

## **4EU+ to share its experience in a new pilot project on a European status for European Universities**

**4EU+ joins forces with the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU), Una Europa, EU-Conexus, Charm-EU and the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) in a new EU project on devising a model of a high-level and formalised strategic cooperation for European University alliances.**

Coordinated by ECIU, the ESEU (European status for ECIU University) project seeks to overcome legal obstacles to a more complex transnational cooperation of European higher education institutions through the design of an institutionalised partnership model. The project will start on 1 March 2023 and run for one year.

The project responds to one of the key initiatives put forward in the European Commission's strategy for universities, aiming at developing a legal statute for alliances of higher education institutions. The legal statute would allow the alliances to act under one common personality, facilitating, among others, the implementation of joint programmes and the award of joint degrees.

“For a European University Alliance, we would of course like to see a European legal form that facilitates flexible cooperation and mobility between the Member States. However, the range of European legal forms on offer so far does not provide a sufficiently flexible structure,” points out Prof. Dr. Marc-Philippe Weller, Vice-Rector for International Affairs at Heidelberg University and Member of the 4EU+ Management Committee. “Through our participation in the project, we hope to contribute to the development of such a new legal form at the European level.”

“At present, European University alliances that consider establishing a legal entity have to choose from a plethora of legal forms regulated by different national jurisdictions. Each of these forms carries both limitations and advantages, that is why the very process of developing a pan-European institutional framework for European Universities will bring benefits to alliances and guide them in their choices. I am pleased that our university experts will be involved in this initiative,” says Professor Sambor Grucza, Vice-Rector for Cooperation and Human Resources of the University of Warsaw and Member of the 4EU+ Management Committee.

“4EU+ can bring in its expertise and experience in obtaining a legal statute, as we are one of few European University alliances to have one”, explains Isabelle Kratz, 4EU+ Secretary General and Head of the Association’s office. She also highlights the need of a solution that will allow for adaptation to alliances’ individual contexts: “By analysing the strengths, but also weaknesses of our model, we can contribute to devising the best recommendations for a framework for institutionalised university cooperation which will be long-term, future-proof, but also offering enough flexibility to the parties involved.”

In April 2021, the Alliance gained legal personality with the establishment of a not-for-profit association "4EU+ European University Alliance e.V." under German law. The Association’s headquarters are in Heidelberg, Germany.

For more information about 4EU+ involvement in the project, please contact the 4EU+ experts involved in the project:

- Sophia Schwemmer, PhD, Heidelberg University:  
[Sophia.schwemmer@ipr.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:Sophia.schwemmer@ipr.uni-heidelberg.de)
- Diana Pustula, LL.M., Head, Office for International Research and Liaison & Head of the 4EU+ local office, University of Warsaw, [diana.pustula@adm.uw.edu.pl](mailto:diana.pustula@adm.uw.edu.pl)

### About the 4EU+ Alliance

The 4EU+ European University Alliance brings together seven comprehensive, research-intensive, public universities from four regions of Europe: Charles University (Prague, Czechia), Heidelberg University (Germany), Sorbonne University (Paris, France), University of Copenhagen (Denmark), University of Geneva (Switzerland), University of Milan (Italy) and University of Warsaw (Poland).

The vision of the 4EU+ Alliance is to create One Comprehensive Research European University, contributing to the building up of the European Education and Research Areas by 2025 and beyond. 4EU+ was among the first 17 alliances funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ "European Universities" pilot call (2018) and was granted a funding renewal in 2022. As part of its activities related to research and innovation, it also carries out TRAIN4EU+, a "Science with and for Society" project funded through the Horizon 2020 programme. For more information about 4EU+, please visit [www.4euplus.eu](http://www.4euplus.eu).

