

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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Acknowledgements: The YERUN Brussels Office thanks YERUN Rectors, Presidents and Official Representatives, YERUN Coordinators and all members of the different YERUN groups who have contributed to all the different sections included in this report.

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FOREWORD: Prof. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija

Rector of the University of Rijeka and YERUN President

We have reached the end of the present year with an exacerbated understanding of the complexity of global challenges. However, at the same time, we are aware of universities and science's power to counter them. After my first year as YERUN's President, I feel even more encouraged to state that YERUN is a **community** of universities that recognises the unique contribution our network and our collective wisdom have in developing models of institutional and social resilience, which are now more important than ever. Thus, the year 2022 was denoted by **YERUN's heightened activities** conducting our Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which aims to develop talents, an open culture of excellence, and responsible and engaged universities. We have documented our intense engagement in implementing the ERA Policy Agenda 2021-2024. In 2022, YERUN was heartened by four new members: the University of Klagenfurt, the University of Potsdam, Stirling University, and the University of South-Eastern Norway. Encouraged by our new partners, YERUN has become an even more relevant EU stakeholder in advancing our goals and is internally enhanced by novel perspectives and insights.

The year 2022 has simultaneously introduced the world to a post-pandemic phase and novel challenges. Coexistence with **COVID-19** oriented us to the promises of rapidly transforming our system towards a higher education's digital and environmentally sustainable future. It has also faced us with novel dilemmas and sensitised us to mental health concerns, the threats of social polarisation and radicalisation, and the significance of quality social relationships. Although individuals came to trust scientific findings and solutions, we have countered the unexpected range and causes of distrust and skepticism towards science. We had witnessed a year when Europe underwent another war, causing inconceivable human suffering. The costs of the pandemic and the war in **Ukraine** multiplied the economic and financial challenges impacting the quality of our lives and work. We now feel global warming's consequences are in the form of an aggressive climate crisis and energy supply issues that profoundly affect institutional and civic well-being. Concurrently, demographic changes and migrations are reshaping the world, requiring stable resilience and adaptability. In short, we are living in a time of polycrisis. Diverse simultaneous crises point towards correlated causes and the necessity of sturdier university engagement as rational centers of concentrated expertise. In YERUN, we comprehend this polycrisis as a moment of radical reflection about adapting and transforming universities and the whole **European Research Area** to genuinely render them the beacons of European values and influential stakeholders of social resilience.

In YERUN, we have closely monitored, endeavored to understand, and supported our Ukrainian colleagues and students, with our universities exerting significant efforts. In this, we focused on the issues of digitalisation and sustainable development. We have published a Joint Statement on the exemption of educational and scientific digital infrastructure from the Digital Service Act. We have organised thematic discussions on sustainable development goals in all their aspects, formed an ad hoc group on SDGs, and published the paper '**Education for a more sustainable world: what can we learn from young European research universities**'. Furthermore, we increased the number of working groups and meetings, channeling our collective deliberation.

FOREWORD: Prof. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija

Rector of the University of Rijeka and YERUN President

Following two pandemic years of virtual meetings, we have been delighted to meet again in person during the General Assemblies at the University Carlos III de Madrid and the University of Maastricht. These events operated as excellent opportunities to open thematic dialogues on two cardinal subjects: the **European Strategy for Universities and the Research Assessment Reform**.

The European Strategy for Universities explicitly highlights the role of the **European University Initiative**. As 16 YERUN members partake in 7 European University alliances, we profoundly value our collaborative capacities and conception of the developmental orientation of European universities as lighthouses of European values and the European way of life. This active participation also demonstrates our genuine understanding of the synergic effect of alliance memberships and our joint work in YERUN. In 2022, besides endeavoring to contribute to the European University Strategy's realisation, YERUN has profiled itself as a frontrunner in advocating for and actively articulating the initiative and activities related to the Research Assessment Reform, which led to the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment, **CoARA**. Connected to this topic, YERUN launched the paper '**Rethinking Academic Careers: Cultural Change as a Key Bottleneck to be Addressed**' as the outcome of a working process carried out with members of the YERUN ad hoc group on developing academic careers. The openness of YERUN's members to this initiative stems precisely from continuous reflection on changing social demands, increasing expectations from universities, and the need to recognise and valorise our researchers' broadening contributions to diverse areas of education, research, leadership, innovation, and social impact.

These and many other activities in 2022 have positioned YERUN as a community of highly engaged and vibrant universities. None of them would have been possible without our members' accumulated knowledge and intrinsic motivation, to whom I owe my utmost gratitude and respect. YERUN owes significant gratitude to our universities' entire academic and non-academic staff. Through the Executive Board, coordinators, working groups, and taskforces have connected, become jointly active, and proceeded to advance our work's quality. The professionalism and enthusiasm of the YERUN Office made an inestimable contribution to our engagement, without which YERUN could not enjoy our current growing reputation. Emboldened by our achievements in 2022, we are confident that YERUN will continue to be the most significant voice of young European research universities.



NEW YERUN EXECUTIVE BOARD

During the Autumn General Assembly, the YERUN Executive Board was renovated and welcomed two new members: Prof. João Amaro de Matos, Vice-Rector of NOVA University Lisbon, and Prof. Neville Wylie, Deputy Principal for Internationalisation at the University of Stirling. As for the other two Board positions, Prof. Hildegard Schneider (Maastricht University) and Prof. Florian Schweigert (University of Potsdam) were reappointed. Prof. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, Rector of the University of Rijeka, continues her mandate as President for another year.



President

Prof. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija
University of Rijeka

Board Member

Prof. Florian Schweigert
University of Potsdam



Board Member

Prof. Hildegard Schneider
Maastricht University

Board Member

Prof. Dr. João Amaro de Matos
NOVA University Lisbon



Board Member

Prof. Dr. Neville Wylie
University of Stirling

YERUN NEW MEMBERS IN 2022

YERUN started the year 2022 by welcoming four new members. The University of Klagenfurt, the University of Potsdam, the University of South-Eastern Norway and the University of Stirling joined YERUN on the 1st of January 2022. These four new memberships have brought new perspectives, energies and expertise to YERUN that is further strengthening the voice of young research universities in Europe. Proof of their active engagement is the involvement of two of our new members in the YERUN Board.



Prof. Oliver Vitouch

Rector of the University of Klagenfurt

"YERUN connects "The Best of The Young" on a European level, contributing to vivid exchange, to European integration and to a dynamic European Research Area. The University of Klagenfurt, in line with its recent success story, is happy and proud to join YERUN, and to vigorously partake in this endeavour."

Prof. Gerry McCormac

Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stirling

"YERUN is a leading, innovative, and dynamic network whose ambitions and aims very much align to those of the University of Stirling. We are delighted to be part of YERUN and look forward to contributing to and working across the network in joint research and teaching initiatives to maximize mobility, research capacities and employability of our graduates."



Prof. Petter Aasen

Rector of the University of South-Eastern Norway

"We are delighted to take part in this community of young, progressive universities that work to transform higher education in Europe. This network of universities is sharing our vision, mission, values, focus areas and priorities. Through collaboration in education and research the ambition is to benefit from, and contribute to YERUN's mission and strategy."

Prof. Oliver Günther

President of the University of Potsdam

"We are very excited to join YERUN, a true peer group of renowned research universities that have been founded relatively recently. A younger organization is often more flexible, more agile, and more adaptive. This allows us to take on current research challenges and to develop new programs of study relatively quickly."



2022 AT A GLANCE



+2652



+2231



Renewed
website



External
newsletter: 25



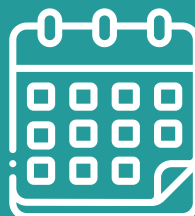
Internal
newsletter: 11



Research
Mobility
Awards: 157



Open Science
Awards: 2



YERUN events:
7



Publications:
6

FOCUS ON EU POLICY

Wrapping up an intense and fruitful year!

2022 has been a particularly intense year in terms of policy development for YERUN. Closely cooperating with our fantastic YERUN Policy Platform, YERUN has been highly involved in the implementation of the **ERA Forum**, which brings together European Commission, Member States and R&I stakeholders in the advancement of the European Research Area (ERA). Representing the whole university sector in the ERA Forum meeting as an alternate to the EUA, YERUN has expressed its commitment to the ERA Policy Agenda and its action in a [statement](#) published in June.

One topic that has underpinned the work held in the past twelve months in particular is the **Reform of Research Assessment**. YERUN has been involved in this topic since the beginning of the consultations that the European Commission (EC) run in 2021, under the leadership of Mr. Kostas Glinos (Former Head of Open Science Unit, DG RTD, EC).

By being involved in the co-creation of this process, and in the implementation group that provided feedback to the drafting of the final agreement, YERUN has developed a thorough understanding of the reform process and a genuine interest to be part of the change, also by bringing critical [perspectives](#) as to the future of the initiative. This has led 11 out of its 22 members institutions to sign the agreement and be part of the Coalition for the Reform of Research Assessment (**CoARA**). This process has followed the successful appointment of **Prof. Rianne Letschert**, President of Maastricht University, as the Chair of CoARA, and of **Prof. Eva Méndez** as member of the CoARA Steering Board. A legacy of this work can be found in our [paper](#) 'Rethinking academic careers: cultural bottlenecks to be addressed', as well as in the joint [statement](#) by the YERUN leaders published in November.

Prof. Rianne Letschert



"We need a better balance in how we recognize and reward academics. Other vital areas of activities at universities such as education, impact and leadership don't receive enough recognition and reward. For too long there has been a one-sided focus on specific types of output in the research domain and there is an urgent need for more diversity in the career paths we propose. We all have a responsibility to act towards changing the academic system towards a better version of itself. I feel honoured to have been elected as a Chair of CoARA and to be given the opportunity to lead this change at European and international levels. Being also an active member of YERUN, I feel very reassured by the support members are giving to this initiative, and I'll be pleased to help them become even more engaged in it."

Prof. Eva Méndez



"We all agree that we need to change the way we measure Science, why we don't do it? - This was my statement in the Open Science Conference in April 2016, under the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the EU. Six years later, I think exactly the same. The WWW and the digital transformation changed our world, but we continue performing, funding and assessing research like we did in the last century. We need better science to address societal challenges and a different research system is not only possible but necessary. I am thrilled to continue the work initiated as chair of the Open Science Policy Platform (OSPP), where I represented YERUN, now as member of the CoARA Steering Board. I look forward to working with the rest of the CoARA SB members on the key challenges ahead."

FOCUS ON EU POLICY

Wrapping up an intense and fruitful year!

In parallel, YERUN has followed very closely the ongoing work on the other ERA Actions. On **Research Careers**, we have provided our input on the finalisation of the ResearchComp, namely the European Competence Framework for Researchers, expected by 2023. In **Knowledge Valorisation**, we have shared our feedback in the preparation of the EC Proposal for Council Recommendation on Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation, and to its accompanying Codes of Practice on Intellectual Assets Management and on Standardisation for Researchers. Moreover, we are excited to be involved in the organisation of the EU Knowledge Valorisation Week 2023.

In the context of **Open Science**, in March, we signed the Action Plan on Diamond Open Access, which was promptly followed up with a YERUN event looking into obstacles hindering this yet under-exploited publishing model.

In the framework of the **EU's Global Approach to Research and Innovation**, YERUN has attended different preparatory workshops that will lead in 2023 to the organisation of a series of workshops on shared principles and values for international cooperation in research and innovation. We will be involved in co-organising those addressing gender equality, open science, research excellence, societal impact and environmental responsibility.

On the **education policies' side**, we have been participating in a series of workshops that will feed into ongoing studies on the future of the **European Universities Alliances** - more specifically on institutionalised cooperation instruments and on monitoring frameworks on the impact of the initiative. These are key topics on which the future of the initiative will be strongly connected, and are followed very closely by the YERUN Policy Platform and ad hoc group on European Universities Alliances. A flavour of those discussions and critical reflections can be found in the recently published article appeared in Research Professional, authored by Silvia Gomez and Chiara Colella. We are also currently involved in a series of workshops organised by the European Commission that will lead to Council recommendation on Enabling factors for **Digital Education** and on Improving the Provision of **Digital Skills**. This connects well with our new group on Innovative Teaching & Learning and on Lifelong Learning, which kicked off in September.

Another central topic of this year has been **Sustainability**: following the intense work of the YERUN ad hoc group on SDGs, the paper "Education for a more sustainable world" saw the light of day in June, bringing together 18 practices from our members on how to embed Sustainable Development in the academic curriculum and in the extra-curricular activities. The paper constituted YERUN's response to the Council recommendation published in June showing that universities are already on a good track and definitely would benefit from a more structured approach at national level. The paper received very good feedback from the international community, and it was presented at the EU Research and Innovation Days on 28 September, in a panel dedicated to Youth and the green transition.

In sum, we look back to a very active year, in which we have strengthened our presence in the panorama of policy advocacy in Research, Innovation and Education, and laid the ground for more exciting things to come in 2023!

FOCUS ON EU POLICY:

The YERUN Policy Platform

The YERUN Policy Platform (YPP) has continued its regular meetings during 2022, steering the network's policy advocacy activities.

The "talk to your colleague" intermezzos during our online meetings were lovely minutes which gave me a chance to get to know someone better whom I had only met digitally as part of a big group. At times, it felt like speed dating, sharing exciting ideas under time pressure, or simply feeling a kindred soul who happened to have the same hobbies and interests.

Karen Vandeveld, Antwerp University

Among the highlights of the year, was the in-person meeting held in Brussels on 26 October. A fantastic occasion for colleagues to meet in person and exchange views with representatives of DG RTD, DG EAC and the ERA Forum.



YERUN Policy Platform meeting (in person and online) and YERUN Office in Brussels 26 October 2022

The peer-support of YPP members, together with coordination by the fantastic YERUN Office, inspire and facilitate our participation and our contributions, as stakeholders, to the current EU policy developments. This year has been extremely exciting in that regard, especially in research and innovation-related policy developments. Member States declared their support to different ERA Actions while others remain pending future support. COARA has been launched defining commitment to challenge traditional research assessment. Open science is at the core of the OPUS project and many of our ongoing YERUN-related activities. This has been an eventful year in which the YPP finally met to discuss hot topics in person with representatives from the Commission. What we do feels impactful and we are looking forward to continuing our work in the new year!

Nataša Jakominić Marot, University of Rijeka

The Policy platform's regular and very well prepared meetings, as well as interesting topical contents have been really useful for my university. In addition of these, active and engaged members and open talks have been a bonus. I have also met regularly the YERUN Office. We have shared our intelligence and I have found the meetings extremely important. They have also helped me on several occasions with the documents I needed.

So in a one word: YERUN has been the best Brussel-based network I have been working with this year!

Jaana Backman, University of Eastern Finland

I would like to congratulate the YERUN Policy Platform on their excellent job of bringing together YERUN members to discuss new developments in European policies. For me, as representative of Brunel University London, it is very important to be part of YERUN's community and to keep abreast of recent developments. We also value a lot YERUN's engagement in major ERA initiatives, making the voice of YERUN universities' heard. The YPP, as well as YERUN, is going from strength to strength, and I am looking forward to working with YERUN and it's fantastic team in 2023!

Yulia Matskevich, Brunel University London

The fact that YERUN had a seat around the table in the development of CoARA, was a great benefit to all YERUN members. We were able to receive information first-hand, provide input at a time when the path was still being shaped, and learn from one another as colleagues as we discussed the process of policy-making in the area of rewards & recognition of research.

Karen Vandeveld, University of Antwerp

ONGOING WORK OF THE YERUN GROUPS

Following the adoption of the new YERUN Strategy 2021-2025, new YERUN groups have been opened under the three Focus Areas, summing up to a total of 10 active YERUN groups. In the next section, we present you the ongoing groups and their main achievements in 2022.

Talent Development

Ad hoc group Development of Academic Careers

Launched under the focus area "Talent Development" of the YERUN Strategy, this group was created to address the current EU policy actions in developing new academic career assessment methods. As part of the group work, in July 2022, the paper "Rethinking Academic Careers: cultural bottlenecks to be addressed" was published. This group will be divided into one more dedicated to the CoARA initiative, and another focused on the developments on research careers, and intersectoral mobility and other issues.

The discussions with YERUN have been useful and helped us to formulate our position in relation to European based coalition CoARA, and shaped our understanding of the aims of this international movement targeted at developing researcher assessments.

Jouni Kekäle, University of Eastern Finland

Ad hoc Group Innovative teaching and learning

This group was created to define the challenges and potentialities for young universities in innovative education, mapping methods across YERUN and reflecting on the challenges, needs and changing models of innovative education.

We are pleased that YERUN is now bringing us together on Innovative Teaching and Learning. Over the past two years higher education has shown its resilience and adaptability, in continuing to deliver excellence in education, in new and often digital arenas. Academics across Europe, and across the world, along with students, have shown resilience and a continued desire to learn, in spite of global issues. The YERUN ad hoc group provides academics with a fantastic opportunity to share good practice and developmental opportunity, and shape the future of teaching and learning, across the disciplines.

Dave Briggs, University of Essex

The meetings are highly inspiring and bring in different views and perspectives from the YERUN network members. It is a pleasure to have the possibility to exchange information and ideas in such vibrant surrounding.

Sofie Schratt-Bitter, University of Klagenfurt

Ad hoc Group of Lifelong Learning

This group was created to understand what existing lifelong learning practices and approaches are available at YERUN member universities. This work will be followed by a reflection process on challenges and potentialities of lifelong learning for young research universities.

Lifelong learning is becoming a European movement. Being part of the the newborn YERUN Ad hoc Group of Lifelong Learning lets us benchmark our efforts and results with those of our partners all over Europe. The experience has been stimulating and is a basis for future developments like shared micro-credentials.

Jan Dries, University of Antwerp

ON GOING WORK OF THE YERUN GROUPS

Open culture of excellence

Ad hoc group on Open Science

This group aimed to facilitate exchanges of views and practices among YERUN members to bring forward Open Science in their institutions. In June, the group and the YERUN Office have co-organised an online event on "Diamond Open Access: How can we make it shine?". Moreover, a page on the YERUN website has been created, where all the Open Access resources of the members are collected.

It's been great to be involved with YERUN's work on Open Science this year. Getting involved with new ways to engage researchers across YERUN institutions with open science is so rewarding, and I particularly enjoy hearing about some of the great initiatives we can support through our open science awards. The highlight for me this year has been the Diamond Open Access webinar, where we came together from across YERUN to discuss the challenges and opportunities around diamond open access. I look forward to continuing this great work with a fantastic group into 2023!

Hannah Crago, University of Essex

Group of Open Science Awards Officers

This group was created to implement and launch the YERUN Open Science Awards. The pilot call of the YERUN Open Science Awards was successfully launched in November 2021, with the awards ceremony taking place in February 2022. This year, the group has finalised the call for 2022. The second call was launched in November 2022, and we are planning to have the awards ceremony again on 14 February.

We appreciate that for this year's awards in addition to our scientists, now also support staff members can apply. We believe this new approach has the potential to inspire and motivate others to embrace openness and collaboration. Our joint work in the YERUN Open Science group not only adds value to Maastricht University, but also contributes to the broader Open Science movement.

Michel Saive, Maastricht University

Group of Research Support Officers

This group was created to increase research collaboration opportunities for YERUN members. It establishes connections among Research Support Offices within YERUN and make analysis of profiles, strengths and participation in European research collaborations

The YERUN partnership is important for the university to build next practices that both enable the internationalisation ambitions of our researchers and the organization as a whole. In the YERUN secretariate and among the partner universities, we find likeminded professionals and collaboration that makes a difference.

Esben Flindt, University of Southern Denmark

It is important to keep exchanging ideas and discuss options for support mechanisms with other Universities and YERUN is ideal for that. Discussion are carried out in a friendly and constructive environment and I am looking forward to further exchanges and future improvements to support scientists.

Kristin Baer, University of Bremen

ON GOING WORK OF THE YERUN GROUPS

Open culture of excellence

Group of Research Mobility Awards Offices

This group was created to increase research collaboration opportunities for YERUN members. 33 applicants have been awarded in this year's call. This brings up to 157 the total number of Early Career Researchers awarded via the scheme in 5 years. Current awardees will conclude their collaborations by the end of 2023.

At the University of Essex we strongly support the aims of the YERUN Research Mobility Awards and are pleased that, again, Essex researchers have been awarded with opportunities for mobility in Europe. We are also proud that researchers from our partners in YERUN have chosen to join us at the University of Essex, as part of their award, and share in our commitment to delivering excellence in research and education for the benefit of individuals and communities.

Dave Briggs, University of Essex

Ad hoc group on European Universities

This group was created to facilitate exchanges of views and information among members currently involved in University Alliances.

The biggest benefit of the YERUN group is the ability to move outside the framework of typical day-to-day interaction, experience external perspectives and enjoy discussions with a diverse group of institutional representatives. Indeed, one of the most significant dangers I see for the future of European University Alliances is that we become too "inward looking" and YERUN can help us overcome this to a degree.

Aleksandar Šušnjar, University of Rijeka

As a new member in a European Universities Alliance from 2023, USN will benefit greatly from joining the YERUN Ad hoc group on European Universities Alliances. Learning from the experiences of other alliances and institutions will improve the implementation of the project at USN and maximise impact.

Espen Johansen, University of South-Eastern Norway

The regular meetings and exchanges within the group are contributing to build trust among members and facilitating information sharing. Currently, several studies are taking place on the future funding of the Alliances and on institutionalised cooperation instruments. YERUN is continuing to follow them and to promote discussions within the group.

As liaison officer of the European Digital UniverCity (EDUC), I am participating to the crosscutting meetings bringing together the alliance universities among YERUN members. The meetings, serving to identify crosscutting topics and synergies among the network and alliances, are a crucial and highly instructive venue of the YERUN network interconnecting personal, institutional and international payoffs. The participants themselves profit from the exchange of experiences and best practices among higher education specialists who are dealing with similar challenges. On the institutional level, they help to inspire concrete changes and add new opportunities for (young) researchers, teachers and students. Finally, they help to increase visibility of international cooperation among European HEIs, especially towards the European Commission.

Katja Jung, University of Potsdam

Participating in this group provides added value to our European university initiative as we are learning good practices and the excellent work carried out by colleagues. And this makes us stronger!

Ana Acebrón, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

ON GOING WORK OF THE YERUN GROUPS

Responsible and engaged universities

Ad hoc group on SDGs

This group was launched in July 2021 with a view to share best practices on how different initiatives and structures at universities contribute to the implementation of the SDGs and to advance together in this endeavour as a network.

The SDGs ad-hoc group has provided a platform to learn from our YERUN institutions how they are becoming more sustainable. In addition, working together to produce a summer school on sustainability will give our PhD students and us a great opportunity as we are learning how to tackle global challenges.

Inma Andrés, Brunel University London

From the beginning I was inspired from the idea to work with colleagues from other universities of Yerun on SDGs and the sustainable development of our universities. What brought us together was the same intention, namely to share ideas and set up formats like a policy paper and events where the entire network and hopefully far beyond can profit from. What I like most of the group is the open atmosphere, trustfulness exchange as well as serious discussions and merrily contact in between the group members. This group is a rewarding investment and a good example of how the effect can be more than the sum of the individual pieces.

Hilmar Hofmann, University of Konstanz

In June 2022, YERUN has published its paper "Education for a more sustainable world", where different inspiring practices from YERUN members are presented showing how sustainability can be integrated in the academic curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. The paper has also been presented at the EU Research & Innovation Days, in a panel dedicated to the topic.

The YERUN ad hoc group on SDGs offers a space for very stimulating exchanges, which inspires the initiatives that we can take at Dauphine and which enables us to build common initiatives to improve the integration of the challenges of the ecological and social transition in our universities. The YERUN summer school for PhDs on sustainability is a project we will be proud of, on behalf of YERUN.

Arnaud Mias, Université Paris Dauphine-PSL

Informal group on Knowledge Valorisation

This group was created to foster a common understanding of knowledge valorisation across the network and influencing EU policies on this topic. Participating in EU consultations and workshops, YERUN became key reference stakeholder for the European Commission on this topic. YERUN is participating in the organisation of the knowledge valorisation week 2023 and mutual learning exercises with Member States.

YERUN PARTICIPATION IN EU PROJECTS



In connection to ERA action 3 on Research Assessment, YERUN joined the **Open Universal Science (OPUS) project** as a partner. This project started in September and will be operational for 3 years. Its goal is to reform the assessment of research and researchers at RPOs and RFOs towards a system that incentivises and rewards researchers to practise Open Science. So far, in the context of WP1, partners have conducted a state-of-the-art on initiatives and literature to reform research(er) assessment and incentivise and reward Open Science. Universities of Cyprus, Nova de Lisboa and Rijeka are also partners.



OPUS kick-off meeting in Gran Canaria (September 2022)



Together with two YERUN members (the University Carlos III de Madrid and the University of Rome Tor Vergata) and two other educational partners, in 2021 YERUN embarked on its first Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership. **EDUSC (European Digital University Staff Competencies)** focuses on developing digital skills and online educational resources for staff working on internationalisation and academics providing online education. It tackles three key aspects: virtual mobilities, online quality teaching and digital management of international mobilities. In the summer 2022, two staff trainings were held at UC3M and at Tor Vergata.



EDUSC staff training at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (June 2022)

In their effort to support sustainability, five YERUN members (Universities of Antwerp, Bremen, Carlos III de Madrid, Nova de Lisboa and Tor Vergata) are working on an Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership called **ProcToGo (Digital Tools for Sustainable Goals)**, with YERUN as associate partner. The project developed two blended mobility programmes: on Sustainable Public Procurement and on Strategic Procurement. Both programmes will be open to students from all YERUN universities. The partnership is also experimenting how to use micro-credentials to support the recognition, transferability and portability of the learning outcomes and its use in the procurement domain.



YERUN PARTICIPATION IN EU PROJECTS



Joint Programmes at doctorate level
linking education and research



Link EDU-RES 2nd Multiplier event in Brussels (June 2022)

The **Link EDU-RES project (Linking Education and Research)** is an Erasmus+ Key Action 2 project funded by the European Commission. The project focuses on the internationalisation of doctoral education and the establishment of collaborative and interactive frameworks for its operation. In particular, its main objective is to lay ground for the creation of joint programmes at doctorate level in the YERUN network of research universities. In February, the first Multiplier event of the project was held online, focusing on how to improve joint doctoral programmes by analysing doctoral collaborations. In June, the 2nd multiplier event took place in Brussels, bringing together around 50 participants in person and 60 online around the topic of joint doctoral programmes.

In 2022, five YERUN members (Universities of Antwerp, Carlos III de Madrid, Eastern Finland, Nova de Lisboa and Tor Vergata), with the support of YERUN as an associate partner, completed the Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership **BUDS (Building Up Digital Strategists)**. The project focused on digital management consulting and its role in supporting digital transformation. It aims to train graduate students in dealing with the technical aspects as well as with the soft skills required to carry out digital transformation projects successfully. The project developed two outputs: an e-learning course and guidelines on the planning, design and management of highly-interactive blended courses. Furthermore, the project offered three summer schools that were attended by 132 students from 11 YERUN universities, merging codified knowledge and experiential learning with the direct engagement of management consulting companies.



BUDS Summer School at Rome Tor Vergata (July 2022)

YERUN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES 2022

2022 has been the year in which YERUN members finally restored their in-person meetings for the General Assemblies (GA), after two years of meetings organised completely online. The General Assemblies are fantastic occasions for the YERUN leaders to exchange at a more personal level, to share their views around key topics for the advancement of higher education in Europe and to take forward the work of the network by bringing in new ambitions and perspectives. This year's General Assemblies took place in March at the University Carlos III de Madrid and in November at Maastricht University.

Spring General Assembly: 30 - 31 March 2022, Madrid

On 30 and 31 March, YERUN General Assembly took place at University Carlos III de Madrid. This was the first GA to be chaired by Prof. Dr. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, Rector of the University of Rijeka, who was elected as YERUN President in September 2021. Moreover, this GA was the occasion to officially welcome the latest four new YERUN members: the Universities of Klagenfurt, Potsdam, South-Eastern Norway and Stirling, who joined the network in January 2022.



YERUN Rectors, Presidents, Coordinators and Office during the Spring General Assembly in Madrid on 31 March 2022



YERUN Office and Coordinators during the General Assembly in Madrid on 31 March 2022

The topics on the agenda were: support measures for Ukraine, the advancement of the reform of research assessment, the European Strategy for Universities and the role of academic leaders in promoting sustainability and sustainable development in their institutions. The discussions were enriched by the presence of Virginijus Sinkevičius, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, who sent an inspiring video message to the YERUN leaders highlighting the importance of universities in the green transition; Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot,

Director Youth, Education and Erasmus+, DG EAC, European Commission, who presented the advancement of the European Strategy for Universities, and Cristina Gallach, Special Commissioner for the Strategic Project for Economic Recovery and Transformation (PERTE) "New Language Economy", who presented a state of play of sustainability in a global context.

YERUN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES 2022

Autumn General Assembly: 28 - 30 November 2022, Maastricht

The YERUN Autumn General Assembly took place at Maastricht University from 28 to 30 November. The main topic on the YERUN leaders' agenda was related to the ongoing discussions and initiatives to reform research assessment in Europe.

The exchange was enriched by the presence of Anna Panagopoulou, Director of ERA & Innovation, DG Research & Innovation (European Commission), who presented the initiative on Research Assessment. YERUN members agreed on some key recommendations for the ongoing initiatives to take forward.



YERUN Rectors, Presidents, Coordinators and Office with Anna Panagopoulou, Director of ERA & Innovation, DG Research & Innovation (European Commission), during the Autumn General Assembly in Maastricht on 29 November 2022



YERUN Rectors and Presidents during the workshop during the General Assembly in Maastricht on 29 November 2022

The General Assembly was also dedicated to internal strategic discussion among the YERUN leaders and the YERUN Office about the advancement of the YERUN strategy, YERUN memberships, and to Board elections.

The meeting was also the occasion to bring together the YERUN Coordinators around the development of a strengthened communication strategy of the network, as well as to know better each other's institution and strategic priorities for cooperation.

It was a pleasure for Maastricht University (UM) to physically host the YERUN General Assembly in November 2022 in Maastricht. YERUN members took stock of the potential that the reform of academic assessment holds to help promote an increased engagement of academics in supporting regional development and innovation. UM is delighted that the YERUN General Assembly resulted in a set of concrete key points to bring the reform of Research Assessment forward. We believe this forms a solid basis to continue our engagement on the topic as the voice of young universities in Europe. It is this proactive approach to policy developments which underlines the strength of the network.

Jan Hupkens, Maastricht University



YERUN Coordinators and Office during the Autumn General Assembly at Maastricht University on 28 November 2022

YERUN AWARDS

Research Mobility Awards

The YERUN Research mobility scheme was launched the first time in 2017. The 2022 edition was the first to be held in a hybrid way. A total of 33 researchers received the award. They have shared with us some testimonials from last year's awards (2021) who developed their collaborations during 2022.

During the project I conducted thanks to the YERUN Research Mobility Awards, I had the chance to develop new skills and knowledge regarding the Hydro Thermal Carbonization (HTC) process, interacting with interesting and professional colleagues.

Lorenzo Bartolucci, Tor Vergata University of Rome, winner of the 2021 YRMAs edition

Personally, this award opened doors for me to enrich myself from viewpoints I had not observed and allowed me to develop new skills as a researcher. I strongly think that the YERUN activity in this sense is essential to keep fostering and enlightening new research partnerships and synergies.

Jose Angel Miranda Calero, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, winner of the 2021 YRMAs edition

I was very happy to receive the YERUN Research Mobility Award in 2021. Although the award exceptionally supported virtual mobility, it has given me a fantastic opportunity to develop and strengthen my research network, through a very enriching collaboration.

Anamaria Bentea, University of Konstanz, winner of the 2021 YRMAs edition

The project resulted in a series of lectures and in a paper, which is about to be published by an international scientific journal and has been presented at several academic conferences around Europe. This has been an amazing and particularly enriching experience for me, thanks to the international and multidisciplinary environment and the constant dialogue with all the researchers involved.

Federica Marconi, Tor Vergata University of Rome, winner of the 2021 YRMAs edition



Prof. Thomann, Federica Marconi, Konrad Doliesen, Dr. Tiziano Zgaga during the ECPR - 11th Biennial Conference on the SGUE where they jointly presented the results of the research (08-10/06/2022).

Open Science Awards

Building on the success of last year, YERUN launched the 2022 edition of the Open Science Awards. Continuing the work to recognise Open Science, YERUN supports the academic community to adopt and implement Open Science principles in their work. The 2nd call opened in November and the winners will be informed in February 2023. This time, up to five winners in total will be awarded.

This award has been a strong impetus to continue developing our work within open science in the field of Law and History of Universities.

Manuel Martine Neira, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, winner of the 2021 Open Science Awards edition

YERUN PUBLICATIONS

As a strategic instrument for its policy advocacy work, YERUN has launched the following publications in 2022:



What can we learn from young European research universities?

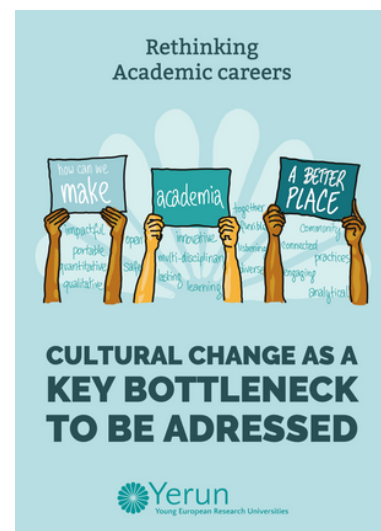
Following the adoption of the Council recommendation on 'Learning for the Green Transition and Sustainable Development', YERUN published the paper "Education for a more sustainable world: what can we learn from young European research universities?". The paper is the result of a thorough work that the YERUN ad hoc group on SDGs has carried out over the past year. It provides some concrete examples of how the recommendations can be translated in reality.

Click [here](#) to read the full publication.

Cultural change as a key bottleneck to be addressed

This paper, result of a working process that the YERUN Office has carried out with the members of the YERUN ad hoc group on the development of academic careers, aims to contribute to the ongoing debate at EU level on the Reform of Research Assessment. Taking the broader perspective of "academic careers", YERUN argued that when rethinking academic careers assessment, change can only happen when new ways of assessing careers become rooted throughout the entire academic community.

Click [here](#) to read the full publication.



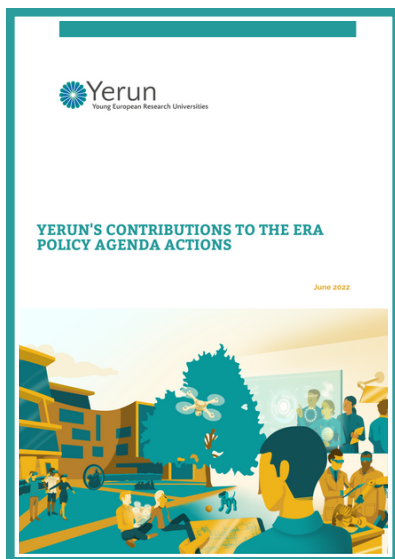
Joint statement on the exemption of educational and scientific digital infrastructures from the digital service act

YERUN has joined a group of universities, research performing organisations, research funding organisations, research libraries, and repositories in Europe in a statement aimed to raise awareness among policy makers on the risks that the Digital Service Act might cause to the university sector and to allow targeted exemptions for the not-for-profit educational and scientific repositories, digital archives and libraries from the Digital Services Act.

Click [here](#) to read the full statement!



YERUN PUBLICATIONS



YERUN's contribution to the ERA policy agenda actions

YERUN is an active member of the ERA Forum, it will continue to be an active player in the ERA governance and will contribute to its implementation by actively working on the actions proposed in the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024. With this objective in mind, YERUN presented its commitments and activities in relation to the development of the proposed ERA actions.

Click [here](#) to read the full position paper!

YERUN position on the agreement of Research Assessment and the CoARA initiative

Following the decisions of its Executive Board and the approval of its member institutions, in November 2022, YERUN became an official signatory of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment and officially expressed its willingness to join the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment.

Click [here](#) to read the full position paper!



YERUN leaders agree on key points to bring the reform of Research Assessment forward

From the conclusions of the YERUN Autumn General Assembly, YERUN members have reflected on the contributions their institutions make and the added value they provide to various areas of education, research, leadership, innovation and societal impact. When reflecting on and exploring how these contributions are evaluated and recognised at present by current systems of assessment, YERUN members agreed on some recommendations for the ongoing initiatives to take forward.

Click [here](#) to read the full position paper

YERUN EVENTS IN 2022

- 14 February** **[Open Science Awards event](#)**
The event was organised to officially award the two winners of the first edition of the YERUN Open Science Awards. The ceremony was opened by a keynote speech by Mr. Kostas Glinos, Former Head of Unit on Open Science in DG RTD (European Commission).
- 17 February** **[Link EDU-RES Multiplier Event](#)**
The event, part of the Link EDU-RES project, was organised online by the University of Antwerp in collaboration with YERUN. The theme of the event was: 'How to improve doctoral training through joint programme? Analysis of experiences in international collaboration'.
- 28 - 29 April** **[YERUN Research Workshop on Digital Humanities](#)**
The workshop, held by the Autonomous University of Barcelona, offered an opportunity to exchange research ideas, to gain a better understanding of complementary expertise in Digital Humanities (DH) and Digital Heritage as well to build new research links.
- 08 June** **[YRMAs informative event](#)**
The YERUN Office organised an online informative event for prospective applicants to the Research Mobility Awards, for them to know more about what to expect for this year's call and to share experiences with former awardees.
- 15 June** **[Link EDU-RES 2nd Multiplier Event](#)**
The event, held in the context of the Link EDU-RES project, was organised by YERUN and the University of Bremen in a hybrid format, in Brussels and online, on the topic: International Collaboration and Joint Programmes at Doctoral Level in European University Alliances and Networks.
- 20 June** **[Diamond Open Access: How can we make it shine?](#)**
YERUN supports the [Action Plan for Diamond Open Access](#), launched in March 2022, and organised this event aiming to contribute to the ongoing discussions and complement the intentions laid out in the Action Plan with a more hands-on perspective.
- 01 July** **[Launch Event of the YERUN Paper "Rethinking Academic Careers: cultural change as a key bottleneck to be addressed"](#)**
The event was organized to launch the paper "[Rethinking Academic Careers: cultural change as a key bottleneck to be addressed](#)".
- 22 - 26 August** **[YERUN Summer School on Transferable Skills](#)**
The summer school was organised by the University of Essex, under the auspices of YERUN and the LINK EDU-RES project. It was conducted in person but with some components available online and hosted trainers from various members of YERUN with a diverse range of expertise.

YERUN MEMBERS SUPPORTING UKRAINE



Ulm University: Prof. Max von Delius (centre) donated his prize money (£ 2000) to three doctoral students. Oleg Borodin (left, from Charkiw) and Yevhenii Shchukin (right, from Kyiv) are holding up the Ukrainian flag

Almost one year passed since the war on the European continent started after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Still lives continue to be endangered, dreams continue to be broken and the European values continue to be challenged every passing day. Given the urgency of this terrible situation, the university sector has been mobilising in different ways to help those affected by the war and the YERUN members have also given their contribution to this important cause.

The actions taken by the YERUN members in support of the Ukrainian population are of a different kind, supporting students and researchers affected by the war, cutting collaboration ties with Russia, supporting Ukrainian refugees in partnership with local communities, sharing their expertise and stimulating discussions to help better understand the situation, creating virtual and physical spaces to connect, taking courageous and generous actions, joining international initiatives.

You can find [here](#) an article that summarises all the initiatives that member universities took and are taking to support the Ukrainian population.



NOVA University Lisbon: Campaign "NOVA IMS stands with Ukraine!"

YERUN COORDINATORS: Our golden circle



YERUN Coordinators and YERUN Office during the Coordinators meeting during the Autumn General Assembly at Maastricht University on 28 November 2022

Being YERUN coordinator at my university is an honour and a privilege, because it allows me to be the connection point between the work that is carried out in the European institutions, through the YERUN Office, and the rest of YERUN partner universities, with the UC3M community university. YERUN makes our university stronger in light of the challenges that we face as a university and society, and we are growing thanks to the knowledge and cooperation with the other YERUN universities.

Pablo Grzeskow Jaszczyszyn, YERUN Coordinators at UC3M



As someone who is new to the group, it was wonderful to meet the group in person for the first time this November - not on a screen tile. It was fruitful to exchange knowledge, but also to learn things about the partner universities, for example why a Fiat 500 ended up in the university pond of one of our members. Thanks to YERUN my working life is now more colorful and my university is diving in more and more, which is great to see!

Marita Böhning, YERUN Coordinator at University of Potsdam

As YERUN Coordinator of the University of Cyprus my role has been multifaceted and interesting in the first year of the UCY's membership. Connecting and working together with colleagues in UCY and in YERUN, sharing the same challenges and visions has been very fruitful, empowering our institutions as a result

Elena Avgoustidou-Kyriacou, YERUN Coordinator at University fo Cyprus



The YERUN membership has opened up new opportunities for our university - with regards to raising awareness in the organisation about EU policy, as well as building expertise internally and networking externally. The possibilities for new and valuable contacts and partnerships in Europe within such a network definitely gives an added value to our collaborations at European level.

Heidi Tovsrud Knutsen YERUN Coordinator at University of South-Eastern Norway

YERUN provides us updated and innovative insights, so to inform our decision making processes. YERUN gives us a better chance to act on the emerging themes in the area of education and research, so to have a voice at the EU level.

Corrado Cerruti, YERUN Coordinator from Tor Vergata University Rome



LOOKING FORWARD: Silvia Gomez Recio,

YERUN Secretary General

What comes next? After the past years of pandemic, war in Europe, and subsequent crisis, no one can predict the future with certainty. Six years have passed since I first joined YERUN, a network that was not yet formally established, whose objectives were high, but resources and structures were not necessarily matching ambitions, and that had to be bold in its activities to shine in a landscape full of very active university networks.

If I can name one common feature I see in all our members across Europe, it is humbleness. Our university leaders are always looking at how they can improve, provide a better education, collaborate and learn from each other to be more meaningful to those they serve, to the regions where they are located, to the staff they employ and the students and researchers that decide to join them.

It has taken us several years to realise the power and strengths that our young network has slowly but surely acquired. First and foremost, as an active player in shaping EU policies, but also in articulating new European initiatives and enhancing the capacity of our members to be better connected and informed to play an even more active role in their national and regional contexts. There is a need to close the circle between European and national regional policies which are intertwined and affect one another. Stronger members contribute to a strong network, and vice versa.

Looking back on the previous sections of this annual report, I want to highlight a common theme: the pride and sense of belonging developed by our members. They feel they have trust in one another, they admire what others are working on and their achievements, and they are eager to learn from them. This point alone fills me with joy and pride.

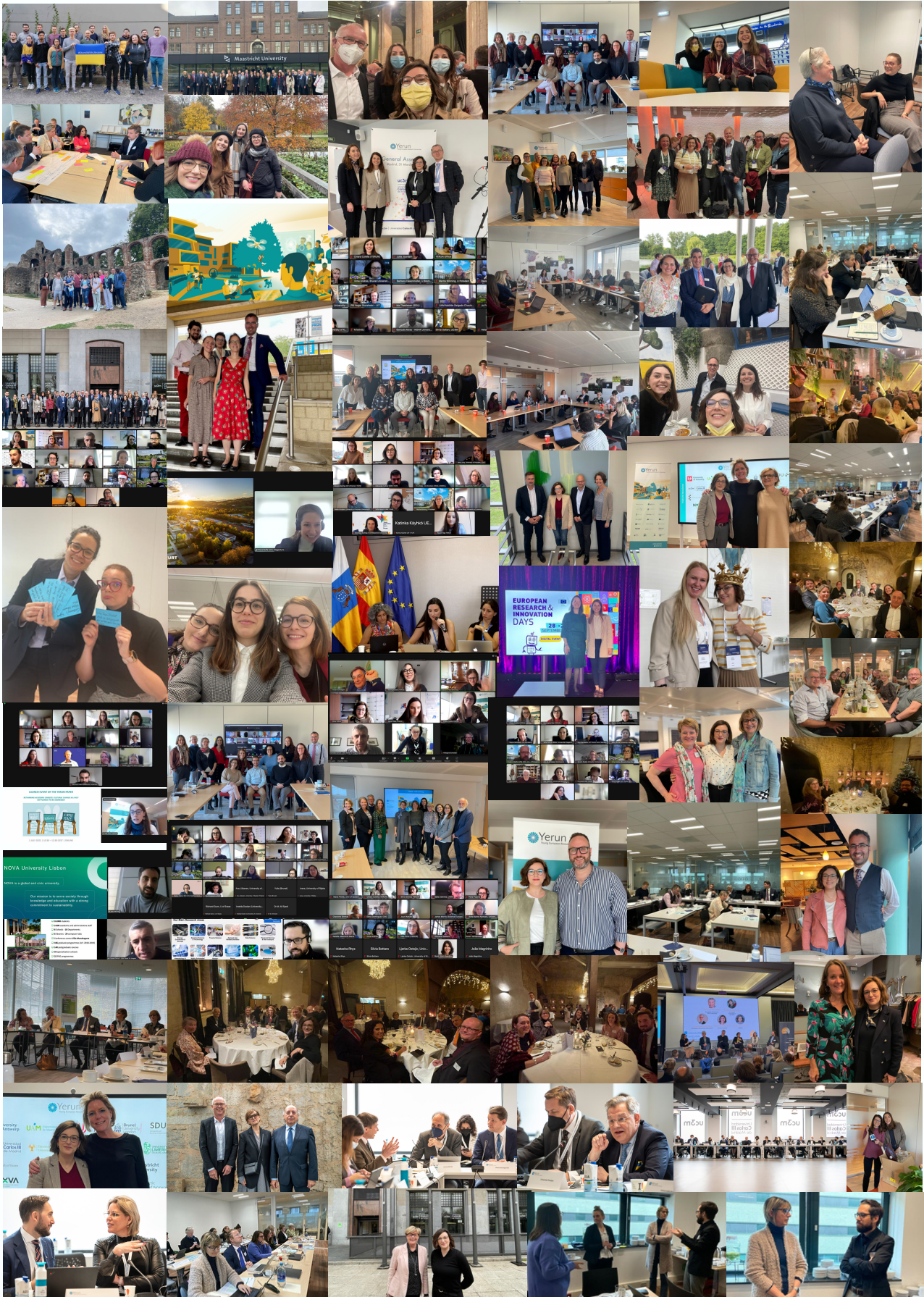
Against this background, the past years made us adapt to new ways of working, This has enabled us to better reflect on how we use our time and resources, to be more efficient and responsible in our scheduling of in-person meetings, to ensure our contributions and discussions are meaningful for us as a network but also those we represent. In that constant resilience-building and learning process, no one knows what comes next, but we can choose our attitude to how we handle any upcoming challenges. If that attitude is positive and collaborative, and we are open to learn and eager to invest and face such new challenges, then I am confident that YERUN and its members will continue to thrive.

On my side, I remain committed to bring these values to our (also enlarging) YERUN Office, and to be a testimony of the dynamism, agility and determination of our member universities. And let's not forget our YERUN partners and the many colleagues that work with us in Brussels - without which many of the above accomplishments would not have been possible.

The YERUN team and I look forward to many exciting new adventures in 2023!



YERUN DNA



- YERUN Members -



YERUN, Young European Research Universities Network, December 2022

For questions about this document please contact Ms Silvia Gomez Recio: secretarygeneral@yerun.eu

