



#EUSAF25
Ambassador Forum



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

of the European University Student
Ambassadors Forum 2025

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01 | INTRODUCTION

This document presents the recommendations resulting from the second edition of the European Universities Student Ambassadors' Forum (EUSAF), which took place in Warsaw from 4 to 6 September 2025. The event, organised as part of the wider Erasmus+ project EUC-VOICES, aims to empower and connect European Universities Student Ambassadors and Representatives to contribute to shaping the future of Higher Education, improving the way that student engagement in European Universities Alliances (EUAs) is being implemented, while fostering a stronger sense of European identity.

EUC Voices

The EUC-VOICES project is an Erasmus+ initiative under the KA220-HED – Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education action, aimed at supporting European Universities in fostering stronger student engagement across their alliances. The project began on September 1, 2023, and will run for a period of 36 months.

The primary goal of EUC-VOICES is to empower students across European Universities Alliances (EUAs) by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to play a leading role in shaping the future of the European Education Area.

European University Student Ambassador Forum

The primary objective of EUSAF is to serve as an interactive platform that brings together one Student Ambassador from each European Universities Alliance to develop the essential skills students need to contribute effectively within EUAs.

It seeks to promote a culture of knowledge-sharing and collaboration. By providing a structured space for the exchange of best practices in student engagement, EUSAF enables Ambassadors to learn from one another's experiences and to share insights effectively. This Forum plays an important role in disseminating information on student engagement across alliances, enhancing involvement and participation within the European Universities network.

Another aim of EUSAF is to foster a sense of community and identity among Ambassadors. Through direct collaboration, the Forum cultivates a sense of belonging, strengthening connections among students and across alliances. This engagement encourages Ambassadors to carry forward a shared vision of student roles and impact within the alliances, reinforcing their role within the local community, while fostering the alliances' connections to students and promoting an integrated sense of belonging across Europe.

01 | INTRODUCTION

A key part of EUSAF's mission is to support the professional and personal development of Student Ambassadors. The Forum includes specialised training sessions aimed at enhancing Ambassadors' knowledge of the European Union (EU) and equipping them with practical skills and a deeper understanding of EU educational policies, empowering them to act as informed and effective representatives within their alliances.

Taken together, these objectives position EUSAF as a comprehensive platform for Ambassadors to engage in meaningful knowledge exchange, build a shared sense of community, and grow as advocates for student engagement within the European Higher Education Area. This document therefore brings together policy recommendations developed by students, recognising and empowering their perspectives and expertise in the role of Student Ambassadors.



02 | RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations build on the inputs and feedback collected during the EUSAF 2025, as well as on the experience of the Erasmus Student Network in supporting students across Europe. These proposals are intended for HEIs, especially responsible to work in internationalisation projects and within the EUAs. They were designed to be adaptable to each context, making them applicable and actionable in a variety of settings.

The process of developing the recommendations started during the Forum, through the collection of feedback and shared challenges encountered by students. During a post-event online meeting, participants further proposed recommendations in four main areas: Governance and Student Engagement; Alliance Awareness and Impact; Building up European and Student Identity; and Communication and Knowledge Transfer Gaps.

The recommendations focus on student engagement and the general student experience within the European Universities Alliances, while not excluding their broader applicability to Erasmus+ and other institutional and mobility schemes. Nonetheless, these recommendations complement the first edition of [EUSAF Recommendation published in 2025](#), as they represent the evolving needs of students involved in governance bodies.

1. Governance and Student Engagement

Student participation in institutional and alliance governance is a core principle of the European Higher Education Area and should be treated as a right rather than a discretionary practice. European Universities Alliances are expected to involve students throughout the full policy cycle – from agenda-setting and consultation to decision-making, implementation and review – in line with European commitments on inclusive and participatory governance (European Commission, 2025a; EHEA, 2024). This section focuses on recommendations that further incorporate the contributions of Student Representatives and Ambassadors in governance structures of European Universities.

Recommendations

1.1 Student Representatives should be involved in decision-making processes within their European Universities.

As the main beneficiaries of Higher Education, students should have a structured and influential presence on governance bodies, with rights that extend beyond consultation. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should ensure that Student Representatives participate in governing boards, steering committees, and relevant working groups with clearly defined mandates, access to information, and (where applicable) voting rights (Estermann, 2021; Topalidou, 2025). Aligning the EUAs with EHEA standards on shared governance and recent analyses of alliance governance models (European Commission, 2024).

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Integrating periodic evaluation into quality assurance measurements of each alliance would allow for the ongoing assessment, ensuring the sustained involvement and meaningful representation of students in governance positions.

1.2 Higher Education Institutions should formally recognise, at the Alliance-Level, the distinct roles of Student Representatives and Ambassadors within Institutional Statutes and frameworks.

The roles of European University Alliance Student Representatives and Student Ambassadors should be recognised as distinct and complementary. In this sense, Student Ambassadors should be responsible for disseminating the activities of the alliance and promoting internationalisation at their local universities. On the other hand, the responsibilities associated with Student Representatives should be set out in institutional or governance documents, drawing on guidance from the [Bologna Follow-up Group](#) on student participation and policy positions from [ESU](#) and [ESN](#) on European Universities (EHEA, 2022; ESU, 2018; Kalinova & Kyriakou, 2023).

In both cases, formal recognition would prevent local student leaders from becoming overloaded and enable alliance representatives and Ambassadors to dedicate sufficient time and energy to alliance governance, outreach, and co-creation activities, while ensuring they maintain a solid understanding of local student needs.

1.3 Higher Education Institutions should facilitate meaningful student engagement in Alliance Governance and Work Packages through recognition and flexible measures.

HEIs should reinforce student involvement in Alliance's Work Packages and governance by establishing a clear framework that recognises this work as an integral part of the learning process, rather than an extracurricular burden. This framework should include the systematic use of credit recognition, micro-credentials, and open badges to acknowledge the skills and competences gained. This approach aligns with European discussions on flexible learning pathways and the recognition of prior and non-formal learning (Brekke & Zhang, 2024; European Commission & Cedefop, 2024; European Commission, 2024; Ruočkutė, 2025).

Executive and Work Package meetings should be organised with clear agendas and timely documentation, taking into account the availability of students. Where appropriate, options for hybrid participation should be made available. Realistic expectations, precise role descriptions and accessible support measures (such as transparent communication channels, mentoring, training and language support) should be in place to ensure that diverse student groups can contribute meaningfully without conflicting with their academic responsibilities. This aligns with EHEA principles on student participation and emerging evidence on alliance governance.

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2. Alliance Awareness and Impact

This section proposes measures to enhance the visibility and perceived relevance of European Universities Alliances, ensuring that communication and outreach are grounded in students' needs and experiences. The recommendations are consistent with ongoing EU discussions on student-centred learning, the promotion of European campuses among students, student participation and the societal role of Higher Education.

Recommendations

2.1 Higher Education Institutions should encourage the participation and contributions of Student Ambassadors in communication strategies.

Student Ambassadors can make a vital contribution to communication strategies, meetings and should be encouraged to participate. They act as a bridge between students and institutional projects, helping to translate alliance activities into language and formats that resonate with the academic community. In line with European guidance on student participation and engagement, involving Ambassadors in communication planning ensures that content is more responsive to students' interests and supports the development of high-level communication and outreach competences (Coimbra Group, 2023; EHEA, 2022). In that sense, Ambassadors should periodically participate in strategic meetings related to communication and alliance activities, with clearly defined roles that reflect their experience, mandate, and time availability.

2.2 Higher Education Institutions are encouraged to co-create local events that promote European values and raise awareness of European Universities to the students.

Higher Education Institutions should organise local events to introduce EUAs and other international projects to the wider university community. Collaborating with student associations, including student unions and other representative bodies, is essential to ensure that events are student-centred and relevant to different programmes and levels of study. The participation of staff and professors also enhances the ecosystem and is fundamental to fostering a European identity throughout the entire academic community.

These events should incorporate practical and interactive components that encourage dialogue, reflection, and awareness of European values, such as democracy, inclusion, and diversity. Formal elements, such as panel discussions and project presentations, can be combined with informal formats, such as discussion cafés and cultural activities. These activities foster a stronger sense of belonging to the institution and the alliance, thereby reinforcing the societal and cultural dimension of the European Universities Initiative.

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2.3 Higher Education Institutions and European Universities Alliances should create Alumni Networks to foster long-standing relationships and engagement.

HEIs should connect their alumni networks, bringing together graduates from different disciplines, cohorts and partner universities, fostering alumni engagement and transnational professional connections in line with EU objectives for a more interconnected European Education Area (European Commission, 2024).

Connecting Alumni networks can act as multipliers by sharing their experiences, mentoring current students and contributing to local and European outreach activities. This positions the alliances as long-term initiatives that support students beyond graduation, strengthening their visibility and impact in society and the labour market over time.

2.4 Higher Education Institutions should adopt student-centred approaches for social media and communication content.

When presenting European Universities Alliances, Higher Education Institutions should adopt a more strategic and student-centred approach to social media and communication channels. Communication should prioritise concise, relevant content that directly impacts students' academic pathways. Tools such as regular newsletters and short 'catch-up' formats (e.g. brief video updates or visual summaries) can help students to stay informed about developments and opportunities without being overwhelmed by information. Content should be co-designed with students and regularly monitored to ensure it reaches diverse student groups, including those less likely to engage with traditional institutional channels.

2.5 Higher Education Institutions are encouraged to enhance the accessibility of Alliance activities to ensure that all students can engage with them.

When creating Forums and events on behalf of Alliances, HEIs should ensure that all students can access activities and events, drawing on European guidance on accessibility and inclusive education. This includes the principles promoted in EU disability strategies and the EHEA's commitments to the social dimension and widening participation (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2020).

This includes using accessible venues, providing appropriate information in advance and designing interactive activities that enable the participation of students with diverse physical, mental or sensory conditions. Integrating accessibility into the planning of international and alliance-related events fosters a sense of community within the academic environment and enables a broader scope of students to participate in internationalisation at home.

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2.6 Academic professors are strongly encouraged to raise awareness of European Universities Alliance activities within courses to facilitate student participation.

As a core element of a bottom-up engagement strategy, professors could take responsibility for systematically presenting European Universities Alliance initiatives in their teaching. This will make participation in alliance projects a visible and expected part of student life rather than a distant activity. In the case of joint degrees, professors can also help identify and encourage students who are well-suited to acting as representatives based on their commitment, profile and availability, and hold democratic elections for class representatives.

In both scenarios, professors can proactively work with Student Representatives of their alliances and/or classes. This shared understanding should result in concrete support, with professors proactively adjusting deadlines, assessments and other academic requirements so that Student Representatives can fulfil their governance and study obligations without penalty.

3. Building European and Student Identity

HEIs have a strong commitment to the European Union, not only as providers of learning and methodologies that prepare students for the workforce, but also in fostering a European and student identity linked to civic engagement. This section focuses on how alliances can promote civic and European values while cultivating a cross-European student community, particularly in the context of the European Universities Alliances. The recommendations align with EHEA commitments on student-centred learning, citizenship, mobility and the social dimension of higher education.

Recommendations:

3.1 Higher Education Institutions should co-create initiatives that foster European values through reflection and dialogue among local and international students.

When organising activities to foster European values within the scope of European Universities, HEI Staff should prioritise events that involve discussion, reflection, and conclusion, allowing students to engage with the components of critical thinking. These initiatives can take place through formal learning components, such as courses and seminars, as well as informal activities, such as debates, cultural events and thematic workshops. Furthermore, these events provide a valuable opportunity for local and international students to engage in further discussion and exchange perspectives, thereby contributing to the fundamental purpose of universities as spaces for cultivating intellectual growth and critical thinking.

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3.2 Higher Education Institutions are encouraged to periodically consult students as co-designers during the implementation of the European Degree and joint programmes.

The European Degree is intended to ensure that degrees are recognised seamlessly and automatically across all EU countries, simplifying the process for graduates to work or study further across borders (European Commission, 2025b). Students are the main stakeholders affected by these policies and should be periodically consulted as co-designers in the implementation and further development of the European Degree and joint programmes. They should participate in structured consultation processes and working groups to ensure that programme design, recognition practices, and mobility arrangements reflect their academic and personal circumstances. This approach aligns with European expectations for student involvement in curriculum design and quality assurance, particularly in innovative transnational formats.

3.3 Higher Education Institutions should recognise student engagement with the use of micro-credentials and digital badges.

The participation and contribution of students within European universities should be formally recognised. Student Representatives, Ambassadors and members of the academic community should receive micro-credentials and other forms of digital recognition for participating in alliance-related projects, governance and community-building activities. These badges and micro-credentials should align with institutional recognition policies and, where relevant, be linked to credit-bearing activities, ensuring coherence and transparency. This will further promote students' participation and foster a sense of a pan-European community.

3.4 Higher Education Institutions and alliances should organise social networking activities that promote peer connections beyond academic achievement.

Alliances should collaborate to create networking activities that encourage social interaction and connections beyond academic achievement alone, recognising the importance of peer networks for fostering a sense of European identity and belonging. To ensure that these events produce valuable outcomes for students' pathways, activities should be carried out in partnership with student organisations. Examples include sports events, thematic clubs and intercultural activities. Such activities contribute to a sense of a shared European student community, complementing students' learning experiences and fostering future workforce connections.

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3.5 Higher Education Institutions should facilitate local activities to integrate joint degree students into the host university community.

As the core beneficiaries of the alliance's outcomes, students on joint degree programmes should receive dedicated support to help them integrate into the local community. HEIs should organise local activities designed specifically to foster the integration of joint master's and other jointly delivered programme students into the host university community. These activities could include welcome programmes, mentoring schemes, language and intercultural activities, and facilitated engagement with local student associations. Such measures would help ensure that joint programme students feel part of both the alliance and the local academic community, while also reducing the risk of isolation and mental health issues.

4. Communication and Knowledge Transfer Gaps

Clear, structured communication and robust knowledge-transfer mechanisms are essential for sustaining meaningful student participation in the EUAs, as well as for preventing the loss of experience across student cohorts. The following recommendations aim to ensure consistency in transparency, accountability, and the sustainability of student engagement in higher education governance.

Recommendations

4.1 Local Coordinators should ensure effective communication with students and student bodies through structured channels and regular meetings.

Effective communication is fundamental to ensuring that alliances continue to be student-centred and have student bodies as key stakeholders. Local coordinators should organise periodic, structured meetings with Student Representatives and Ambassadors, with a clear agenda to ensure efficient use of resources and time, realistic objectives and timely circulation of documents, while providing clear outputs of the meetings.

Student unions and associations, such as ESN sections, should also be invited to participate in these meetings, as they can facilitate clear communication with local students about the outcomes of the alliances. That way, students can provide smart feedback to the alliance, and HEIs can ensure sustainable participation of students within internationalisation strategies.

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4.2 Local Coordinators should co-design handbooks and capacity-building activities for Student Representatives and Ambassadors.

Student Representatives and Ambassadors should have access to local training opportunities that enable them to carry out their roles effectively and in alignment with the European Universities Alliances. Local Coordinators should collaborate with students to design a concise handbook for Student Representatives and a set of capacity-building activities.

The handbook should outline the roles, rights and responsibilities of Student Representatives, as well as the relevant procedures, timelines and key contacts. It should be updated at the start of each mandate according to the priorities of the student council. Capacity-building activities, such as training sessions, briefings and peer-learning events, should be embedded in alliance work plans and linked to institutional quality and governance structures.

4.3 Higher Education Institutions and Alliance Staff should increase transparency to reduce informational asymmetries across alliance levels.

Students are often the last to be informed about developments within alliances, creating significant information asymmetries at different levels. In line with the core principles of the EHEA and the importance of student engagement (EHEA, 2022; European Commission, 2024), Higher Education Institutions and Alliance Staff should ensure that Student Representatives and Ambassadors are consistently included in the primary internal communication channels. They should have access to all non-confidential general and strategic information and updates. These measures would enable students to fulfil their roles as representatives and Ambassadors to the fullest extent, as valuable participants in the European Universities Initiatives.

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04 | PARTICIPANTS

Students

Małgorzata Niedzielska
 Alexandru Popescu
 Lucas de Uña
 Alessandro Marini
 Simona Gibalová
 Lara Mohring-Landsberger
 Iwona Pajqk
 Reka Judit Boros
 Giulia Rebecca Conte
 Markus Simon
 Ivan Svac
 Yousra Balil
 İlker Kayra Orman
 Kateryna Butyrina
 Krzysztof Wąsiewski
 Adrián Binka
 Jade Beaupierre
 Zofia Róžańska
 Danushi Rodrigo
 Philipp Schubert
 Francisca Albuquerque
 Avaneep Kamal
 Alejandro Ortega García
 Caroline Jegaden
 Sarah Bermann
 Leon Hebeisen
 Ioannis Karagiannidis
 Carolina Gironés Fraile
 Liam Barbosa
 Eckert Tilmann
 Annika Breuer
 Anaël Beutin
 Soufyane Chafik
 Jose Ignatio de la Torre
 Thomas Crabbe
 Kateryna Tsepurdey
 Alex Peter
 Pauliina Aaltonen
 Daniel Rodríguez Caro
 Valeria Quintana Solis
 Alexander Lueg
 Santeri Heino
 Mirela Adela Secrieri
 Marcel Sobacki
 Sanni Vesala

University

University of Warsaw, Poland
 Constantin Brâncuși University of Târgu Jiu, Romania
 University of Granada, Spain
 Università degli studi di Perugia, Italy
 University of Pavol Jozef Šafárik in Košice, Slovak Republic
 University of Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy, Bulgaria
 University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland
 ELTE, Hungary
 Central European University, Austria
 Stockholm University, Sweden
 Polytechnic University of Setúbal, Portugal
 Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), Spain
 Istanbul Technical University, Türkiye
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 Gdansk University of Technology, Poland
 Comenius University Bratislava, Slovakia
 Université de Strasbourg, France
 SWPS University, Poland
 Atlantic Technological University, Ireland
 University of Rostock, Germany
 University of Porto, Portugal
 LUT - Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology, Finland
 University of Cantabria, Spain
 Université Le Havre Normandie, France
 University of Cologne, Germany
 Çukurova University, Türkiye
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- **Authors:** Heloise Zilotti and Dominika Gozik
- **Editing:** Simone Lepore, Małgorzata Chromy and Joanna Jędrzejak-Pikuła



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