

# European Universities' Charter on Lifelong learning

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## EUA at a glance

- 800 individual university members in 46 countries
- 34 National Rectors' Conference Members
- Independent voice for the university sector:
  - ✓ policy dialogue (focus: EHEA and ERA)
  - ✓ projects and surveys, e.g. TRENDS V –focused on LLL for the first time
  - ✓ services to members, e.g. Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP); Council on Doctoral Education (CDE)

# Towards a European knowledge society

- European universities have three core missions:
  - ✓ Teaching & Learning
  - ✓ Research & Innovation
  - ✓ Knowledge Transfer & Service to Society
- After a decade of major reforms the time has come (back) to focus more specifically on lifelong learning, building on existing achievements

## LLL and the European knowledge society

- Lifelong learning as a response to the challenges of:
  - ✓ The demographic transformation of Europe
  - ✓ The increasing speed of globalisation & the pace of technological change
- Widening access and expanding participation – underpinned by strong economic arguments
- Taking account of developments in other regions – Europe needs to be competitive in this area as well
- Systems & HEIs need to cater for a greater diversity of learners

## What is Lifelong Learning (LLL) ?

- An amalgam of concepts requiring clarification:
  - ✓ retraining & skills updating for those with prior training
  - ✓ 'catching-up' for those who have missed out on initial (higher) education
  - ✓ cultural enrichment for ageing populations
  - ✓ continuing education for specific needs & in different modes: part-time, evening classes, weekends, online programmes etc
  - ✓ Balancing economic productivity & self fulfilment
- Universities must reconsider their role & their approach, taking account of their specific missions & profiles

## LLL in the context of ongoing reform processes

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- *A national but also a European challenge:*
  - increased mobility of students, young researchers & migration of workers seeking employment
- *The Bologna Process:*
  - new academic structures, flexible learning paths, new tools enabling the recognition of prior learning
  - LLL already a priority but requires further attention
- *The Lisbon Process & the 'modernisation' agenda:*
  - focus on LLL
  - university autonomy & the reform of governance structures

## But there is much to be done..

- LLL means changing mindsets
- Communicating to society & individuals the overall goals of ongoing European reform processes is crucial
- What does a 'Lifelong Learning University' look like?

# LLL Charter for universities

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## Process:

- Invitation from Prime Minister Fillon, Dec 2007
- Broad consultation with stakeholder organisations
- Adopted by national Rectors' Conferences, EUA Council, 4 July 08
- Further discussion with universities & stakeholders: EUA Autumn Conference, Rotterdam, October 2008
- Engaging with governmental partners during the French Presidency – Bordeaux Ministerial summit, 25/26 Nov 08

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## European Universities commit to...

- 1. !** Embedding concepts of widening access & LLL in their strategies
- 2. !** Providing education & learning to diversified student population
- 3. !** Adapting study programmes to enhance widening participation
4. Providing appropriate guidance & counselling service
- 5. !** Recognising prior learning
6. Embracing LLL in quality culture
- 7. !** Strengthening research/teaching links in a perspective of LLL
8. Consolidating Bologna reforms designed to promote flexible learning environments
- 9. !** Developing partnerships at all levels to provide relevant programmes
- 10. !** Acting as role models of LLL institutions

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## Universities call on governments to commit to:

- 1. !** Recognising the university contribution to LLL as a major benefit to individuals & society
2. Promoting social equity & an inclusive learning society
3. Including LLL objectives in their national QA systems
4. Supporting the development of appropriate guidance/counselling
- 5. !** Recognising prior learning
- 6. !** Removing legal obstacles that prevent potential learners from responding to LLL opportunities
- 7. !** Ensuring the necessary autonomy & incentives
- 8. !** Encouraging partnerships, especially at regional level
9. Informing and encouraging citizens to take advantage of LLL opportunities offered by universities
- 10. !** Acting as role models in relation to their own employees

## Questions to be addressed...

- LLL as a priority in the context of ongoing reforms - next steps for universities?
- What should the partnership with governments look like? How best to ensure that progress is made?
- How can the Charter be used most effectively?

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**Thank you for your attention**