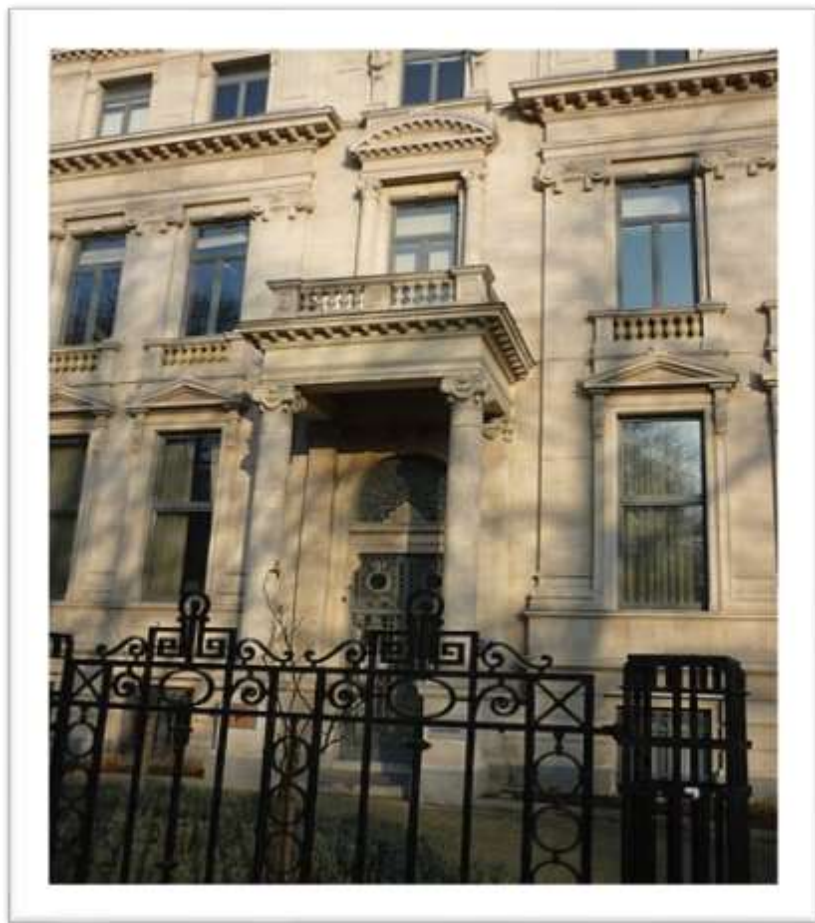# Skills, learning, institutions and regional cooperation: a European perspective

AMANDA CROWFOOT

SECRETARY GENERAL

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION (EUA)

EUA in brief

- Established in 2001
- Non-governmental **membership organisation**
- Independent voice of the university sector at European level
- Forum for exchange and peer learning for members
- Advocacy for the university sector at European level
- Secretariat with ~40 staff in Brussels (seat of EU institutions) and Geneva

Over 870 members
based in 49 countries
- 35 national university associations
- Over 830 individual universities
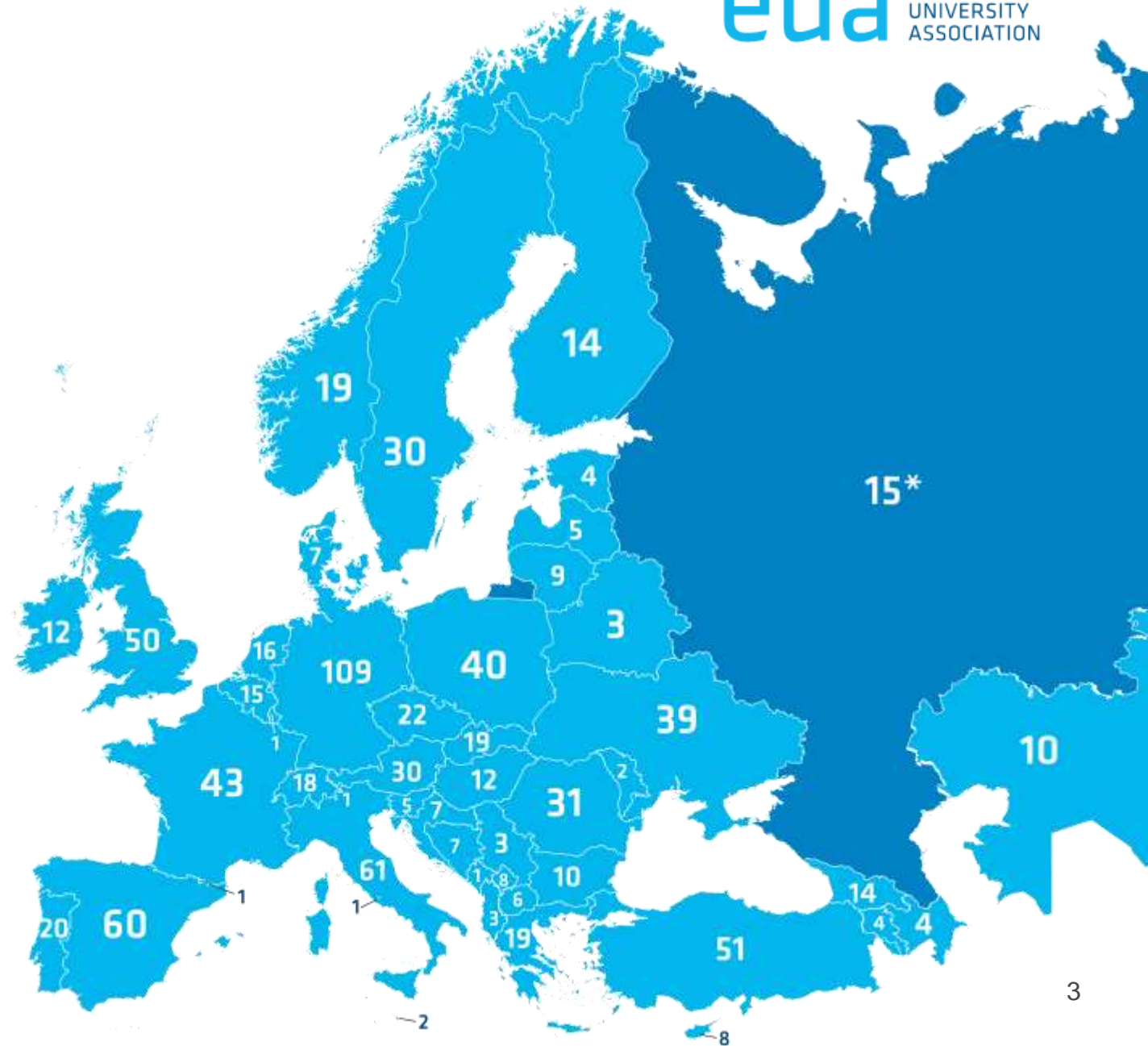
Universities without walls
A vision for 2030

Universities without walls – Core goals

Open, transformative and transnational universities

Openness

Sustainability

Sustainable, diverse and engaged universities

Autonomy

Strong, autonomous and accountable

Skills & higher education – and the role of institutions and university associations

- Growing skills need

- Fast changing skills needs – difficult to predict for companies, policy makers and educators

- Learning can take place everywhere

EUA:

- Future skills require strong institutions

- Critical importance of enhancing students' capacity to learn and research – rather than only training for present jobs

- Education for and with society – not only for recent school graduates

Changing mission & role of higher education

- Traditionally: research and education
- Increasingly: diverse and multiple missions
- Redefinition of the links between learning, research and innovation
- Education is more than knowledge and content
- Increased need for advanced/higher skills
- Increasing participation
- Broadening participation: LLL, equity, inclusion
- Impact: contribution of HE to society

At universities: a context of increased demand for flexible provision

Growing demand for short-term (non-degree) learning opportunities, with a certificate upon course completion.

62%

Enrolment to flexible courses or programmes has increased in the past 3 years.

57%

Growing demand for degree programmes provided under flexible arrangements.
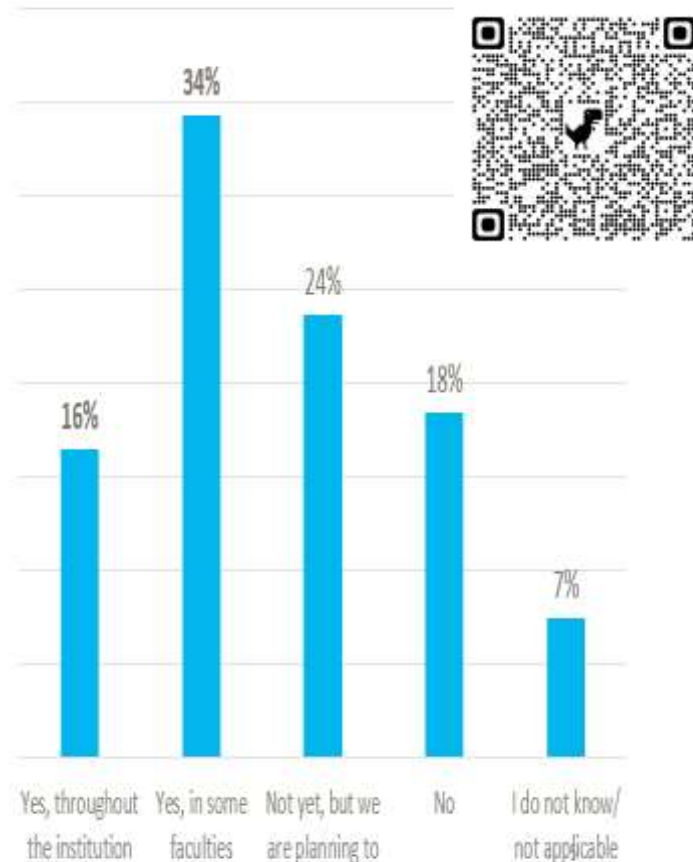
79%
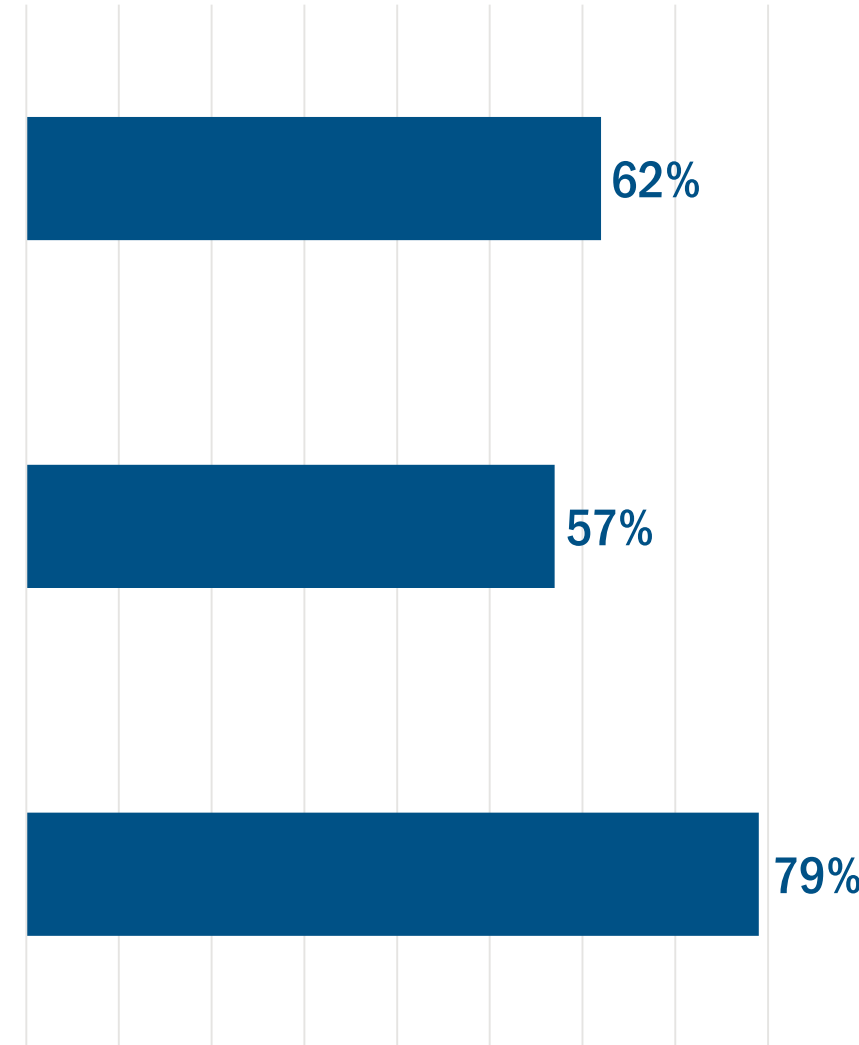
■ Yes / To some extent

Examples of recent developments: Microcredentials at HEI

Short online courses (non-degree) that earn certificates, micro-credentials or badges

DIGI HE

50% offer short, non-degree online courses

- Target: lifelong learners
- Most frequent online offer (more than MOOCs)
- Half of institutions ≤ 10 courses

368 responses from all 48 countries of EHEA
Responses gathered from April to June 2020

Bar chart:
- Yes, throughout the institution: 16%
- Yes, in some faculties: 34%
- Not yet, but we are planning to: 24%
- No: 18%
- I do not know / not applicable: 7%

- 2020: Half of HEIs in Europe provided it
- 2023: 3/4 – with more in preparation (Trends 2024)
  - Might not call it microcredentials
  - Targeted at external learners, but also students and staff
- Reemphasis on LLL
- Implicit endorsement of new ways of provision: blended, online…
- Potential changes for teaching, curricula, degrees?

Greening & Sustainable Development Goals

- **Growing emphasis on greening/SDGs**
- **Campuses, but also beyond**
- **Impact on education, research and innovation**
- **New and unknown industry needs**

Strategy & activities addressing greening

- 61% address in overall or dedicated strategy, usually referencing SDGs
- 82% have activities for greening across the institution (64%) or at individual departments/faculties (18%)

Key areas of activity

- 86% consider greening (21%) or SDGs (61%) in curriculum reform
- 86% active in community engagement on greening
- 93% "green campus" - recycle/waste management – 68% a comprehensive policy
- Reducing the environmental footprint of laboratory research (24% comprehensive policies, 54% some activities)

10

Developments in university collaboration: European Universities (EUI) alliances

- Networks of higher education institutions from at least three Erasmus+ programme countries
- Currently 50 alliances (to grow to 60), involving over 400 HEIs
- Develop and implement an integrated long-term joint strategy for education, with links to research and innovation
- Work on establishing a European inter-university campus
- Establish knowledge creating teams of academics and students working together to address societal challenges

EUA's role in European policy making

- Active role in the European HE and research policy processes
- Bologna process/European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
  - 49 European countries
  - Shared policies and instruments
  - Enabling student and staff mobility, transnational collaboration
- European Union – 27 +
  - European Education Area – Erasmus +
  - European Research Area – Horizon 2020
- Advocating the role of, and conditions for, universities
- Collaboration and networking with members, partners, policy makers
- Facilitating institutional development and good practice
- Global dialogue – international exchange

eua EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

Thank you for your attention!

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