
CU takes baton from Sorbonne at annual 4EU+ meeting

Charles University takes baton from Sorbonne at annual 4EU + Alliance meeting

This week saw the holding of the annual meeting of the 4EU+ Alliance that brings together the talents of six top schools, including Charles University. Following Sorbonne University, CU took over the rotating presidency of the alliance, during which it outlined priorities over the coming months. Charles University will be focusing on quality of education and the removal of barriers to open alliance activities to a greater number of students.



On Monday, CU's Rector **Tomáš Zima** formally took the baton from **Sorbonne University's Jean Chambaz**. "Originally, we hoped to meet with our colleagues here in Prague, but we transferred all of our activities online due to the coronavirus pandemic," Zima explained.

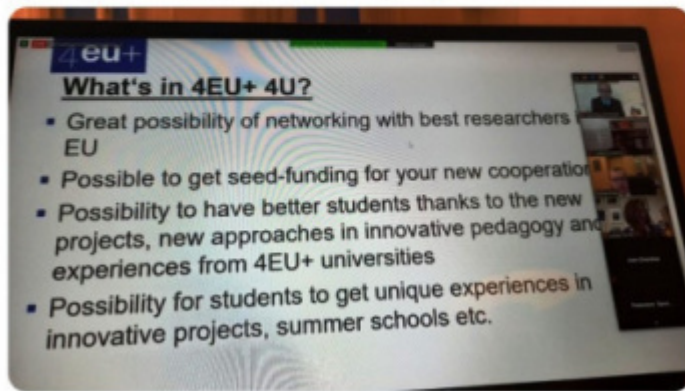
The alliance meeting, bringing together representatives from all six schools, saw a number of webinars held and online discussions with students. In the afternoon, proceedings were broadcast live and open to all. Among noted speakers in the afternoon were the Czech Republic's **Minister of Foreign Affairs Tomáš Petříček**, **Deputy Education Minister Václav Velčovský** as well as the German, French and Italian ambassadors and the **European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth Mariya Gabriel**.



Christoph Israng
@velvyslanec_SRN

Naštěstí máme i dobré zprávy:

Špičkové evropské univerzity, mj. @UniKarlova + @UniHeidelberg, rozšiřují svou spolupráci v @4EUplusAlliance. Bylo mi ctí zúčastnit se jejich výroční konference. Děkuji @profZima



7:33 odp. · 16. 11. 2020 · Twitter for Android

The **German ambassador to Prague Christoph Israng** tweeted during the annual conference, expressing support for greater cooperation slated between alliance members, including the University of Heidelberg and CU.

Roundtable discussion on science and education

Part of the afternoon schedule was devoted to a public roundtable discussion on the topic of synergy between science and education. CU's Rector Tomáš Zima, European Commission representatives, as well as the rectors of the universities of Heidelberg and Copenhagen took part. Other participants included **Vanessa Debiais-Sainton**, the head of the unit in charge of Higher Education policies and programme at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, and **Apostolia Karamali**, the head of the unit in charge of Academic R&I and Research Organisations, Directorate General for Research and Innovation at the EC. Three student representatives also took part in the discussion.

The 4EU+ Alliance was formed three years ago with the aim of improving cooperation in education, research and mobility between top European universities: Charles University, Sorbonne University, the University of Warsaw, the University of Milan and the University of Copenhagen. Cooperation takes place in four main areas, so-called "Flagships" 1 through 4, focusing on the following major topics: Health and demographic change in an urban environment, Europe in a changing world, Transforming science and society, and Biodiversity and sustainable development.

Cooperation in the time of coronavirus

Like all aspects of life, the alliance has also been affected by the pandemic but continues to move forward and to meet set goals. Many events or meetings which would have taken place in person are now online; student mobility has of course been affected, says **CU's Vice-Rector for European Affairs Lenka Rovníá** but restrictions have redoubled emphasis on the digitalisation of education and learning, which was one of the 4EU+ original goals.



“We weren’t sure at the start how we would implement some of those projects but the pandemic made clear it was possible to meet our goals over a short period,” the vice-rector said. Among the most important aspects, says Rovná, is the enormous dedication and trust in moving forward together and deepening cooperation; already there have been many positives from the sharing of expert databases to other sources, such as scientific publications.

As it takes up the presidency, Charles University will aim to meet three main goals: to oversee the founding of a new Academic Council made up of 30 members (five from each university) to act in an advisory capacity for rectors, and to interconnect university management and academics.

To erase further barriers in education and science, pushing for cross-recognition of school courses and agreeing on the definition of a European degree.

And to significantly boost student involvement and participation in all 4EU+ alliance activities events.

You can learn more about the alliance and alliance projects [here](#) . If you'd like to watch the video of the conference that was open to the public, click [here](#) .



**EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY
ALLIANCE**

4EU+ by the numbers:

Students: 286 940

Academics: 23 680

Other personnel: 26 350

Erasmus+ projects: 243

Finance Horizon 2020: 368 M€

Number of ERC projects: 115