

YUFE reaction to a Blueprint for a European Degree

The YUFE Alliance welcomes the [ambitious higher education package](#) presented by the European Commission on 27 March 2024, including the Blueprint for a European degree and two Council Recommendations on a European quality assurance and recognition system in higher education, as well as attractive and sustainable careers in higher education. We are happy to see the ambitious goals formulated in the documents, which we believe can contribute to reduce barriers to transnational collaboration and joint transnational education.



YUFE provided input on the Blueprint for a European Degree through open calls for evidence ([YUFE](#), and [FOCI](#) contributions) and participation in the [FOCI European degree \(label\) project](#), a collaboration between three European Universities Alliances. We anticipate the publication of the final recommendations from this project in April 2024. In this statement, we share some insights into those recommendations in reaction to the higher education package.



Value of the European Degree Initiative

We strongly support the emphasis on the added value of the European degree for students, staff, higher education institutions, societies, labour markets and society. As an Alliance united by common European values, we recognise the potential of the European degree to foster a shared European identity and acknowledge the transnational nature of educational pathways developed by Alliances and other consortia. To realise these benefits, continued collaboration with stakeholders is essential to refine the European degree criteria and maximise its uptake and value.

We eagerly anticipate the European degree policy lab and annual forum, both crucial initiatives to continue the co-creation of the European degree initiative and future guidelines for their implementation.



Scope of the European degree Initiative

Throughout the consultation process, we advocated for expanding the scope of the European degree to encompass innovative learning formats developed by Alliances and others. This expansion is vital to future-proof the European degree amidst a shifting higher education landscape towards more flexible and student-centred learning pathways. It aligns with the ambition to equip future generations with the necessary skills and competencies for a knowledge-based European society and economy.

We are pleased that the Commission has acknowledged this input in the [staff working document](#), published alongside the Blueprint, considering to explore potential expansion to include micro-credentials and EQF level 5 programmes. We recommend pursuing this direction in the work of the envisioned European degree policy lab.

European degree Criteria and Integration with existing Structures

We commend the European degree for simplifying processes and reducing barriers to joint degree programmes while respecting subsidiarity, academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Aligning with existing structures, tools, and processes is crucial, as are the proposals for recommendations for quality assurance and recognition. We support evaluations by existing quality assurance agencies and cross-institutional accreditation possibilities, but **we also would like to stress the importance of developing a robust methodology for evaluating programmes and Alliances against European degree criteria.** This will be another crucial task to be undertaken by the policy lab to ensure further simplification and effectiveness.

YUFE is committed to keep actively engaging in the design and implementation of the European degree, ensuring its success in fostering collaboration, enhancing educational quality, and promoting innovation in the European dimension of education.

Recommendations for the work of the European degree policy lab

Co-create guidelines for implementation:

The policy lab should focus on further refining the European Degree criteria and develop clear guidelines for their implementation with a broad range of stakeholders to maximise the uptake and value of the initiative.

Explore scope expansion:

The policy lab should explore expanding the scope for the European degree initiative to include innovative learning formats, such as micro-credentials. This expansion is crucial to future-proof the European Degree and align it with evolving trends in higher education towards flexible and student-centred learning pathways.

ABOUT YUFE

The Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) is the top-scoring European University Alliance, selected in 2019 and 2022 by the European Commission to develop and implement its pioneering model of a European University. The YUFE Alliance strives to bring about radical change in the Higher Education sector by becoming the leading model of a student-centred, open and inclusive European University based on the cooperation between higher education institutions, public and private sector, and citizens.

In the past years, the YUFE Alliance has started to build the foundations of its European University, and has developed pilots of truly European, student-centred study programs, enhanced European career perspectives for staff, and contributed to solving important European regional challenges.

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