

MINUTES OF MEETING: IGLO Higher Education working group – 2027 Call & Next Erasmus+ programme (The Commission)

Date:	24 September 2026
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On 24 September 2026 the CZELO office participated in the meeting of the IGLO Higher Education working group. The topic of this meeting was the upcoming 2027 Call & next Erasmus+ programme, and a representative of the Commission (Council position) presented the current situation.

Speaker: Albert Sesé Ballart, Higher Education Unit, DG EAC, European Commission

2027 Call

- Introduction and DG EAC updates
 - o Suzanne Conze is retiring next Tuesday.
 - o Philip van den Poele is expected to join the new International Cooperation Unit.
- The 2027 Programme Guide is expected to introduce few changes, with the main novelty being the potential association of two additional countries: CH & UK.
 - o Their participation is subject to compliance with all the conditions set out in the respective association agreements.
 - o Switzerland's participation remains conditional, also because of the planned referendum.
- The ECHE call was published earlier in 2026, allowing higher education institutions from the UK and Switzerland to obtain accreditation for participation from 1 January 2027.
 - o The 2027 call is open to institutions across all participating countries. France and Spain, for example, have relatively high numbers of ECHE holders.
 - o The UK is also rebuilding its administrative capacity, including through the staffing of the British Council, with a view to re-establishing longer-term cooperation with Erasmus+.
- The Programme Guide is expected at the end of October 2026, may be postponed to November.

Key actions

European Universities Alliances

- The 2027 call will support the renewal of 30 currently funded European Universities Alliances for a further two years, into the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).
 - o Budget: EUR 216 million from Heading 2 and EUR 2.4 million from Heading 6.
 - o Duration: Two years.
 - o Maximum grant: To be specified in the call document.



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- The bridging call is intended to ensure continuity for the existing alliances while preparing for the next phase of the initiative.
- Although the UK and CH may participate in the 2027 programme, no additional funding will be provided specifically to accommodate their participation in the alliances.
- The future programme may also provide opportunities for new alliances, potentially involving the UK and CH.

European Degree Label – Exploratory Actions

- In mid-July 2026, the first two European Degree Labels were awarded. This was a significant initial exercise and that the same process would not necessarily be repeated in every subsequent round.
- A new call, budget of EUR 24 million, will support the adaptation and development of joint programmes aligned with the European Degree Label quality criteria.
- The call will have two strands: Development of joint programmes: Supporting the creation and adaptation of joint programmes that meet the criteria for the European Degree Label. Joint programmes in strategic fields: Supporting programme development in strategic sectors, alongside dedicated student support measures, including merit-based scholarships to attract talented European students to higher education and careers in these fields.
- The scholarship component is intended to provide additional support to consortia and programmes. Existing European Universities Alliances may be among the beneficiaries, with the scholarships constituting additional funding opportunities.

Accreditation and reaccreditation

- Accreditation is one of the major topics in the 2027 call, as the process will also prepare higher education institutions for the next Erasmus+ programme.
- The new accreditation framework will be valid for 2028–2034. Institutions obtaining or renewing accreditation will therefore be covered for this period.
- The European Commission intends to strengthen the monitoring of Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) holders and provide clearer guidance on monitoring requirements.
- A key change concerns the decentralisation of accreditation awards and monitoring through National Agencies (NAs), under indirect management. National Agencies have a closer understanding of the higher education institutions in their respective countries and are therefore better positioned to monitor them.
- The aim is also to facilitate the participation of more institutions in mobility consortia and to adjust the accreditation requirements accordingly.

New Erasmus+ programme structure (2028–2034)

- The proposed structure for the next Erasmus+ programme will move from the current Key Actions towards two main pillars.
- The proposed structure represents a reorganisation of the existing Key Actions, with some activities transferred or consolidated and new initiatives introduced.



- Merger of KA131 and KA171
 - o The Commission presented plans to merge the existing KA131 and KA171 mobility actions into a single action, covering intra-European and international mobility.
 - o The proposed new action would encompass three types of mobility: Intra-European mobility. Mobility within Europe. International outgoing mobility.
- The detailed arrangements, particularly concerning Global Europe funding, will be clarified.

Re-designing Erasmus Mundus

- The Commission is considering a redesign of Erasmus Mundus, distinguishing between two complementary components.
- Erasmus Mundus Master scholarships
- The scholarships will continue to support the attraction of international talent, in line with the Union of Skills objectives.
- There will be a stronger focus on Global Gateway thematic priorities.

European Universities Alliances 2.0

- The 2027 call will lay the groundwork for the next phase of the European Universities initiative, following 2027.
- In line with the priorities outlined in President von der Leyen's Letter of Intent following the State of the Union address.
- The legal status of alliances is an important issue, particularly in relation to their capacity to deliver the European Degree and contribute to the European Education Area (EEA), the European Research Area (ERA), the Union of Skills and the EU competitiveness agenda.
- The next phase will also need to clarify the definition and scope of a European Universities Alliance, including the role of research. Some stakeholders are advocating for a stronger research dimension.
- The two-year bridging call will provide continuity for existing alliances while the future framework is developed.

Legislative and institutional timeline

- The legislative proposals for the next Erasmus+ programme are progressing through the EU institutions.
 - o The CULT Committee vote expected at the end of September 2026.
 - o The plenary vote expected in November 2026.
 - o The two legislative proposals expected to be ready for negotiations by January 2027.
 - o Trilogues expected to begin in January 2027.
- These developments will shape the final structure and implementation of the 2028–2034 programme.

Further Q&A and stakeholder interventions

- How will strategic scholarships be organised, and what will be the implications of Global Europe funding and migration conditionality for Erasmus+ international mobility? Will individual accreditation be required for higher education institutions applying for KA2?
 - o Strategic scholarships: The scholarships will be partially integrated into the European Degree framework, rather than being organised through a standalone call.
 - o Global Europe and migration conditionality: The potential impact of migration conditionality on Erasmus+ remains an open question. The Commission referred to the people-to-people dimension of Global Europe.
 - o KA2 accreditation: The question of whether individual accreditation should be required for higher education institutions applying for KA2 remains under consideration. While accreditation is primarily intended to ensure the quality of mobility activities, participants stressed that the importance of KA2 cooperation should not be overlooked.
 - o Application volumes and AI: The Commission expressed concern about a potentially significant increase in applications if accreditation is not required as an initial filter. The use of AI in preparing applications adds another dimension to this challenge, as applicants may increasingly rely on AI-generated submissions. The Commission is considering how to strike a balance between simplifying the programme and maintaining effective quality assurance.
- Upcoming stakeholder event
 - o A major stakeholder event is scheduled for the first week of February 2027. The event has been brought forward in the calendar and will take place instead of the usual January NA meeting.
- How will Hungarian higher education institutions be affected by the new accreditation requirements, particularly those without a recent track record of participation?
 - o Most Hungarian higher education institutions should be able to participate and that funding is expected to be unblocked. The final decision on accreditation and participation will rest with the Hungarian National Agency.
- How will European Universities Alliances 2.0 be positioned within the next Erasmus+ programme, particularly in relation to social inclusion and competitiveness?
 - o A key issue in the trilogue negotiations will be the introduction of a clear definition of European Universities Alliances, potentially incorporating a research dimension. Not all existing alliances currently have an explicit research component.
- Will the forthcoming education package include initiatives specifically targeting higher education?
 - o The education package does not currently contain specific measures for higher education. Its focus is primarily on schools, teachers and AI.

- Is there an estimate of the share of Erasmus+ funding that will come from Global Europe under the next MFF?
 - o No estimate is currently available. The allocation will depend on the outcome of the MFF negotiations.
 - o A reduction in humanitarian aid and capacity-building funding could mean fewer resources for supporting cooperation with other regions.
 - o Greater emphasis may be placed on cooperation in relation to competitiveness. Cooperation with countries such as Canada is an example of the potential direction of future Erasmus+ international cooperation.