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MANIFESTO OF THE SEA-EU GOVERNING BOARD

July 13th, 2020

The 'European University of the Seas' (SEA-EU) alliance was officially launched in October 2019, as part of the flagship 'European University' initiative of the European Commission, to renew the vision of universities' role as key leaders in and shapers of the future of Europe.

Almost one year after the creation of this alliance, the Rectors and Presidents of its constituent universities - University of Cádiz (Cádiz, Spain – Coordinator), University of Western Brittany (Brest, France), University of Kiel (Kiel, Germany), University of Gdańsk (Gdańsk, Poland), University of Split (Split, Croatia) and University of Malta (Malta) - have met (virtually) on July 13th, 2020 with Matthieu Gallou, President of the University of Western Brittany in the Chair, to take stock of the past year, which was highly atypical in the face of the Coronavirus pandemic and for which resilience, in its various forms, has been brought to the forefront.

We, the Rectors and Presidents of the constituent universities of SEA-EU, agree to the following:

1. WE REAFFIRM the commitment of the six partner universities to this strategic alliance which allows us to ambitiously 'dream' the European University, with the support of the European Commission and other national or regional public supports and the engagement of our associated partners and other stakeholders. For this, each university is making this partnership a priority within its own strategy of higher education and research plans.
2. WE CONFIRM that, while the initial anchor of SEA-EU has been the marine and coastal heritage of the six universities, we also agree to consider that our ongoing cooperation is open to all disciplines and units within our universities. The challenges that SEA-EU seeks to address – contributing to a sustainable development and reinforcing the European identity - oblige a truly interdisciplinary and international cooperation, which is only possible if we engage our universities as a whole.
3. WE PLEDGE to ensure and provide the necessary support for the involvement, participation and activist roles of students in the various dimensions of the SEA-EU alliance, its governance and its actions. Students are at the centre of our alliance. Their commitment to and appreciation of SEA-EU will be the real measure of our success.
4. WE ACKNOWLEDGE and reinforce virtual learning and virtual mobility as measures that complement (but do not replace) traditional, face-to-face teaching, learning and research, and which support and build upon the robustness, resilience and 'anti-fragility' of the SEA-EU alliance. Developing and promoting virtual communication and digital transformation will also help us to be better prepared for exceptional situations, such as that produced by the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. We ACT - in association with the relevant regional, national and European bodies - to develop a robust system of quality assurance that will ensure the viability and attractiveness of the academic programs offered in the framework of SEA-EU.





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6. WE ASSURE that the teaching, learning and other efforts undertaken by the SEA-EU Project promote mainstream European Languages as tools of communication; but we will also support the rich language diversity of the alliance as a tool of cultural appreciation and understanding. We urge our staff and students to develop a strong competence in both local and international languages, and to aim for trilingualism as an aspirational benchmark.

7. WE EMPHASIZE the need for political actions at European, local and regional levels, in support of the goals and aspirations of the 'European University' initiative.

8. WE RECOGNIZE the essential and generous support of the European Commission, as well as of other national or regional public bodies, on this, our exciting journey towards a 'European University'.

Signed, on this day, the thirteenth day of July, of the year two thousand and twenty.



Prof. Francisco Piniella-Corbacho
Rector
Universidad de Cádiz (Spain)
Coordinator



Prof. Matthieu Gallou
President
Université de Bretagne Occidentale (France)
Hosting Institution



Prof. Anja Pistor-Hatam
Vice President (Interim board)
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Prof. Jerzy Piotr Gwizdała
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Prof. Dragan Ljutić
Rector
Sveučilište u Splitu (Croatia)



Prof. Alfred J. Vella
Rector
L-Università ta' Malta (Malta)

