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|  | ***Opening session***  **Mrs. Amanda CROWFOOT, Secretary General, EUA, Mr Michael MURPHY, President, EUA**  Mrs. CROWFOOT and Mr MURPHY welcomed the participants and wished for a fruitful meeting.  ***Keynote speeches by the European Commission***  **Mrs. Pauline ROUCH, Head of Cabinet of European Commissioner Mrs. Mariya GABRIEL**  Mrs. ROUCH presented the European Strategy for Universities. The European Strategy for Universities as announced by the European Commission, aims to support university transformation by fostering synergies between university missions through related EU policies, programmes, and national reforms. This strategy comes in a context of reform discussions, also in connection to the Next Generation EU recovery and resilience plans.  **Mrs. Aline HUMBERT, Adviser on Higher Education, Education and Youth for the Permanent Representation of France to the European Union**  Mrs. HUMBERT stated that the EU Commission is working on the EU contribution to the deployment and attraction of teacher. The EU is also deeply committed to deepen the feeling of being European, while removing barriers to freedom of movement. She added that the EU university initiative must be implemented and deployed. The EU is focused on creating common structures for training and research, on micro-credentials and on synergies between higher education, Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers and universities.  ***Panel 1 - Synergies between higher education, research, and innovation: policies, programmes, and practice, moderated by Thomas JØRGENSENS, EUA Senior Policy Coordinator***  **Mr Jens Peter GAUL, Secretary General, German Rectors’ Conference (HRK), Germany**  Mr GAUL stated that universities are the basis of society. They preserve the cultural heritage of Europe, transfer knowledge, …Mr GAUL suggested that to implement the EU university strategy, the following suggestions should be taken into consideration:   * Universities are holistic institution, therefore more cooperation between VET providers, university and research is needed. * A more holistic approach with the EU Commission is necessary. * A fair pan-European approach needs to be introduced: i.e., in the field of teaching; micro-credentials are good but cannot replace the education itself. * Bridges between different universities cultures in Europe should be fostered.   **Mr Marc VANHOLSBEECK, acting Deputy Director General for Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry for Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Scientific Research, Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Belgium**  Mr VANHOLSBEECK briefly touched upon the EU's Open Science policy. Open Science is a policy priority for the European Commission and the standard method of working under its research and innovation funding programmes as it improves the quality, efficiency, and responsiveness of research. To develop its open science policy the Commission works closely with 2 expert groups:   * The [Open Science Policy Platform](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3436&NewSearch=1&NewSearch=1) advised the Commission on how to further develop and practically implement open science policy * The [expert group on indicators](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3551&NewSearch=1&NewSearch=1) proposes indicators researchers' engagement with open science and its impacts supporting and acknowledging open knowledge practices.   He added that open science provides new opportunities between teaching, research, and innovation.  **Mrs. Darinka VRECKO, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia, and co-chair of the BFUG task force on synergies**  Mrs. VRECKO highlighted the role of consultations. The issue of synergies between higher education and EU research area is very important. The issue has been on the agenda of the Bologna process and the EU. She added that the development of Bologna process inspired the EU and vice versa. This priority has never been translated into action.  ***Panel 2 - Fostering recovery and resilience: the role of national plans in university system reforms, moderated by Mr Thomas ESTERMANN, Director for Governance, Funding and Public Policy Development, EUA***  **Mr Maurizio TIRA, Rector, University of Brescia, Italy**  Mr TIRA briefly summarised the main issues IT is currently facing as to education. He added that some reforms have already been approved, while others need to be further analysed. He stated that the availability of money is forcing reforming in IT. One big reform is happening within the Italian public administration. As to the reform of the degree: content timing is constraining. This reform is ongoing. He added that new intermediate degrees are to be increased in IT.  **Mrs. Karina ANGELIEVA, Deputy Minister of Innovation and Growth, Bulgaria**  Mrs. ANGELIEVA briefly described the activities BG is putting in place as to universities. BG is investing in research universities; supporting university to do research and innovation. BG will use the recovery money on some university to foster their key elements, i.e., areas where they want to integrate experienced researchers through grants. BG will support university with research programmes, via industry academia cooperation projects and mobility exchange.  **Mr Josep M. GARELL, Rector, Ramon Llull University, Spain, Vice-President of the Spanish Rectors’ Conference (CRUE) and EUA Board member**  Mr GARELL stated that education not always include higher education. He added that the EU commission should foster links to employability.  ***Panel 3 - The future of transnational university collaboration: how to overcome system-level barriers, moderated by Mrs. Anna-Lena CLAEYS-KULIK, EUA Policy Coordinator***  **Mrs. Vanessa DEBIAIS-SAINTON, Head of Unit, Higher Education, Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission**  Mrs. DEBIAIS-SAINTON stated that solutions are to be applied not only to Europe but everywhere. As to challenges, there is lack of coherence in the way the Bologna process is implemented. What are the possible solutions? Mrs. DEBIAIS-SAINTON stated that the EU should work on recommendation to give the Member States more autonomy as to:   * international mobility * in defining the languages of degrees * embedding mobility * creating joint transnational programmes * supporting high quality education * removing barriers for interdisciplinary activities   **Mrs. Florence BALTHASAR, Head of International Affairs, Zürich University of the Arts, Switzerland**  Mrs. BALTHASAR briefly introduced Zürich University of the Arts, stating that it is one of the largest universities in Europe. This university has broad partnerships for student mobility and international projects funded by private foundations. She added that there are several projects in close cooperation with Asia.  **Mr Peter LIEVENS, Vice-Rector for International Policy, KU Leuven, Belgium and Member of the Board of Directors, UNA Europa European University alliance**  Mr LIEVENS stated that KU Leuven major goals are education, quality, and research. KU Leuven strongly relied on strong alliances and strategic partnerships. As to EU University Alliance, the focus is on sharing the same ambitions, complementary strengths. He added that many KU Leuven academic/professionals/staff/students worked on building interdisciplinary/multilingual/international paths. He stated that there are still boundaries: one is mobility.  **Mr Elmar PICHL, Director General for Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences, Ministry for Education, Science and Research, Austria**  Mr PICHL stated that quality assurance is key. As to mobility in AT, Mr PICHL stated that coordinators of the mobility projects meet regularly to tackle the mobility issues. He added that short mobility is difficult as well, especially because pandemic is creating new boundaries.  ***Closing remarks***  Mrs. CROWFOOT thanked the participants for their involvement. The meeting was then closed. |  |