together brings learning, changing yourself, academia.
Working together brings new ideas, joy and friendship.
Working together brings UNICA."

Melita KOVAČEVIĆ, former Vice-Rector for Research and Technology, University of Zagreb, Member of UNICA Steering Committee



"UNICA is my first network of universities in Europe. My university, NOVA from Lisbon, was a founding member and in the last years, as Rector and Member of the Steering Committee, I have had the privilege of working and contributing to an increasing number of diversified activities involving friendly and competent people. My vision of UNICA is of a rainbow with many colours leading not to a pot of gold but to priceless partnerships between members of a very special network of European universities."

Antonio RENDAS, Rector, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Member of UNICA Steering Committee



"My first UNICA meeting was the General Assembly in Rome in 2005. I remember some very kind and welcoming colleagues, and the frustration over the amount of paper we had to deal with. Actually it took a while before I learned to appreciate UNICA's genuine value... I have become more and more involved seeing that UNICA is a very good platform for developing ideas, and that the best of them convert into working groups. The most rewarding part of being a UNICA contact person and IRO is to have a group of very competent *colleagues* to discuss work issues with. The funniest event was when we arranged the Student Conference in Oslo in 2012. And the fantastic bonus is the opportunity to visit so many European Capitals;)"

Guri VESTAD, Special Adviser Internationalisation, University of Oslo, UNICA IRO Observer



"I was representing the Rector of the VUB at the founding conference of UNICA, 25 years ago, and was immediately taken by the enthusiasm of the then-leaders of the other founding universities. I lost it out of sight for several years, finding it back, in much greater shape I must say, when I became Vice-Rector for International Relations of the VUB.

In both periods, I experienced UNICA as a dynamic family of academic institutions seeking (and finding!) common grounds for helping each other to improve, through international exchange of experience, and through many joint ventures in research, education and university leadership.

Two aspects make UNICA special for me:

- Its scale which, though not so small, enables contacts that are easy and personal, leading rapidly to concrete actions and results. All the meetings are characterized by a warm and family-type atmosphere, enhancing the open exchange of ideas;
- Its rich programme EduLab, PhD
 MASTER CLASS, PR and Communication,
 just to name a few give every member
 institution the possibility to get more than
 enough added value from the Network."

Jean-Pierre DE GREVE, former Vice-Rector for International Relations (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), former Member of the UNICA Steering Committee

MEMBERS OF THE UNICA STEERING COMMITTEE

* due to the lack of complete data for the years 1990-2000, we list SC members 2000-2015

2000-2001

- Marie-Christine Adam Université libre de Bruxelles
- Hugh Gough University College Dublin
- Arthur Mettinger University of Vienna
- Peter Mraz Comenius University in Bratislava
- Carlos Seoane Complutense de Madrid

2002-2003

- Pierre de Maret Université libre de Bruxelles
- Constantine Evangelides Nathional and Kapodistrian University of Athens
- Hugh Gough University College Dublin
- Arthur Mettinger University of Vienna
- Peter Mraz Comenius University in Bratislava

<u>IRO Observer</u>: **Jolanta Urbanikova** <u>University of Warsaw</u>

2004-2005

- Gilbert Béréziat Université Pierre et Marie Curie
- Pierre de Maret Université libre de Bruxelles
- Constantine Evangelides Nathional and Kapodistrian University of Athens
- Ivars Lacis University of Latvia
- Rodney Thom University College Dublin
- Arild Underdal University of Oslo

IRO Observer: Jolanta Urbanikova University of Warsaw / Eva Lack Freie Universität Berlin

2006-2007

- Gilbert Béréziat Université Pierre et Marie Curie
- Pierre de Maret Université libre de Bruxelles
- Ivars Lacis University of Latvia
- Helena Jasna Mencer University of Zagreb
- Vittoria Tessitore Roma Tre University

<u>IRO Observer</u>: **Markus Laitinen** *University of Helsinki*

2008-2009

- Gilbert Béréziat Université Pierre et Marie Curie
- Helena Jasna Mencer University of Zagreb
- Arthur Mettinger University of Vienna
- Rein Raud Tallinn University
- Ben Van Camp Vrije Universiteit Brussel

<u>IRO Observer</u>: Catherine Convery <u>University College Dublin</u>

2010-2011

- Ben Van Camp Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Inga Bostad University of Oslo
- Maria Amélia Martins-Loução Universidade de Lisboa
- Rein Raud Tallinn University
- Uwe Nagel Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

IRO Observer: Ursula Hans Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

2012-2013

- Jean-Pierre De Greve Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Inga Bostad University of Oslo
- Luciano Saso Sapienza University of Rome
- Rein Raud Tallinn University
- **Uwe Nagel** Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

IRO Observer: Trine Sand University of Copenhagen / Tiina Mäe Tallinn University

2014-2015

- Emmanuel Fraisse Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3
- Serge Jaumain Université libre de Bruxelles
- Melita Kovačević University of Zagreb
- Luciano Saso Sapienza University of Rome
- António Rendas Universidade NOVA de Lisboa

IRO Observer: Tiina Mäe Tallinn University / Guri Vestad University of Oslo

UNICA PRESIDENTS 1990-2015



1990-1996
Georges Verhaegen
former Rector,
Université libre
de Bruxelles



1997-2000
Pierre Ducrey
former Rector,
Université de Lausanne



2000-2003 Gunnel Engwall former Vice-Rector, Stockholm University



2004-2007 Arthur Mettinger former Vice-Rector, University of Vienna



2008-2015 Stavros A. Zenios former Rector, University of Cyprus

UNICA SECRETARIES GENERAL 1990-2015

1990-1998

- Chantal Zoller

1998-1999

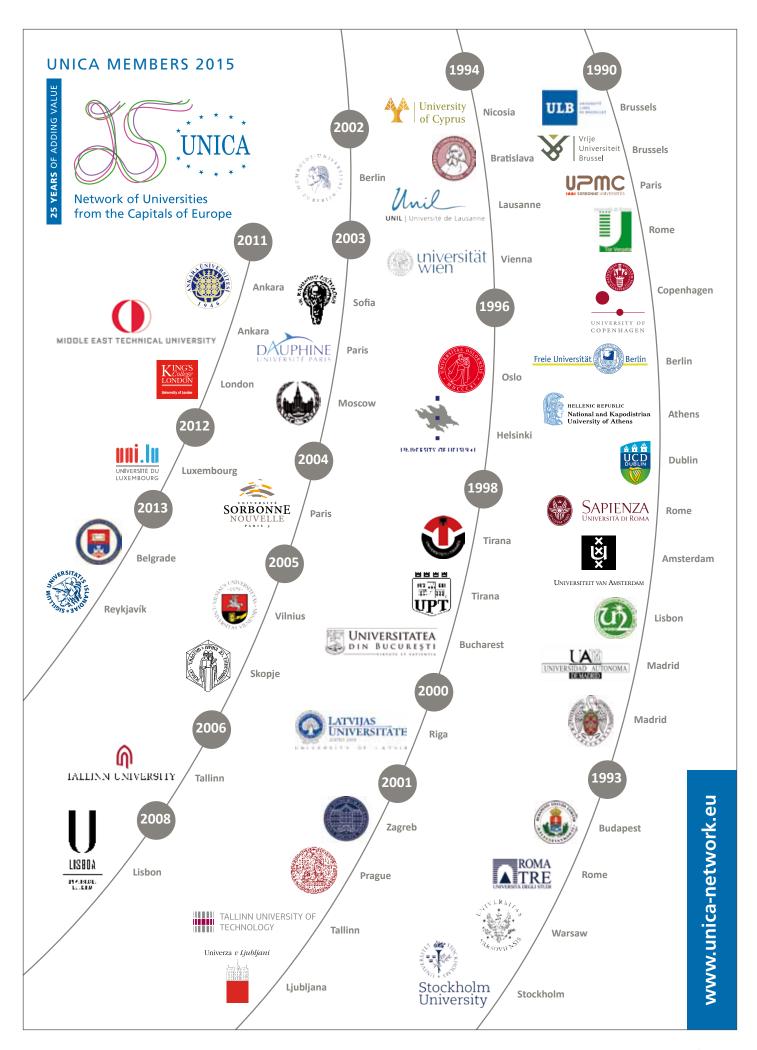
- Jeanine Hermans formerly Wageningen University

1999-2001

- Sonia Noronha Mykletun formerly University of Oslo

Since 2001

- Kris Dejonckheere Vrije Universiteit Brusse



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

UNICA Activity Report 2014-2015











ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-2015 IN NUMBERS

12 UNICA meetings and workshops

brought together more than

370 participants



The average evaluation

of UNICA workshops and seminars was **4.38** on a **scale from 1 to 5**, with the UNICA International Relations Officers meeting 2015 at Vilnius University **being rated highest (4,63)**





UNICA website has on average attracted **16,300 different**visitors per month

(an increase by 800 from the previous year)



Launched in February 2014, the UNICA Summer & Winter Schools Portal lists more than 200 programmes from 25 UNICA Member Universities and their partners.

The www.staffmobility.eu platform now lists more than 180 training schemes for university administrative and technical staff. The platform

is linked to the official website of the European Commission.



UNICA ON THE EUROPEAN & INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Our core task as a Network is to make sure that the views and recommendations voiced by our Member Universities ing control and programmes for European higher education and intermore stakeholders' forum of the European Commission and maintains regular dialogue with the European Commissioner for Education and Culture as well as with the Directorates

General for Education and Culture and for Research and

"UNICA places great importance in the cooperation with other networks and HE organisations".

UNICA seeks to support its member institutions in developing comprehensive international strategies and strategic partnerships and provides a forum for discussion on the internationalisation process of Higher Education. At the same time, we commit to adequately respond to the needs of UNICA Members related to the challenges of internationalisation through the organisation of dedicated thematic sessions.

Acknowledging the importance of communication and the mutual exchange of knowledge and experience with other key higher education stakeholders at the European and international level, UNICA places great importance in the cooperation with other networks and HE organisations such as European University Association (EUA), EUA Council for Doctoral Education, SGroup Network of European Universities, Coimbra Group and Compostela Group of Universities.

Innovation.

MEETING WITH EU COMMISSIONER TIBOR NAVRACSICS

• On 23 April 2015, Member of the UNICA Steering Committee Prof. Melita Kovačević (University of Zagreb) and Rector of ELTE Budapest Prof. Barna Mezey met European Commissioner for Education and Culture Mr Tibor Navracsics in his office in Brussels. The meeting focused on current priorities in European higher education policy discussions and the regional engagement of universities from the capital cities.

UNICA extends its special thanks to Rector Prof. Barna Mezey for his role in facilitating the meeting.



PARTICIPATION IN OTHER ORGANISATIONS' ACTIVITIES

- On invitation from the Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities, Prof. Melita Kovačević and UNICA Secretary General Mrs. Kris Dejonckheere participated in the **CGBU 7**th **General Assembly and the 6**th **International Seminar**, Recife (Brazil), 15-17 October 2014. Prof. Melita Kovačević contributed to the Seminar's session "International University: Models and strategies at five continents".
- UNICA President Prof. Stavros A. Zenios and Secretary General Mrs. Kris Dejonckheere took part in a round-table discussion on economic diplomacy organised by the International Diplomatic and Consular Circle (CIDIC) in Brussels on 27 May 2015. The meeting involved the participation of Mr. Didier Reynders, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Belgian Foreign Affairs and Mr. Daniel Calleja, Director-General DG Growth of the European Commission.

UNICA AND EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION



 UNICA, collective associate member of the EUA's Council for Doctoral

Education, organises **UNICA PhD MASTER CLASSES:** Prof. Kovačević (University of Zagreb), Member of the UNICA Steering Committee and Chair of the EUA-CDE, is involved in the Organising Committee of the UNICA PhD MASTER CLASS.

- An **informal UNICA Rectors meeting & dinner** was held in Antwerp on 15 April 2015 in the framework of the EUA Annual Conference, University of Antwerp, 15-17 April 2015.
- UNICA took part in the Round Table: Higher Education in the framework of the European Neighbourhood policy, a discussion event on the EU consultation for a new Neighbourhood Policy organised by the EUA together with the University of Barcelona, Association of Arab Universities (AARU), UNICA, and UNIMED in Brussels on 17 June 2015. Prof. Luciano Saso (Vice-Rector for European University Networks, Sapienza University of Rome & Member of UNICA Steering Committee) contributed to the session "University networks and initiatives in bi-regional cooperation".
- Prof. Luciano Saso and UNICA Secretary General Mrs. Kris Dejonckheere are Members of the Steering Committee of the 3rd Arab-Euro Thematic Conference on Higher Education (AECHE): The networked university: opportunities and challenges for Higher Education between the Arab World and Europe, Technical University Berlin Campus El Gouna (Egypt), 9-11 October 2015.



PARTICIPATION IN EUROPEAN PROJECTS



UNICA AS
COORDINATOR

RUMI: Réseau des Universités Marocaines pour l'Enseignement Inclusif (Network of Moroccan Universities for Inclusive Education)

under TEMPUS IV – Structural Measures; project period: 01/12/2013 – 30/11/2016

Relevant Working Group:

UNICA-MED & Equal Opportunities

Aim: Establishing a network of Moroccan universities to promote procedures and good practices in the field of inclusive education and equal opportunities in Morocco.

Partners: UNICA (Coordinator), 9 Moroccan universities, U. Roma Tre, Vrije U. Brussel (both UNICA members), Erasmus Access Network, Compostela Group, Fontys, U. Montpellier 3, Ministry of HE (Morocco), Ministry of Solidarity, Woman, Family and Social Development (Morocco), Observatoire National du Developpement Humain – ONDH, Moroccan Association of Law Students

Project website: www.rumi-project.org





UNICA AS COORDINATOR

UZDOC: Enhancing quality of doctoral education at Higher Education Institutions in Uzbekistan

under TEMPUS IV – Structural Measures; project period: 01/12/2013 – 30/11/2016

Relevant Working Group: PhD Officers Group

Aim: Enhancing the quality of doctoral education in Higher Education Institutions in Uzbekistan, in line with the principles of the European Higher Education Area.

Partners: U. of Zagreb, Sapienza U. of Rome, Comenius U. in Bratislava (all three UNICA members), U. of Granada, Athens U. of Economics and Business (Greece), Tashkent Financial Institute, State Institute of Culture and Arts of Uzbekistan, Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service, Berdakh Qaraqalpaq State U., Karshi State University, Ministry of HE of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan)

Project website: www.uzdoc.eu





PRIDE: Professionals in Doctoral Education: Supporting skills development to better contribute to an European knowledge society

under Lifelong Learning: Erasmus Multilateral Projects; project period: 1/10/2013 – 30/9/2016

Relevant Working Group: PhD Officers Group

Coordinator: University of Vienna (UNICA member)

UNICA's role: Coordinator of Dissemination and responsible for the organisation of the training course

Aim: Supporting skills development of administrative staff in doctoral education in order to provide better support to PhD supervisors, PhD candidates and external stakeholders.

Partners: UNICA, U. of Zagreb, Humboldt U. zu Berlin, Vrije U. Brussel (VUB), Comenius U. In Bratislava, U. NOVA de Lisboa, Tallinn U. (all 6 UNICA members), Mediterranean Universities Union (UNIMED), Fundación Universidad E mpresa of the Region of Murcia

Website: www.pride-project.eu



In order to better understand the specific skills required and training needs of non-academics working in doctoral education, the PRIDE project conducted a survey among universities which received 222 responses from HEIs in Europe, Australia, and New Zeeland. We thank all UNICA Member Universities who took part in the Survey for their important input to the project! Based on the study's findings, several focus group meetings were held in 2015 to discuss in depth the roles and responsibilities of professionals in doctoral education. The project is now taking the final stretch with the development of a handbook with best practices and a training course for the administrative staff in doctoral education.



UNICA AS PARTNER

EU-CHINA DOC: Enhancing the Visibility of European Higher Education and **Strengthening the Dialogue and Cooperation with Chinese Stakeholders** in the Field of Doctoral Education

under Erasmus Mundus Action 3; project period: 1/10/2013 - 30/9/2016

Relevant Working Group: PhD Officers Group

Coordinator: Vrije Universiteit Brussel (UNICA member)

UNICA's role: Dissemination and Exploitation

Aim: Increasing awareness and knowledge about European Higher Education among Chinese HE actors and strengthening dialogue and cooperation between European and Chinese stakeholders in the field of doctoral education, training and research.

Partners: UNICA, U. Of Vienna, Stockholm U. (both UNICA members), U. of Tampere, Belgian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce (BCECC), China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE), Beijing Normal University (BNU), Peking University (PKU), Shanghai Jiao Tong University, (SJTU), Southwest University China (SWU)

Website: www.euchinadoc.com





GENOVATE

UNICA AS PARTNER

PASCL: Peer Assessment of Student Centred Learning

under Lifelong Learning: Erasmus Multilateral Projects, project period: 01/10/2013 – 01/07/2016

Relevant Working Group: EduLab

Coordinator: European Students' Union (ESU)

UNICA's role: Coordinator of WP4: Piloting the Peer Assessment and WP7: Exploitation

Aim: Developing a peer assessment framework (PASCL guidelines) for "student-centeredness" of HE institutions and establishing a European recognition award for student-centred institutions that have successfully incorporated the elements of student-centred learning in their teaching & learning strategy.

Partners: UNICA, National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB), Finnish Institute for Educational Research - U. of Jyväskylä (JYU), Central European U. (CEU), Melius s.r.l., Knowledge Innovation Centre (KIC)

Website: www.pascl.eu



GENOVATE: Transforming Organisational Culture for Gender Equality in Research and Innovation

under FP7 - Science in Society

Relevant Working Group: EU Research Liaison Officers & Equal Opportunities

Coordinator: U. of Bradford

UNICA's role: Dissemination; Member of International Advisory Board

Aim: Ensuring equal opportunities for women and men at universities by encouraging a more gender-aware management in research and scientific bodies of HE institutions.

Partners: U. Complutense de Madrid, Ankara U. (both UNICA members), Federico II U. of Naples, U. College Cork, Trnava U.

Website: http://www.genovate.eu





SAVES: Students Achieving Valuable Energy Savings

under EC Intelligent Energy-Europe;

project period: 04/2014 - 03/2017

Relevant Working Group: UNICA Green

Coordinator: National Union of Students UK

UNICA's role: Dissemination

Aim: SAVES aims at promoting energy saving behaviour among the students living in dormitories by putting them in a competition to save the most energy by simple everyday actions.

Partners: U. of Athens, U. of Cyprus (both UNICA members), Vilnius Gediminas Technical U., De Montfort U., Studentbostadsforetagen

Website: www.saves.nus.org.uk



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LENSAGE

UNICA AS PARTNER

European GRAding CONversion System- Practical Approach to Improving ECTS Implementation in Europe

under Lifelong Learning: Erasmus Multilateral Projects; project period: 1/10/2012 – 30/9/2015

Relevant Working Group: UNICA International Relations Officers Group and EduLab Group

Coordinator: University of Ghent

UNICA's role: Coordinator of Dissemination

Aim: Achieving a simple and unified interpretation and implementation of the ECTS grade conversion tables as recommended in the European Commission's ECTS User's Guide since 2009.

Partners: Sapienza University of Rome, University of Lausanne, Vilnius University, University of Warsaw (all 4 UNICA members), SGroup Network, Université de Liège, Université de Rouen, University of Leon, University of Gothenburg, University of Essex, Justus Liebig U. Giessen, Stichting Hoger Onderwijs Nederland Den Haag

Website: www.egracons.eu



The main outcome of the EGRACONS project - an online grade conversion tool - is now functional and available to universities from all over Europe for testing! To get access to the tool, the interested HEIs need to provide their grading tables according to the EGRACONS template. After their grading tables are integrated in the tool, universities will be given access to the EGRACONS grade conversion tool for comparison of grades with other universities and for sharing their feedback on the tool's utility. For more information, please visit http://egracons.eu/documentgrading-table-instructions-and-template.

Promoting Erasmus Mundus Towards European Students: Activate, Communicate, Engage

under Erasmus Mundus Action 3: National Structures; project period: 01/09/2012 - 30/08/2015

Relevant Working Group: International Relations Officers Group and PR & Communication Group

Coordinator: Sapienza University of Rome (UNICA member)

UNICA's role: Coordinator of WP 2: Developing promotional material and WP4: Promotional campaign

Aim: By tailoring the promotion of Erasmus Mundus towards European students, the project aims at increasing both quantity and quality of received applications for Erasmus Mundus study programmes.

Partners: UNICA, University of Belgrade (UNICA member), Ghent University, The Knowledge Partnership (UK), ICUnet.AG on behalf of the Erasmus Mundus Association, University of Belgrade, University of Melbourne (Australia).

Website: www.em-ace.eu/en/





JOINED-UP THINKING FOR JOINT SUCCESSES: UNICA MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

- **INTERNATIONALISATION & MOBILITY**
- 2 EDUCATION
- **3 RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT**
- 4 POLICY & STRATEGY
- 5 MISSION & LINK WITH SOCIETY

In the past academic year, UNICA organised a range of events within the UNICA clusters of activities. UNICA highly appreciates the initiatives and suggestions of the Members, which help the Network improve its added value, identify the topical issues of common importance for the Member Universities and tailor the events' programmes according to the specific interests and concerns of the university communities.



INTERNATIONALISATION & MOBILITY

- UNICA CP/IRO MEETING 2014 took place in the framework of the UNICA General Assembly 2014, Stockholm University, 24 October 2014.
- UNICA IRO MEETING 2015, (Vilnius University, 5-6 May 2015) brought together 48 participants from 30 Universities of the Network. Through highly interactive sessions, the meeting discussed burning questions related to the international mobility in Erasmus+, as well as quality management and language issues in university internationalisation.



In the evaluation survey, the meeting was rated at 4,63/5, which is the highest satisfaction score among UNICA meetings conducted in the academic year 2014/2015!

Erasmus+ Placement at the UNICA Secretariat



Between 2008 and 2015, 20 students from 10 Member Universities undertook traineeships at the UNICA Secretariat in Brussels.

Students from the UNICA Member Universities are encouraged to apply for a traineeship at the UNICA Secretariat in the framework of the Erasmus+ Placement programme: It is a great opportunity to work in a small but multinational office, learn about the recent developments in the EHEA & ERA, and gain hands-on experience in varied activities and projects of the Network. For more information, please contact office@unica-network.eu.

• 2ND SUMMER AND WINTER SCHOOLS' ORGANISERS MEETING

University of Bucharest, 27-28 April 2015) looked into various models for summer/winter schools' cooperation at the national and international level. It gathered 23 participants from 10 Member Universities.



• 5TH UNICA PR & COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP: UNIVERSITY PR & COMMUNICATION OFFICE IN THE DIGITAL ERA: was hosted by

Sapienza University in cooperation with Universities "Tor Vergata" and Roma Tre, 21-22 May 2015. The Workshop engaged 40 participants from 14 Member Universities in discussions on new skills & competencies for a university PR & Communication Officer and preserving traditional university values in modern university communication.

• UNICA Secretary General Mrs Kris
Dejonckheere contributed to the panel
session "International Staff Weeks:
staff training and professionalization
opportunities under the Erasmus+
programme" and chaired the session
"SAVES project: on the way to sustainable
student accommodation" at the ERASMUS Congress & Exhibition (ERACON)
2015, Porto, 13-17 May 2015.

• EAIE CONFERENCE 2015

UNICA hold two sessions and a poster session the **27th EAIE Conference**: The wealth of nations. Glasgow. 15-18 September 2015. The session "Mobility with a legacy: empowering students through student conferences" discussed enduring outcomes of UNICA Student Conferences and involved Guri Vestad (University of Oslo, Organiser of the UNICA Student Conference 2012) and two students: Simon Wursten (University of Lausanne, Organiser of the Student Conference 2014) and a participant of the 2014 Conference Marie Stepanova (Charles University). The session "Getting greener: student engagement for a better future" and the accompanying poster session presented the achievements of the UNICA Green Academic Footprint initiative and the EU-funded SAVES project in the field of sustainability-oriented student engagement. The informal IRO meeting@EAIE brought together more than 40 participants.

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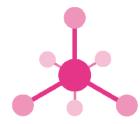


2 EDUCATION

• The 1ST UNICA EDULAB: New Developments in Teaching & Learning, the first seminar to take over from the UNICA Bologna Lab, was hosted by Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, 4-5 December 2014, and attracted 48 participants from 15 Member Universities. The programme featured engaging keynote speeches, an interactive gallery walk on the 15 years of Bologna Process, discussion on new perspectives on student-centred learning and MOOCs, and an open space on essential tools for the implementation of European HE policies.







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RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

• 9TH UNICA MEETING FOR EU RESEARCH LIAISON OFFICERS (Université Pierre et Marie Curie, 20-21 November 2014) brought together more than 40 representatives from 17 Member Universities. It discussed major legal and financial issues of Horizon 2020 and voiced a list of recommendations for the improvement of Grant Management Services, which was later submitted to SyGMA, External User Group for the new Research and Innovation Grant Management Services in Horizon 2020.

• The 6TH UNICA PHD MASTER CLASS: Crossing the finish line: PhD completion and career

preparation (Centre for Advanced Academic Studies of the University of Zagreb in Dubrovnik, 6- 9 September 2015) gathered 25 participants from Europe and Australia. By discussing various case studies, the participants had an opportunity to build their understanding of the complexity of the dissertation process and discussed possible support measures for doctoral candidates who need to reach the final steps in order to complete their doctorate. The meeting also discussed different career preparation approaches. As during the previous editions of the MASTER CLASS, the participants were guided by doctoral education experts: Hans Sonneveld (Netherlands Centre for Doctoral Schools). Melita Kovačević (University of Zagreb/ EUA-CDE), Lucas Zinner (University of Vienna), Jean-Dominique Pollack (Université Pierre et Marie Curie), and Kenneth Wann (Cardiff University).



"UNICA PhD Master Class has a unique combination of excellently structured activities: cases, empathic sharing of experiences in the intervision sessions, alive critical discussion, formal and informal exchanges among the participants in an always lovely and friendly social environment enlightened by the fascinating Dubrovnik atmosphere even under the storm. UNICA is "unique" in its genre of events indeed, and it is difficult to imagine that after the first experience there will not be another one even better each year."

Prof. Annamaria De Rosa, Sapienza University of Rome





POLICY & STRATEGY

TAKING A LOOK AHEAD: UNICA MISSION STATEMENT

With the Network's 25th founding anniversary in sight and conscious of the need to ensure that the Network's strategic focus corresponds most accurately to the needs and aspirations of its Members, UNICA Steering Committee engaged in works on the revision of the UNICA Mission Statement in early 2014. Prepared

as a result of several Steering Committee meetings, exercise with UNICA Rectors & Presidents carried out at the Rectors Seminar 2014, and a training session conducted by an external facilitator in October 2014, the new UNICA *Mission & Vision* will be put to vote at the UNICA General Assembly 2015.

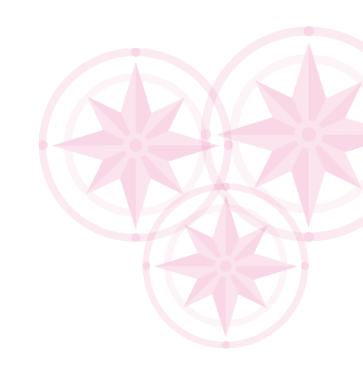


MISSION & LINK WITH SOCIETY

• The 5TH UGAF WORKSHOP: Sustainability at Universities - How to Combine Management and Participation was hosted by Freie Universität Berlin, 25-27 March 2015. It brought together a record number of 66 participants, including representatives of UNICA Member Universities and guests from non-UNICA HEIs and scientific institutions. The key questions that guided the Workshop discussions included: How can management processes and the need for participation be combined in the field of sustainability? How can participation methods be applied successfully? How can internal and external stakeholders be engaged effectively in higher education institutions? The programme offered insights into the state-of-the-art research, practical training in participation methods, and a forum for the exchange of hands-on practices in participation.







GENERAL ASSEMBLY **2014 & 2015**

UNICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2014





Stockholm University, 23-25 October 2014

UNICA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2015

& 25THANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



Université libre de Bruxelles & Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 15-17 October 2015





GENERAL & STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2015

3 FEBRUARY 2015, Brussels

(UNICA Secretariat)

6 MAY 2015, Vilnius University (in the framework of the UNICA IRO meeting, 5-6 May 2015)

5 SEPTEMBER 2015, Centre for Advanced Academic Studies of the University of Zagreb in Dubrovnik (in the framework of the 6th UNICA PhD MASTER CLASS, 6-9 September 2015)

15 & 17 OCTOBER 2015, Brussels

(in the framework of the UNICA General Assembly 2015)

GETTING THE MESSAGE THROUGH

UNICA WEBSITE

Given the increasing diversity of events and undertaken projects, there is a growing need to strengthen the visibility of activities of the Network. One of UNICA's major attempts is to communicate the outcomes of UNICA activities via its websites, targeted mailings, social media, and a number of publications disseminated among the members of the UNICA community as well as external stakeholders: representatives of the European Commission, European Parliament, Ministries of Higher Education, student associations and peer university networks.

The number of visitors/month on the the **UNICA website** www.unica-network.eu grew from 6,000 visitors in the academic year 2011/2012 to 16,300 in 2014/2015. In early September 2015, the website gained a new look and functionalities, including renewed user-friendly navigation, quick search engine for events, and responsive mobile/tablet adaptable pages.



All Member Universities are welcome to send us news about the organised conferences, achievements and awards as well as about their project and recruitment calls; your summer/winter schools can be announced on the UNICA Summer & Winter Schools Portal and staff mobility weeks on the staffmobility.eu platform.







UNICA FACEBOOK PAGE

serves as an additional tool for reporting on UNICA news and activities. Created in May 2013, it now counts more than 554 followers.



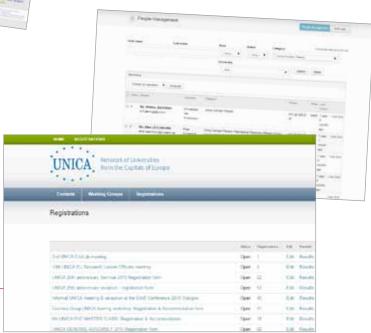


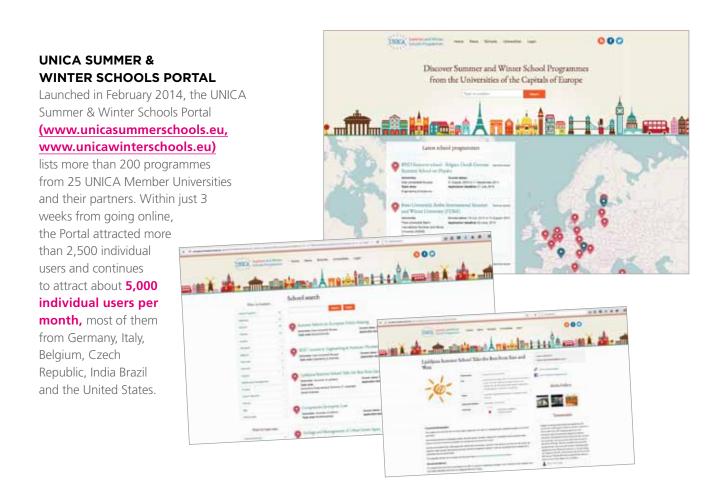
UNICA E-NEWSLETTERS

Since 2006, UNICA sends 4 (quarterly) e-newsletters to the UNICA Member Universities and partners; each newsletter represents 3 months of UNICA activities in a nutshell.

UNICA ONLINE DATABASE

The database provides an online access to each UNICA Contact Person and allows to easily modify and add the data on university representatives involved in UNICA activities and on the University itself. Both the database and the **online registration** component provide a quick data overview for the UNICA Secretariat.

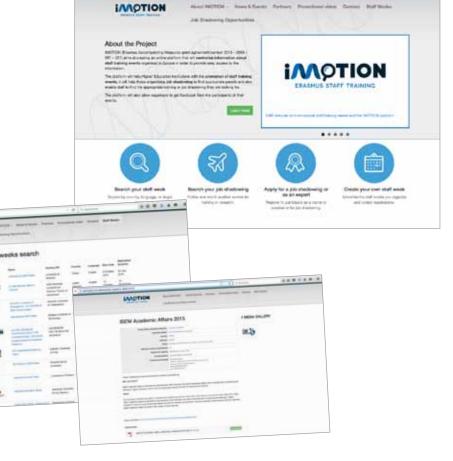




STAFFMOBILITY.EU PLATFORM

Created in the framework of the UNICA-led **IMOTION project** funded through the Lifelong Learning Programme, the **www.staffmobility. eu platform** currently lists more than **180 training schemes** for university administrative and technical staff. The platform is linked to the official website of the European Commission.

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UGAF WEBSITE

The UGAF website (www.ugaf.eu) attracts more than 2,200 different visitors per month. Apart from information about the UGAF initiative itself, the website contains news on conferences and new initiatives in environmental sustainability, a "green" media library, a database with best green practices, and a Campus Green Corners section which offers a virtual tour around

green spaces in the campuses of UNICA Member Universities.

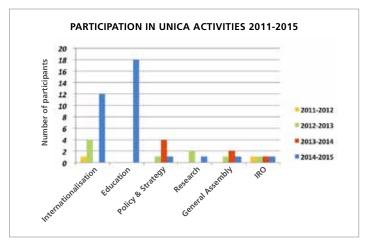


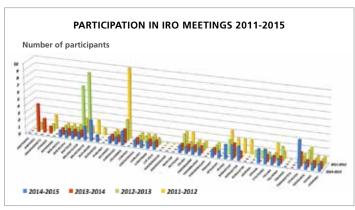
UGAF

Become Greener.

UNICA PARTICIPATION CHARTS: MAPPING MEMBER UNIVERSITIES' ACTIVITY

Every year, each UNICA Member University receives a "UNICA Participation Chart": a comprehensive overview of its participation in UNICA activities over the last 4 academic years. The Participation Charts evaluate the quality of the conducted activities, but also analyse the interests and priorities of UNICA Members. It is recommended that the Contact Person and Rector/President organise an annual meeting at their institution with all colleagues that have participated in UNICA activities. We greatly appreciate your your feedback: Your comments and suggestions allow us better fulfil the needs of our Member Universities, and improve the quality of our activities.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS





All of the initiatives envisaged in the **Work Programme 2014-2015** were undertaken. Some of them are still in the process of development and will be continued in the current academic year, either through new project proposals or UNICA events.

The Network commits to pursue ambitious goals and their fulfilment largely depends on the amount of input and commitment UNICA Member Universities are willing to give. In this context, it is not just a bow to convention to thank our Hosting Universities:

We extend our sincere appreciation and thanks for your hospitality, continuous engagement and efforts.

UNICA warmly thanks all the Rectors/ Presidents, Vice-Rectors/Vice-Presidents, Members of the UNICA Steering Committee, International Relations Officers, Contact Persons, members of the UNICA Working Groups, Students and UNICA Trainees, and other members of the UNICA community for your ongoing active support.



UNICA BOARD

UNICA PRESIDENT (2008-2015)

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MEMBERS OF THE UNICA STEERING COMMITTEE (2014-2015)

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DEPUTY IRO OBSERVER

Ursula HANS (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) ursula.hans@uv.hu-berlin.de



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ABOUT UNICA

UNICA - Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (www.unica-network.eu) was founded in 1990. It currently brings together 46 universities from 35 capital cities of Europe, combining over 150,000 university staff and 1.800,000 students.

UNICA provides a forum for its Members to reflect on the latest developments and demands of strategic change in university research, education and administration. To achieve its aims, UNICA carries out member-driven activities, the content, format, and frequency of which depend substantially on UNICA Member Universities' engagement and interest.

UNICA is also active in the field of European projects, both as coordinator and partner.



Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe



UNICA brings together 46 member universities from 35 European capitals

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Vrije Universiteit Brussel Université Libre de Bruxelles

BULGARIA

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

CROATIA

University of Zagreb

CYPRUS

University of Cyprus

CZECH REPUBLIC

Charles University in Prague

DENMARK

University of Copenhagen

ESTONIA

Tallinn University
Tallinn University of Technology

FINLAND

University of Helsinki

FRANCE

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3 Université Pierre et Marie Curie Université Paris-Dauphine

FYR OF MACEDONIA

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje

GERMANY

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Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata Università degli Studi di Roma Tre

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University of Latvia

LITHUANIA

Vilnius University

LUXEMBOURG

University of Luxembourg

THE NETHERLANDS

Universiteit van Amsterdam

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University of Oslo

POLAND

University of Warsaw

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Universidade de Lisboa Universidade NOVA de Lisboa

ROMANIA

University of Bucharest

RUSSIA

Lomonosov Moscow State University

SERBIA

University of Belgrade

SLOVAKIA

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SLOVENIA

University of Ljubljana

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Middle East Technical University

Ankara University

UNITED KINGDOM

King's College London

Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe

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