Elements

Supporting the Mission Statement

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Ten Reasons to be one

Strength in Unity: Ten reasons to be one

Together we will lead a new European model for technology that thinks people first. We will be an inclusive space where everybody is equally welcome. We will identify synergies, achieve critical mass and develop new programmes. Together, we will:

1. *reinforce Europe*. By targeting a fully integrated multicampus European University of technology, we will lobby for an evolution of legal frameworks and reinforce the European area of higher education, research and innovation.
2. *forge a brand*. Our brands are important to our alumni and recognised by our economic partners but they are not immutable: our eight institutions have all been renamed in the past twenty years! By becoming campuses of the European University of Technology we will increase our recognition and visibility.
3. *increase research impact*. Institutional mergers enable the pooling of academic talent and infrastructure, increased financial and staffing resources, and opportunities for interdisciplinary research. Our research projects will be able to prioritize areas where the skills present in one partner institution benefit the regional priority of another one (for example cybersecurity in Troyes and Darmstadt will benefit Cyprus and Latvia).
4. *improve teaching quality*. By sharing our best practices and implementing a common quality assessment system we will improve teaching throughout our university. We will increase our academic offer and profile by pooling specialities (such as IoT or 3D printing) on different campuses. Together, we will create degrees in new fields.
5. *incentivize mobility*. By ensuring that all campuses share a common core curriculum and that each develops areas of expertise for the whole, we will both facilitate and encourage mobility, for students as well as for academic and non-academic staff. Mobility is one of our priorities because it is key to create a common identity.
6. *leverage cultural diversity*. We share a robust technological culture but also a great diversity in culture, language and experience. This diversity is an incredible added-value to address global challenges.
7. *improve administrative processes*. Improving heterogeneous administrative and information systems and structures is a challenge for all institutions. Coming together with such an ambitious project is exactly what triggers the interest of the multinational IT company Atos to collaborate with us and help us overcome the complexities.

8. *design a new governance structure*. Over the first 3 years, we will test different models of governance so as to ensure a wide circulation of ideas, and a full engagement of all communities. Being one university with eight campuses means finding the sweet spot that encourages a bottom-up, low hierarchy model whilst reinforcing synergies throughout the university.
9. *exemplify equality and inclusiveness*. The student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels will reflect the diversity of our populations, and students, staff and stakeholders will experience true equality
10. *embed engagement and knowledge exchange* with society in our curriculum and our research.

Our integration will strengthen our institutional position in relation to competition, funders and stakeholders. More importantly it will improve the way we teach, increase the impact of our research and boost our potential for transfer.

In many ways the reasons and challenges for integrating our institutions mirror the European project. Europe needs European universities, Europe needs a European University of Technology.

Implementation Plan

The objectives of EUt+ are ambitious, as it sets to both rethink the role of universities of technology while building a new institution on a European scale. We are convinced that both objectives make sense simultaneously: one leading the other. Thus, we want to project onto a European scale what we do best - ensuring rapid, sustainable and quality employment for almost all our students and supplying industry and services with expertise - while positing a European ethos of technology.

This ambitious initiative is supported by a battery of concrete actions and a clear timeline, outlined above. The transformation process has been underway for over a year, and the actions have been structured within eight interlinked work packages.

Colleagues and students from all eight partner institutions are already building common activities (MoU on ECT Lab+, construction of a common lab for innovative pedagogy, common PhD in sustainable sciences, common competency framework…). This community engagement is what fuels our initiative, which is already backed by more than 350 regional and global companies.

The present section aims to show how the current implementation plan (with key targets and milestones as well as a more detailed description of the work packages) will be organised, managed and distributed.

Development plan

The first three years

The first three years of our timeline are decisive. We have designed eight interlinked work-packages to deal with the key aspects of the integration plan, and to simultaneously develop the vision of the new University and to establish the coordinated actions. The eight partner institutions are already engaged on this path, as all rectors and presidents - as well as the student representatives - have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch the initiative and the actions evoked below. All agree that EUt+ "is **the** leading priority of each of the eight […] institutions".

The first three years will already enable a transformation of our main missions. The student experience has already been influenced by EUt+, for student representatives started meeting each other and designing their role in the initiative. Research collaboration projects are already increasing within the partners of EUt+, ECT Lab+ being but one example. And with more than 350 companies

already supporting our initiative, we foresee great added value in technology and knowledge exchange in the first years.

The first three years purposefully maintain an emerging governance structure. These years will be a space for flourishing horizontal exchanges, initiating the concrete integration of activities, coordinating management, polishing the harmonization of respective institutional strategies towards EUt+. This period of time will lead to the signature of the first EUt+ Act establishing the confederation, with elected members of the executive board. After this incubation phase, the experimental confederation will start for good in 2023.

Year 3 to year 6

The next three years will be dedicated to establishing a more formal governance structure to EUt+, and to transfer step by step the activities of each partner to this emerging structure. Importantly, the strategy we chose to put in place this new central governance structure is not to create an empty shell where responsibilities could be transferred from pre-existing institutions. It is rather to create the "central" governance structure by mutualizing preexisting activities, at one and the same time. We believe this approach will facilitate a challenging eight-headed integration process. This experimental phase will end up in the signature of the second EUt+ Act, which will shift key decision-making capacities from the individual members to the confederation.

Year 6 onwards

From 2026 on, the confederation will start a process of full integration. The goal is to transition from a confederation to a single federative institution. There are multiple models of federal university organisations which we detail in the box below. Our model is closest to that of a tightly integrated university (*à la* Oxford), with campuses more distant from each other than exists to this day. Perhaps the closest model is that of PennState University with its 24 campuses distributed throughout Pennsylvania.

This process will, presumably, require an evolution of legal frameworks at both the national and the European level.

Models of federal university organisations

"**Federal university**" is a misleading expression, because it applies to the structure of the parent state, not to the university itself. Historically, the term "federal university" has been used by the University of London and primarily by the University of Wales (which even used the term "confederated university" between 2004 and 2011). Today, the few occurrences of the term "federal university" refer to universities with a centralized structure, but dependent on a federal state. The main occurrences thus correspond to the public universities of Brazil (e.g. Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), Russia (e.g. Siberian Federal University, Ural Federal University), or the recently established universities in Nigeria (e.g. Federal University Lokoja, Federal University Oye-Ekiti).

"**Federated university**" refers to a university whose internal organization is federal. This term is used primarily in the North American world, and particularly in Canada. "Federated" indicates that regulatory powers are not only delegated by the centre to components, but are shared between the central structure and its members. It is a stronger notion than delegation of authority. A university can indeed be very decentralized in its operations, with a high level of delegation to the components that ensures them *de facto* autonomy in their day-to-day operations, while remaining unified from a legal point of view, with a single body having ultimate responsibility for all decisions made and legal representation. A university is organized federally, on the contrary, if there is not a single component ultimately responsible for all functions and decisions.

In most cases, universities that call themselves "federated" or "federative" are the result of the union of formerly independent colleges.

Today, this union takes two forms:

- An "associative" form such as the University of London, which is more like an association of independent members, and considered as such by ranking agencies in particular (see below the analysis of the case of University College London). The balance of power is on the side of the members, not the central structure.

- A "tight" form like Oxford University, which presents itself and is treated by its interlocutors as a university. The balance of power is on the side of the central structure rather than the members, and this tendency is continuously growing.

These two possibilities are embedded in the very principle of a federal organization: whether in higher education or in other domains, a recurring question for federations is whether the centre of gravity and "unity of action" are on the side of the federal structure or of the federated members. What makes

any federated structure both interesting and fragile is the constant need to renegotiate the balance between two opposing tendencies towards either secession or unification.

"**Collegiate university**" is an ambiguous expression:

- It can refer to a university that has residential colleges, usually for undergraduates. These colleges can then enjoy a certain degree of financial autonomy and cultivate their own identity, but their responsibilities are strictly related to student life (board and lodging, recreation, student life). This is particularly the case of British universities that present themselves as "collegiate", while having a unified governance structure, such as Kent, York or Lancaster University: the college is an instrument of student sociability and the construction of a sense of community.

- Or the term is functionally equivalent to "federated university" and refers to a university structure that shares academic responsibilities and decisions with its members, who enjoy some form of legal personality and financial autonomy. Cambridge University, Durham University, Oxford University in the United Kingdom, and a handful of institutions in the United States and Canada use this term to introduce themselves. In practice, however, colleges have seen their academic role diminish in favour of the university, with the result that the model of the college exercising true academic responsibility no longer really exists today.

"**University system**" refers to a structure created by a public administration to organize the public provision of higher education and research by funding a network of institutions. These institutions are dependent on the system and are accountable to it: the system is not a voluntary association that members could leave of their own accord. This model is often the equivalent, for a federal state, of the relationship that universities have with the Ministry of Higher Education. The higher-ranking structure distributes funding, exercises quality control over degrees, defines the conditions for accrediting degrees, and draws up strategic directions of a very general nature. This model is present in the United States (e.g. California, Illinois, Oregon, Wisconsin), Canada (e.g. Ontario, Quebec), and to some extent in Germany (e.g. Bavaria). The degree of supervision exercised by the system over institutions varies, depending in particular on the size and complexity of the system.

Timeline

Launching the process
Exceecutive boards

MoU

Common activities, increasing integration, coordination of management, strategy harmonization

Establishing the confederation
Exceecutive boards, permanent members

Act 1

Delegation of activities, coordination of strategies

Strenghtening of confederation
Exceecutive boards, permanent members

Act 2

Delegation of governance, delegation of strategic activities, articulation of strategies

Building the Federation
Exceecutive boards, permanent members

Act3

Creating the Federation
Exceecutive boards, permanent members, states

Federation Act

Delegation of governance, relative to legal framework

Federation setup

2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035

EUt+ alliance

EU initiative EUt+

Experimental confederation

Integrated confederation
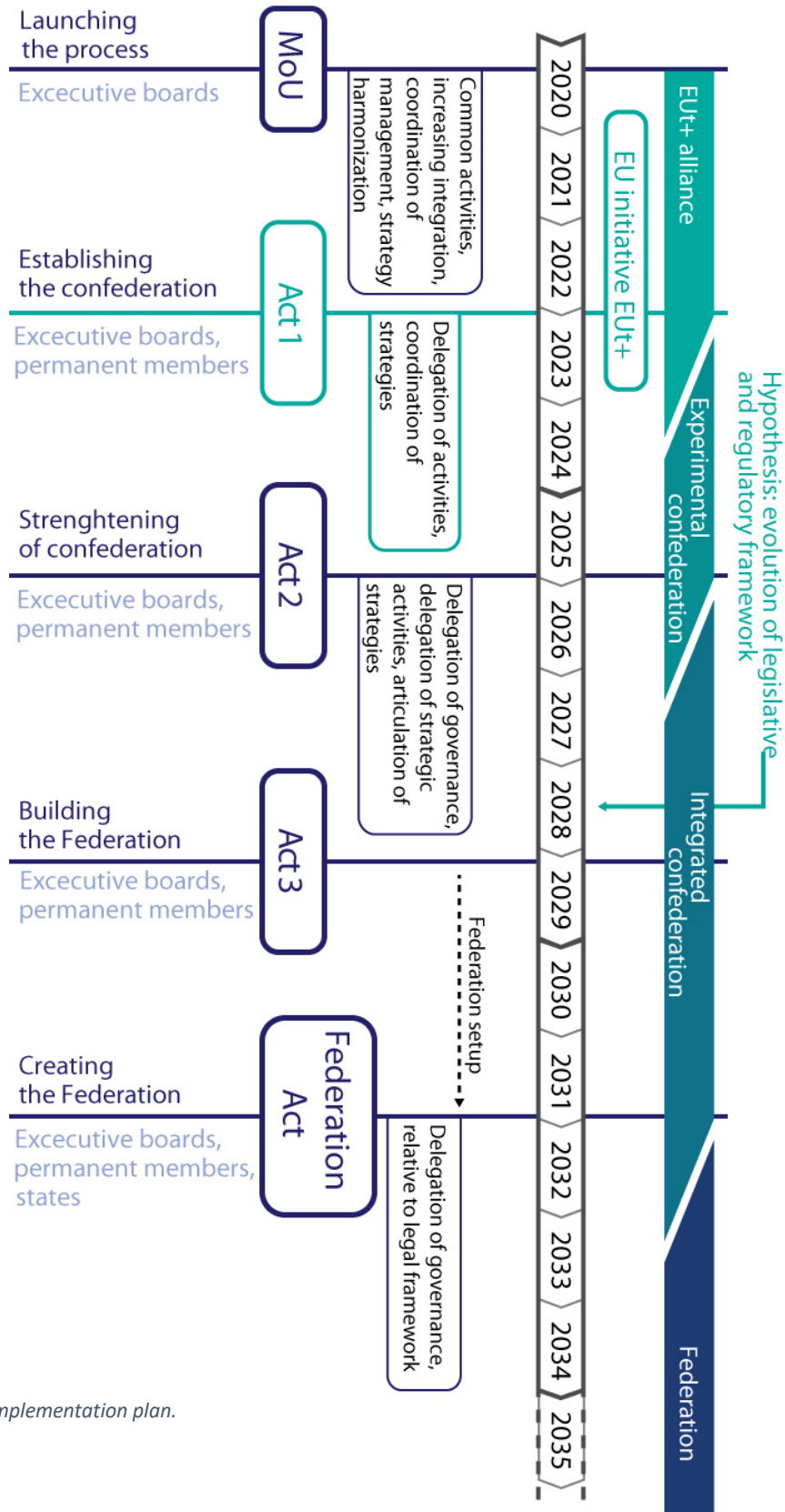
Federation

Hypothesis: evolution of legislative and regulatory framework

Figure 1: EUt+ implementation plan.