

# Mission Statement

Updated January 2023



**University of Birmingham (United Kingdom)**

**Università degli Studi di Firenze (Italy)**

**Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (France)**

**Universität zu Köln (Germany)**

**Universität Konstanz (Germany)**

**Linnéuniversitetet (Sweden)**

**Universidad de Murcia (Spain)**

**Nantes Université (France)**

**Universidade de Santiago de Compostela (Spain)**

**Semmelweis Egyetem (Hungary)**

**Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine)**

## Foreword – EUniWell in 2023

### EUniWell's success in the pilot phase

EUniWell – the European University for Well-Being – was selected as a European University Alliance in 2020. Three years later, the results of the pilot phase are highly encouraging.

On the one hand, innovative and impactful initiatives have been designed and implemented from scratch and are today at the forefront of transnational cooperation in higher education. The Seed Funding programme, the EUniWell Winter and Summer Schools, the Open Lecture Series and the Research Incubator, to name a few, provide an unmatched opportunity to enhance cooperation between our institutions and enlarge participation of our student and staff communities around the topic of well-being.

On the other hand, a shared trajectory is being implemented through the development of common infrastructures, strategies and roadmaps that are moving us closer towards a truly sustainable European University. The Quality Culture Framework, the shared HR Well-Being Strategy and Roadmap, the EUniWell IT Roadmap and the joint participation in other European-funded projects such as #Research and the Teacher Academy are contributing to embedding EUniWell in our varied university systems.

All of this has been achieved with our students at the centre. At EUniWell, students are involved at every institutional level: a EUniWell Student Board was created and includes representatives from each partner institution; the Chief Student Officer and another Student Executive have participation and voting rights in the Steering Group, the EUniWell Board and the Rectors' Assembly; and local Student Arenas have been created at member universities. But most importantly, our initiatives involve students at each step of the design and development processes in order to ensure that they are aligned with student needs and to maximise their impact.

Our success has been put into words by the European Commission in their mid-term evaluation report, calling EUniWell an “exciting, ambitious and original alliance” and specifically praising our coordination efforts across partner institutions, our dissemination initiatives, the outputs and milestones achieved and the efficient use of resources.

With this success in mind, EUniWell faces the upcoming period with a renewed confidence and commitment towards our vision, mission, values, and ways of working as we formulated them three years ago.

## Expanding EUniWell

Throughout the past three years, EUniWell has continued to grow, bringing new members onboard and integrating them into the daily activities of the Alliance. The multiple expressions of interest in joining the Alliance from all around Europe showcase EUniWell's relevance and prominence in the European university space.

**Universidad de Murcia (Spain)**, an institution with a strong history rooted in diversity and inclusion, joined EUniWell as a Partner in March 2022. The decision was based on Murcia's academic qualities in teacher training, of particular added value for EUniWell's Teacher Education Arena, as well as their international research reputation in SDG-related fields and in core topics for the Alliance (such as international law, urban environment and climate change, AI in clinical settings and open science) and their many initiatives to support early-career researchers. Furthermore, the addition provides EUniWell with a portal to Latin America. They are also a Campus Mare Nostrum member, with solid ties to Mediterranean universities. Upon joining, Murcia immediately started to contribute to the Alliance's mission, especially through the four arenas for teaching and research.

**Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine)** joined EUniWell as a member in August 2022, after a relationship of collaboration was first established in Spring 2022 in response to the war in Ukraine. KNU is the country's largest national higher education institution. It is recognised as one of its most prestigious universities, and is the country's top research producer. Their addition is a particularly meaningful step towards upholding EUniWell's values of peace, democracy and freedom of research and teaching.

**Universität Konstanz (Germany)** joined EUniWell as a Partner in fall 2022. It is one of Germany's eleven universities awarded the status of excellency. Already actively aligned with the SDGs both at institutional level and with respect to its research and teaching, Universität Konstanz will contribute to core EUniWell areas such as inequality research, ecological sustainability, teacher education and health, as well as build on their long-standing collaborations with several Alliance members. Also, Universität Konstanz is a model for innovative governance and career paths – invaluable assets to foster EUniWell's ambition to become the employer of the future.

**Inalco – Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (France)** joined EUniWell as a Partner in December 2022. Inalco's unique focus on language-based area studies strengthens EUniWell's multiculturalism and multilingualism dimensions, both of which are key dimensions of well-being. It also provides EUniWell with the opportunity for developing a future-proof and research-based implementation of area studies. Upon Inalco's arrival, our commitment to these dimensions has been reaffirmed by the creation of a new dedicated Multiculturalism and Multilingualism Arena.

**Universidade de Santiago de Compostela** joined EUniWell as a Partner in fall 2022. A comprehensive and research-intensive university, deeply rooted in its geographical context but with a clear international vocation, USC will not only increase EUniWell's presence in Latin America, but also open a channel to Lusophone countries, on account of the linguistic proximity between Galician and Portuguese. The university also brings its experience in EU-funded programmes and the development of cross-border joint degrees (thanks to its participation in the cross-national Universidade sem Fronteiras, which involves the public universities of Galicia and Northern Portugal).

Sadly, the University of Leiden (Netherlands) left the Alliance at the end of 2022, after a transition period that saw their responsibilities successfully redistributed amongst the rest of the EUniWell members. Nevertheless, EUniWell and the University of Leiden will continue working together through our ongoing cooperation with Una Europa, the European University of which they are now members.

All 11 members are equally committed and involved in EUniWell as a long-term European University Initiative, and we are all core participants in all processes, including decision-making. However, from a formal perspective, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and the University of Birmingham are “Associated Partners” in the new Erasmus+ call because United Kingdom and Ukrainian universities are not currently eligible to be full partners in these calls. Thus, we consider the Alliance to have 11 “members”, but only 9 of them appear as “Partners” under certain funding calls, such as Erasmus+.

Considering the success of our enlargement process, EUniWell remains open to further expansion beyond the current 11 members. In the future, we will continue to consider new expressions of interest and potentially incorporating new members, notably from Eastern Europe, who can contribute to our vision and mission. We have a clear expansion process and criteria, and we are already in the process of strategically targeting other global areas and universities which complement our well-being profile.

## **Consolidating our innovative approach to well-being**

One of our flagship initiatives in EUniWell was the creation of teaching and research Arenas focused on topics related to well-being. Arenas are network formats with lean hierarchies in which researchers, managers and students from multidisciplinary backgrounds work co-creatively on a given topic. They are also an attitude – they reflect our willingness to be open and work in interdisciplinary teams.

The success of the Arenas has convinced us to place them at the heart of our initiative. They will embody the spirit of EUniWell and will complement the classical structure of European Universities around processes (mobility, certification, governance...) by enabling a thematic approach to the

development of new curricula, the consolidation of research platforms and the integration of our institutional strategies.

The thematic focus of the Arenas has also been revised, building on past performance and an updated bibliometric analysis of the current members' strengths in research and teaching, as well as their specialisation in Sustainable Development Goals. Four of them have evolved from existing arenas; the fifth is a specifically designed new one to reflect the important cultural dimension of well-being, which includes language, norms and values, and histories. The five Arenas are thus the following:

- Health and Well-being
- Social Equality and Well-being
- Environmental Change and Well-being
- Well-being in Teaching Future Generations
- Culture, Multilingualism and Well-being.

## **EUniWell in the current context**

The past three years have dramatically demonstrated the importance of Well-Being and had a massive impact on our universities.

Far from launching our first mobility initiatives in spring 2020, we found ourselves in lockdown – something unimaginable a few weeks before. Beyond the terrible toll in terms of human lives, the pandemic has had a major impact on mental health and especially on that of our student population. It upended our practices and demonstrated that universities can be incredibly resourceful and innovative: in a few days, we moved to fully online teaching modalities, we were at the forefront of Europe's answer to the health crisis.

Two years later, almost day for day, Europe was once again confronted to an existential crisis with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The unthinkable once again became reality. The students and staff of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv found themselves at war at the heart of Europe: students and professors took up arms, others became refugees, the university itself has been bombed. As EUniWell we answered by issuing a clear statement in defence of Ukraine and immediately launched initiatives to support the Ukrainian nation and more specifically the staff and students of Ukrainian universities.

Both events deeply question the role of universities in today's world. They convinced us more than ever that our future lies together as one European University, that our responsibility is to work to address the great societal challenges that we face. We cannot know the future, but we can prepare for it as EUniWell.

## The Mission Statement, updated

With this new approach in mind, all EUniWell members together considered the original Mission and Vision Statement and came to the conclusion that it is timelier than ever and that it remains fully aligned with our ambition. Therefore, it was decided to maintain its core content and further contextualise it, to address the current situation in Europe, the new composition of our consortium, and our updated approach to building a European University.

This updated Mission Statement brings us one step closer to our long-term ambition for 2030 of becoming a model for European Universities and the employer of the future, operating in an open and boundaryless transnational education and research environment.

## Vision and Mission

### Ambition

### Well-Being in Context

In October 2019, the Council of Europe outlined a series of recommendations for the European Commission and the Member States. These acknowledge that “wellbeing is a principal aim of the European Union”, underline that well-being includes “people, societies and the planet” and promote a “horizontal approach based on cross-sectoral collaboration”<sup>i</sup>. They build on a growing number of policy papers by the UN, OECD, EU and individual countries<sup>ii</sup>.

These recommendations, all stressing the crucial importance of well-being, underlie our decision to create EUniWell, the European University for well-being<sup>iii</sup>.

Well-being is multidimensional. It ranges from individual quality of life to social cohesion and environmental balance at a planetary level. It implies an understanding of the relations between these dimensions and the capacity to boost their synergies. It implies a “move beyond GDP” towards new ways of measuring progress that “put well-being at the centre of policy”<sup>iv</sup>. As the Council of Europe underlines, “[w]ellbeing is ... at the heart of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to which all Member States are committed”<sup>v</sup>.

This emphasis on well-being as “systemic” and “sustainable” aims to answer a paradox. Today’s Europeans are members of the healthiest, wealthiest and most peaceful generation ever to have lived. Yet, the long-term well-being of our youth is endangered by challenges such as climate change, new diseases,

rising populism, the war in Ukraine and a growing divide between different groups in society<sup>vi</sup>. Solving this paradox will require a holistic approach in which institutions of higher education, research and innovation have a leading role to play.

## Well-Being in Universities

Universities, like all institutions, are part of the broader social tissue. Their well-being depends on internal cohesion, external environment, and the right degree of permeability between the two. Each university, each educational programme, and each individual can increase their individual well-being. However, their well-being does not exist in isolation: it depends on the interactions within themselves, and with the outside world. As both the outer world and the inner institutional reality evolve, the balance constantly needs to be adjusted.

Within a university, well-being thus necessarily concerns all actors. It also concerns all fields from health, education, citizenship, rights and responsibilities to economics, culture, environment, and language. It further considers how our societies are influenced by the digital transformation. It requires enhancing skills such as critical thinking, digital literacy, entrepreneurship, interdisciplinarity and social responsibility and shifting to a model whereby education is a lifelong experience. Just as importantly, it implies breaking down boundaries within our institutions, between our institutions and beyond them.

This is key because universities, like the rest of our world, must change. We must accept that each of our actions has a wide-ranging impact that is never univocally positive or negative. Increasing individual well-being (for example by training future leaders) does not necessarily improve societal well-being (as inequality may rise), just as increasing societal well-being has had a dramatic impact on environmental well-being.

To become aware of how improvements within an institution can contribute to the common good outside the institution thus requires a pluri-institutional approach in the same way as tackling global challenges requires a pluri-disciplinary approach.

## EUniWell: European University for Well-Being

EUniWell unites eleven universities from eleven European regions in a cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary, knowledge-based perspective. Working in partnership with societal stakeholders and across the research-innovation-education nexus, we aim to generate new knowledge, play a critical, intermediary role in delivering research-based policy to inform decision-

making, underpin education, training and skills development and have a measurable impact on European citizens' well-being and quality of life.

It is by bringing together our different expertise, perspectives, systems, structures, and local contexts that we can identify synergies, challenge our way of teaching and doing research, and develop new perspectives that in turn enable a transformation of each of our institutions.

We have defined a core mission to understand, improve, measure, and rebalance the well-being of individuals, our own community, and society as a whole and formulated our values – democratic, inclusive, diverse, research- and challenge-based, inter- and transdisciplinary, entrepreneurial, and co-creational. We fully align with the European values and will foster European identity.

Our focus is on five priority Arenas where we are world leaders in both research and education, where the strengths and synergies of our universities are strongest, and where we can have the greatest impact: Health and Well-being; Social Equality and Well-being; Environmental Change and Well-being; Well-being in Teaching Future Generations; and Culture, Multilingualism and Well-being<sup>vii</sup>. These are closely aligned to 6 key Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)<sup>viii</sup>: SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being); SDG 4 (Quality Education); SDG 5 (Gender Equality); SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality); SDG 13 (Climate Action); SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

In the short-term, students will be able to follow any course on any EUniWell campus, academic staff will teach on different campuses and be part of trans-institutional research groups, and administrative staff will be able to spend periods working on any of our campuses. Experiences of all these groups will be enriched by new forms of digital, blended, and physical interaction and co-creation with a diverse range of societal stakeholders.

Over the next ten years, this will progressively lead to a common curriculum marked by cutting-edge research- and challenged-based education and training, and a common identity across our eleven universities and communities.

In the long-term, EUniWell will create a seamless, state-of-the-art transnational educational environment in which our boundaries will dissolve as we become a multi-campus European University strongly intertwined with its local, regional, and global contexts.

## **Vision and Mission**

Together we will help create a world in which individual, societal, and environmental well-being are in synergy, in which we flourish and prosper together.

We will become a multi-campus European University that:

1. empowers our cutting-edge research, education and training and interacts ever more closely with society to enhance global and regional well-being in social, environmental, economic, and cultural terms;
2. promotes internal well-being for each student and member of staff, for each educational programme, for each disciplinary field and department, for each campus and for the university as a whole;
3. multiplies synergies by breaking down boundaries, both internal and external, increasing the permeability of our structures, and shifting to more inclusive and holistic ways of driving change by evaluating what we do and how we do it.

Our first mission covers the traditional core responsibilities of universities – teaching, research, and societal impact – but places them under the overarching framework of global well-being. It requires us to explicitly analyse and measure the multi-level impact of each action.

Our second mission is a mirror of the first. It underlines the importance of ensuring that the way we work is aligned with our vision, that the vision we carry is also one we live on a daily basis.

Fulfilling these two missions implies a change of frameworks, cultures, and mind-sets. To achieve this, our third mission focuses on the way we interact both internally and externally.

Coming together as one European University gives us the power to truly transform our approaches and the impact we can have within our institutions, the European Higher Education Area, and society at large. Coming together makes it possible to question the way we work and the boundaries that separate us, to address the growing global divides and ensure that the world not only survives but thrives. Coming together we can transform faster and better to support radical change, and to unite our mutual strengths. Coming together is synonymous with well-being.

## Addressing Global Challenges

### Aligning Research and Education with Global Challenges

Coming together as a European University enlarges our scope and increases our critical mass thus enabling both deeper specialisation and more transversal

approaches. More importantly, it makes it possible to compare different models and identify ways of increasing our impact.

This is at the heart of EUniWell’s ambition and perfectly reflects a shared strategic direction, which our eleven universities have taken over the last ten years. In this period, our research shows an increased engagement in topics directly relevant to the United Nations’ SDGs. This shift can be remarkably demonstrated by the rising percentage of publications on SDG topics from an average of just under 20% to over 30% within this time frame.

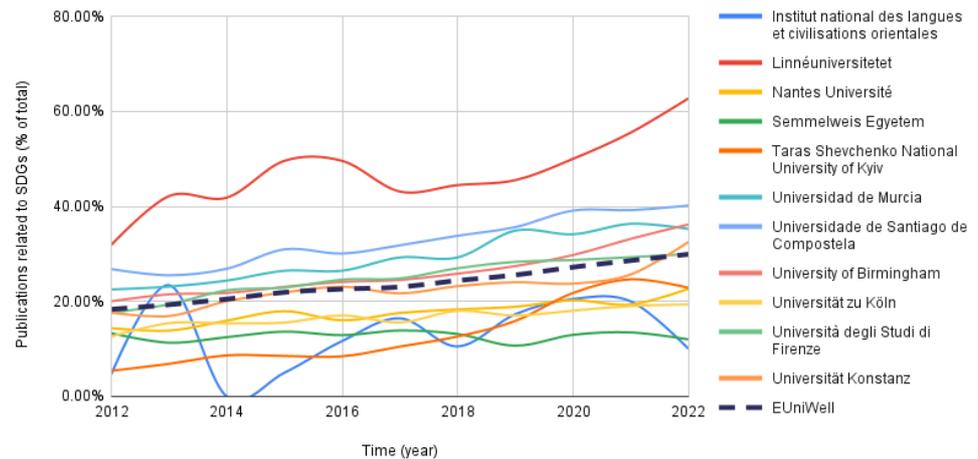


Fig. 1: Evolution of the percentage of publications identified as dealing with SDGs in the total productions of each university in the last decade <sup>ix</sup>.

As a European University, we will build on this expertise to ensure that the percentage of publications concerning SDGs reaches 40%, ensuring both maximal social impact on our priority fields, whilst continuing to nurture our expertise in fundamental research, without which we could not develop cutting-edge new approaches. Perhaps even more significantly, we also aim to embed this focus on global challenges in our educational programmes.

Doing this will enable us to offer our students the possibility to build personalised trajectories around key societal challenges across our eleven universities. It reflects the way well-being will transform our educational programmes.

## Defining key priority Arenas and placing them at the heart of our activity

At the beginning of the EUniWell initiative, in order to identify priorities, we launched a bottom-up approach with a series of design-challenge events and workshops amongst our researchers that identified four key themes, closely linked to SDGs, in which we have strong expertise and where we felt that increasing our collaborations makes sense. They formed the basis for the creation of our four Thematic Arenas in the pilot phase. At the end of 2022, the focus of these Arenas was updated through another wave of participative

workshops, and a new fifth Arena was created. These five Arenas are reflected in the five thematic Work Packages that are placed at the heart of our proposal for the new 4-year funding period of the Alliance. They are the following: Health and Well-being; Social Equality and Well-being; Environmental Change and Well-being; Well-being in Teaching Future Generations; and Culture, Multilingualism and Well-being.

Finally, we mapped our scientific production over the last 10 years according to the SDGs.



Fig. 2. SDGs Specialization Index of EUniWell member universities, compared to total production of all EU27 universities. Data from Scopus (2012-2022). EUniWell is specialised in areas for which the index is above 1. For example, the share of articles that concern SDG10 is 1.13 times higher within EUniWell than within the EU27 as a whole. The SDGs that correspond to our 5 priority arenas as well as transversal SDGs are highlighted in pink.

As the graph above shows, our areas of specialisation are closely aligned with our five Arenas. As we have detailed in our analysis in the annex, each of these Arenas is deeply multidisciplinary with dozens of disciplinary fields contributing to our expertise, many of which are transversal across all five arenas.

## Empowering Diversity

### Building on Different Environments

Well-being is closely linked to both the natural and socio-economic environment. Being situated in the heart of major post-industrial cities with large immigrant populations such as Birmingham or Köln changes both the student profile and the social expectations when compared to semi-rural settings like Växjö and Kalmar, historical cities such as Firenze or Santiago de Compostela or global cities like Paris. A maritime port like Nantes or Murcia does not have the same feeling as a Central European city like Budapest. More dramatically and significantly, in Kyiv, the invasion of a European country and

the ongoing bombardment of civilian populations questions our very understanding of well-being as well as what level we can take for granted in Europe.

This is why EUniWell includes universities situated in a wide variety of environments, which cater to students from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. It is why all our city councils are partners of EUniWell. Enabling students and staff and members of our wider environment to discover and understand different realities and working together to identify both commonalities and specificities is key to our ambition.

## Spanning the Centuries

Well-being is deeply cultural. Each university was born under different circumstances and for different purposes, and these conditions continue to mould the universities today.

Our oldest university was founded in 1321 and a further EUniWell university was founded in every subsequent century (other than the 1600s) up until 2010, when our youngest member was founded. EUniWell thus spans 700 years and combines the rich and varied histories of our universities, with their different institutional legacies, traditions, and cultural settings.

These different histories give us an understanding of how tradition and innovation can complement each other.

## Aligning Institutional Missions under a Shared Vision

EUniWell includes classical comprehensive research-intensive universities, practice-oriented universities like Linnéuniversitetet and specialised universities like Semmelweis Egyetem or Inalco. This brings strong added-value: comprehensive members can draw on the wide range of disciplines that concern well-being; specialist members can provide focus, scale and expertise on specific aspects in, for example, health; practice-oriented members can contribute effective routes for knowledge transfer and the preparation of students for employment, e.g. by developing entrepreneurial skills.

The diversity of our profiles is also well reflected in our civic collaborations with a great variety of societal actors, including schools, and the private sector. This rich and diverse dynamic of collaborations gives us an inspiring basis for the development of new forms of interaction and co-creation with society at large.

As a result, each of our universities performs well according to different indicators, which range from classical bibliographic tools to employability or innovations indexes, and measures of social impact and teaching quality.

The diversity and complementarity of our environments, cultures and profiles will multiply the value of mobility for our students. It will give them much greater choice and a much wider range of experiences. It will enable them to live a truly European university experience with the security that their choices in one campus will be automatically validated throughout the eleven campuses.

## Opening Boundaries

### Within Universities and across Disciplinary Fields

There is a wide consensus within academia that a meaningful and sustainable change in culture through a holistic and system-thinking approach is much needed to ensure well-being of staff and students<sup>x</sup>. Each of our universities contains a multitude of boundaries related to organisational and socio-cultural realities. These boundaries have a massive impact on the likelihood of students to go abroad, the success of female academics, or the graduation rates of minorities. They limit entrepreneurship and social engagement because these are perceived differently from department to department, due to organisational constraints and cultural preconceptions, which can lead to invisible barriers to participation. For example, men in STEM disciplines are more likely to engage in entrepreneurship programmes designed to create companies.

Our diversity in internal structures provides EUniWell with a privileged setting to reflect on possible new frameworks, new ways of working, of addressing cultural issues relating to diversity and inclusion<sup>xi</sup>, open science<sup>xii</sup>, reward systems and talent development<sup>xiii</sup>. We will start with pilot formats but with a system-level approach and a view to scaling up.

Similarly, the way disciplinary fields are structured and interdisciplinarity is promoted is different in each of our institutions, just as is the way research feeds teaching and the weight that is afforded to fundamental and applied approaches.

By coming together as EUniWell, we can learn from each other and question boundaries that exist without us even being aware of them.

### Between Universities

EUniWell universities currently operate in very different national and regional contexts. In some of these, the higher education systems are weakly stratified; in others, they are more highly segregated. However, our countries are all

impacted by increased competition, fuelled by international rankings, which are increasing boundaries between universities.

By creating EUniWell, our eleven universities are taking a stand against this. We aim to create a new type of university that brings together diverse universities for the benefit of society. Our universities have been chosen because of their differences and because they bridge so many different boundaries: *in varietate concordia*.

By working together, we expect to complement existing metrics applied to universities, and to elaborate new ones that are more aligned with our Mission to increase well-being<sup>xiv</sup>. We expect EUniWell to be an important player in promoting a more equal higher education system, one in which social impact, to take one example, is measured not only by the capacity to “market” knowledge through patents or start-ups but according to students’ competences, their educational processes and their understanding of the rights/duties of citizenship, according to our capacity at setting-up joint research, design, and co-creation processes with societal actors.

The strong research-intensive component of EUniWell – albeit within different institutional settings – enables us to build on our reputation for research excellence. Integrating a broader basis, more diverse approaches and partners in our way of working will ultimately strengthen our research design, research outcomes, our degree of innovation as well as the quality of our teaching. We will thus demonstrate that diversity, inclusion, and co-creation do not come at the expense of research excellence, but actually drive and accelerate it, enable equity and enhance universal well-being.

## **Across the European Higher Education and Research Ecosystem**

Although we tend to imagine that universities in different countries are comparable in terms of their roles within national higher education and research ecosystems, this is not completely true.

To take one example, Università degli Studi di Firenze and the University of Birmingham are both comprehensive, research-intensive universities. Yet, education-wise, Università degli Studi di Firenze has a higher percentage of undergraduate students than the University of Birmingham because the Birmingham higher education ecosystem includes other universities with high proportions of undergraduate students (such as Newman University or University College Birmingham). Whereas, research-wise, Firenze hosts various national research centres of the Italian CNR (IGSG, ICCOM, IFAC, INO, OVI, IBE), which are independent from the university and do not exist in Birmingham.

By working with Associated Partners, such as national research organisations, we can compare the way our ecosystems function and help to open boundaries and identify better models of cooperation.

## Beyond Higher Education and Research

Perhaps even more interestingly, the boundaries between universities and institutions whose core mission is not in higher education and research are also far more diffuse than sometimes imagined.

Semmelweis Egyetem is not only a university specialised in Health Sciences but the leading provider of healthcare in Hungary. The various university hospitals are thus fully integrated within the university governance, unlike in universities like Köln, Murcia or Nantes where they are independent institutions. This has an enormous impact not only on higher education and research but on the structure of healthcare itself.

In another priority field for EUniWell, teacher education, where we provide education and training for future teachers, Semmelweis Egyetem, Universität zu Köln, and University of Birmingham own and manage secondary schools. As such, these universities are secondary school operators and highlight teacher education as an important strategic component in all performance areas.

Working together thus necessarily implies opening our European University to institutions in other sectors such as secondary education or health. Including Associated Partners such as university hospitals and schools in our consortium makes it possible to co-design solutions to societal challenges and improve well-being in our communities.

This in turn gives us a unique forum to address the wider participation of universities in the regional ecosystem, which is one of the priorities of the European Commission: “In the context of smart specialisation we also need to know how HEIs can better promote knowledge dissemination and application through cooperating with regional partners, or with their most important ‘products’; students who can provide valuable human capital”.<sup>xv</sup>

## Beyond Europe

Finally, our diversity in terms of student bodies and our strong presence across continents will help us reach a deeper understanding of well-being through different cultures not only within Europe but throughout the world.

Climate change, political and health crises, economic inequalities and population growth are global issues (as the ongoing Coronavirus crisis clearly demonstrates). In each case, the world’s ability to cope with these challenges is equal to that of the weakest link. Analysing them in terms of well-being requires

not only a global approach but one which is based on an equitable bi- and multi-directional exchange and on bottom-up collaboration.

Here we will benefit from the strengths and complementarities of our members: Murcia and Santiago de Compostela's strong links to Latin America and Mediterranean countries; a focus on African studies at Birmingham, Firenze, Köln and Nantes; close links to Asia in all our universities and in particular Köln and Birmingham; Santiago de Compostela's channel to Lusophone countries; and last, but not least, Inalco, which teaches and conducts research on the greatest number of languages and cultures anywhere in the world.

Together we aim to build more tolerant and integrated societies, to contribute to a diverse Europe and a better world.

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- <sup>i</sup> See EU Council Conclusions (24 October 2019) on “The Economy of Wellbeing”, §§2-3 (URL: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/epsco/2019/10/24/>).
  - <sup>ii</sup> See for example, the OECD Background Paper on “The Economy of Well-Being” (2019/06/21); Stiglitz et al. (2009), written for the French government, or Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law in Bhutan (Chase 2017; URL: <https://today.law.harvard.edu/feature/law-happiness-bhutan/>).
  - <sup>iii</sup> “Creating an economy of well-being is not just the mission of governments” (OECD Background Paper on “The Economy of Well-Being” [2019/06/21], p. 7).
  - <sup>iv</sup> See Council Conclusions on “The Economy of Wellbeing” (2019/10/24), §§1, 5. At a global level, new measures include the World Happiness Report 2019 produced by UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (URL: <https://worldhappiness.report/>), the OECD Better Life Index (URL: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>), or the UN Human Development Report 2019 (URL: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf>). The Global Wellness Institute (n.d.) provides a useful list (URL: <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/happiness-wellbeing-index/>).
  - <sup>v</sup> Council Conclusions on “The Economy of Wellbeing” (2019/10/24), §8
  - <sup>vi</sup> As the European new Green Deal and the latest UN report on SDGs underline, now is the time to act: “[T]he world is not on track for achieving most of the 169 targets that comprise the Goals. [This] raises strong concerns and sounds the alarm for the international community. Much more needs to happen – and quickly – to bring about the transformative changes that are required: impeding policies should urgently be reversed or modified, and recent advances that holistically promote the Goals should be scaled up in an accelerated fashion.” Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now. Science for Achieving Sustainable Development, p. 20 (URL: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24797GSDR\\_report\\_2019.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24797GSDR_report_2019.pdf)); see also A European Green Deal – Striving to Be the First Climate-Neutral Continent (URL: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)).
  - <sup>vii</sup> These arenas include (but are not limited to) fields such as aging, cancer, infectious diseases, human rights and peace studies, climate change, urban environments and human interactions and discourses, as well as teacher education.
  - <sup>viii</sup> UN Sustainable Development Goals (URL: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>).
  - <sup>ix</sup> SIRIS Academic methodology. Publication data source Scopus. See Duran-Silva, Nicolau, Enric Fuster, Francesco Alessandro Massucci & Arnau Quinquillà (2019). A Controlled Vocabulary Defining the

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