

Work Package 2 YUFE Student Journey

Deliverable 2.2. (Due M24): Set up a multilateral inclusive mobility scheme

Multilateral Mobility Scheme

Young Universities for the Future of Europe / YUFE Alliance

November 2024



YUFE Multilateral Mobility Scheme

November 2024

final version

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The Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) is one of the dynamic European University Alliances, selected by the European Commission. YUFE aims to shape a holistic and inclusive future for students and learners, and their society in Europe. The YUFE Alliance strives to be the front-running Alliance of European Higher Education in which students, learners, and staff are co-leaders, co-dreamers, and co-creators. YUFE's mission is to become a successful model of a socially responsible European University.

1. Executive Summary

The Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) is one of the dynamic European University Alliances shaping a holistic and inclusive future for students, and their society in Europe.

As a European University in the making, YUFE is characterised by an innovative *student-centred approach* to cross-border European education with *multi-institutional mobility* available for students and other learners.

With mobility being offered in different forms and with YUFE allowing students to self-select, students from existing academic tracks have the opportunity to enhance or enrich their degrees with interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary courses and activities from universities across Europe.

YUFE fosters a multicultural—and often multilingual—international learning experience that equips them to make meaningful contributions to diverse European societies, aligned with their personal skills development and unique learning paths.

The innovation here lies in allowing students not only to select courses and activities independently—sometimes venturing beyond the scope of their own degree discipline—but also to combine in-person courses with online or hybrid formats. This flexibility enables them to engage with multiple partner universities, even within a single semester.

YUFE's student-centred, multilateral mobility is facilitated through two Erasmus+ Inter-Institutional Agreements, signed by all YUFE Alliance partner universities: one among our 9 continental YUFE partners and another between these partners and our UK partner.

With this, YUFE's **multilateral mobility scheme** facilitates seamless mobility flows among all YUFE partner universities and their local communities, supporting personalised learning paths, student-centred education, and multi-institutional mobility.

YUFE recognises that supporting students in their multi-institutional mobility is essential for their well-being and academic progress, making it a vital component of our mobility scheme. Whilst each partner university has a designated central point of contact for YUFE students – known as the YUFE decentral admission officer – students are also guided through YUFE Induction Courses through which YUFE's values are shared.

Despite that, YUFE aims to push forward. In preparation for YUFE's full degree joint programme, set to launch in the 2025/26 academic year, YUFE partner universities are actively discussing ways to enhance their support for students, particularly in assisting those with disabilities. This aligns with YUFE's commitment to being open, inclusive, and equitable. Efforts are underway to map and, where possible, align the rights of students with disabilities, along with the support services available to them.

In addition to in-person support, YUFE's multilateral mobility initiative is enhanced by a comprehensive digital support system. The YUFE Virtual Campus, launched in December 2020, serves as a digital platform where students can explore and enrol in a wide variety of academic courses. It provides convenient access to a diverse range of courses, including academic, language, and skills training options. By consolidating online, hybrid, and in-person opportunities from 10 universities into one virtual space, the platform promotes more inclusive mobility across Europe. Moreover, the YUFE Virtual Campus offers a clear outline of each student's progress toward meeting program requirements, ensuring structured guidance and clarity throughout their academic journey.

And what about the YUFE students, what do they think?

Students are enthusiastic about participating in multiple YUFE courses and activities across various partner universities, utilising different forms of mobility (physical, virtual, or blended) during their YUFE journey. Since the 2022/23 academic year, 84% of active YUFE students¹ have engaged in mobility by enrolling in courses or activities at one or more partner universities beyond their own.

In order to facilitate this even more, especially in view of the open character of our student-centred and personalised learning trajectories, the YUFE Alliance suggests in the final chapter of this report several adjustments to better align Erasmus+ KA1 with innovative types of learning and mobility developed by Alliances and other HEIs.

¹ Data from 7 November 2024

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2. YUFE Alliance

The Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) is one of the dynamic European University Alliances, selected by the European Commission. YUFE shapes a holistic and inclusive future for students and learners, and their society in Europe.

We are ten young research-intensive universities and two non-academic organisations from across Europe working together to be the front-running Alliance of European Higher Education in which students are co-leaders, co-dreamers, and co-creators.



Figure 1: Map with YUFE Partners

YUFE's mission is to become a successful model of a socially responsible European University. The YUFE model of the European University is rooted in the principles of diversity and inclusivity, with digitalisation of learning enabling increased access to Europe-wide opportunities for staff and students for whom physical mobility is difficult, for example those with caring responsibilities, those from low socio-economic backgrounds and those with disabilities.

YUFE stands for:

- An Alliance co-created and co-led by students for a Europe closer to all.
- A fair, non-elitist, equitable and innovative education in which every talent is recognised and fostered.
- Accessible mobility, multilingualism, and university-citizens communities solving European challenges.
- Working together with European citizens in upskilling and reskilling our local workforce.
- Involving all European regions for inter-cultural and inter-generational exchange, enrichment, education and social responsibility to close the social gap.

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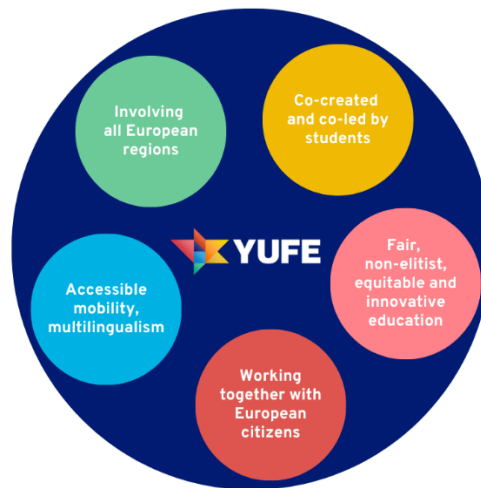


Figure 2 YUFE characteristics

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3. YUFE Mobility Characteristics

As a European University in the making, YUFE is characterised by an innovative *student-centred approach* to cross-border European education with *multi-institutional mobility* available for students and other learners.

All YUFE educational programmes, collaboratively developed by our 10 partner universities, offer students across Europe the chance to study at one or more partners universities through online, on-campus, hybrid, or blended formats (or a combination of all of these, see figure 3). Each student decides what suits them best, therewith following their own personalized international learning path.

With mobility being offered in different forms and with YUFE allowing students to self-select, students from existing academic tracks have the opportunity to enhance or enrich their degrees with interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary courses and activities from universities across Europe.

Our upcoming full degree programme, set to launch in 2025/26 academic year and designed for a new cohort of students, will also incorporate YUFE's core attributes (as described in the annex). This programme will enable personalised, cross-university learning within the framework of a complete degree.

Whichever format students choose, YUFE fosters a multicultural—and often multilingual—international learning experience that equips them to make meaningful contributions to diverse European societies, aligned with their personal skills development and unique learning paths.

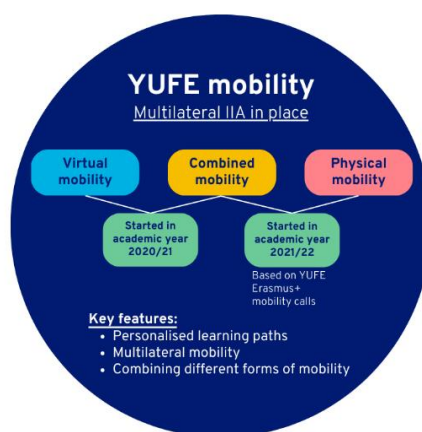


Figure 3: YUFE mobility

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3.1. Student-centred approach: personalised learning

Student empowerment is at the heart of YUFE education, offering students the freedom to select disciplines, educational formats, and levels that align with their unique interests and goals. They can also choose which YUFE partner universities to engage with, creating a highly personalised learning experience.

Since 2020, OpenYUFE—one of YUFE's flagship educational programmes—has allowed students enrolled in any degree programme within our 10 partner universities to enrich or supplement their studies with courses and activities from across Europe. OpenYUFE empowers students to shape their own learning paths, offering choices in discipline, course type, level, delivery method, and even the university providing the course. Students can combine online, hybrid, and on-campus courses from one or multiple YUFE universities, creating a flexible, personalised European learning experience.

The innovation here lies in allowing students not only to select courses and activities independently—sometimes venturing beyond the scope of their own degree discipline—but also to combine in-person courses with online or hybrid formats. This flexibility enables them to engage with multiple partner universities, even within a single semester (see Figure 3).

For example, a student pursuing a full degree in Business Administration at Maastricht University (UM) enrolled in OpenYUFE, took courses across several YUFE partner universities. Some of these courses aligned with the primary field of study, while others extended beyond it. While continuing their Business Administration degree at UM, the student took an online course in *Intercultural Communication Competence* at the University of Eastern Finland and another in *Psychology of Child Well-being* at the University of Rijeka. To complement their core studies, the student also took an online course in *International Finance* at the University of Essex, closely related to their primary degree programme.

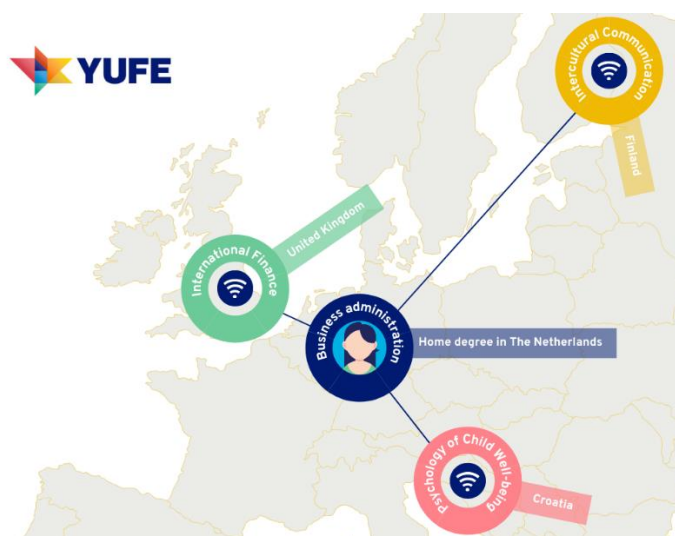


Figure 4: Student Journey example

Another example is of a student that combined online learning with on-campus learning at *multiple* universities with YUFE. A student enrolled for their full-bachelor degree in Liberal Arts & Sciences at Maastricht University (UM), enrolled in OpenYUFE and went on a physical exchange semester to Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M) while in the next semester took part in an online language class hosted by the University of Antwerp (UA) and participated in an online academy lecture hosted by Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M).

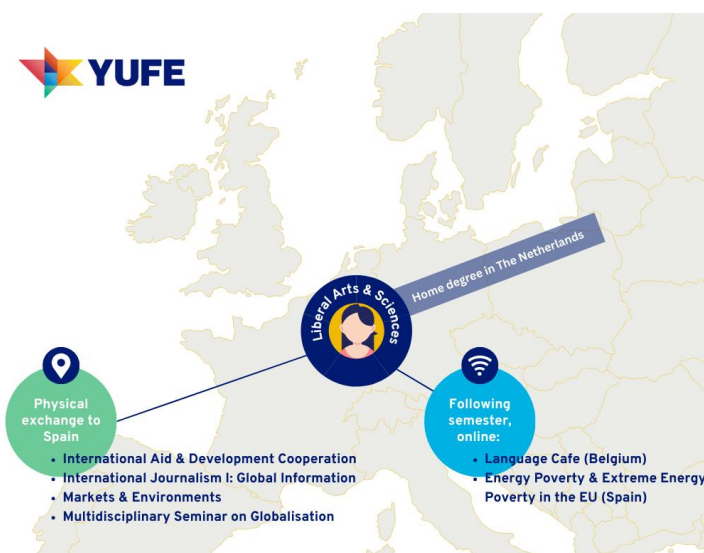


Figure 5: Student Journey example II

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3.2. Multi-institutional mobilities

With YUFE, student mobility can take on a multi-institutional dimension, depending on students' choices within our educational offerings. The YUFE Minors programme illustrates this well: each YUFE Minor comprises academic courses offered by different universities within our alliance, with multiple universities contributing to the Minor's intended learning outcomes. Additionally, each university offers more courses aligned with these outcomes than the 30 ECTS required for the Minor, providing students with a range of options.

This setup allows students to choose which courses to take and at which university, often creating a multi-institutional mobility experience within a single semester. With one university hosting the Minor's in-person components and others contributing elective online courses, YUFE has established a new model of multi-institutional mobility.

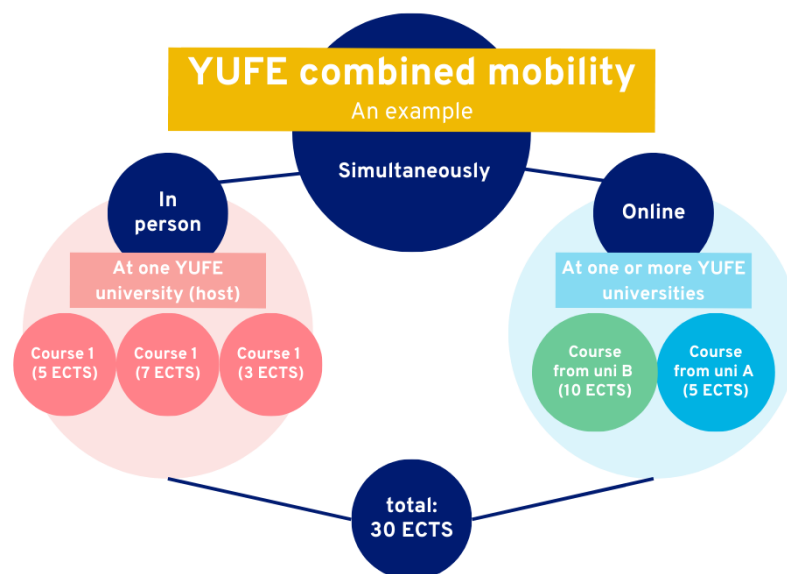


Figure 6: YUFE combined mobility opportunities

4. YUFE Inter-Institutional Agreement

As outlined, YUFE prioritises a blend of in-person, virtual, and hybrid learning opportunities that cater to the diverse needs and ambitions of all students. Through YUFE's virtual courses, students can study at multiple universities across different countries simultaneously, while physical mobility enhances intercultural exchange between YUFE students and local communities across Europe.

Physical student exchanges to other YUFE partner universities are primarily funded through Erasmus+ student mobility grants (KA1) allocated to each partner university, with UK students supported by the Turing Scheme. To facilitate this, all YUFE Alliance partner universities are part of two Erasmus+ Inter-Institutional Agreements: one among our 9 continental YUFE partners and another between these partners and our UK partner.

By signing these inter-institutional agreements, our 10 YUFE partner universities commit to collaborating on the exchange of students and/or staff within the framework of Erasmus+. They agree to uphold the quality standards set by the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education in all aspects of mobility organisation and management. Additionally, they establish a series of quantitative mobility targets, cooperation conditions, and qualitative measures to ensure high-quality and impactful mobility experiences.²

This **multilateral mobility scheme** facilitates seamless mobility flows among all YUFE partner universities and their local communities, supporting personalised learning paths, student-centered education, and multi-institutional mobility.

The scheme is further strengthened by a learner-centered recognition system, which ensures that the majority of courses completed abroad—whether in the YUFE Bachelor programme, the BioYUFE programme, or YUFE Minors—are properly recognised by each student's home university. Moreover, YUFE encourages students to take extracurricular courses, aligning with our student-centered approach that empowers them to create personalised learning paths, sometimes extending beyond their primary degree discipline.

² https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/inter-institutional-agreement?facets__field_eac_themes=1996

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5. Student Support Services

YUFE recognises that supporting students in their multi-institutional mobility is essential for their well-being and academic progress, making it a vital component of our mobility scheme. Whilst each partner university has a designated central point of contact for YUFE students – known as the YUFE decentral admission officer – students are also guided through YUFE Induction Courses through which YUFE's values are shared.

These introductory materials about the YUFE Alliance, its partner universities, and core YUFE values are designed to familiarise students with how YUFE operates and to ease their transition into engaging with YUFE's activities and programmes.

By sharing the YUFE Code of Conduct, students are informed that partner institutions are expected to be open and transparent about the extent to which diversity and inclusivity are integrated into their organisations. They are encouraged to recognise issues, strive for improvement, and support one another in taking individual actions that help contribute to systemic cultural change.

In preparation for YUFE's full degree joint programme, set to launch in the 2025/26 academic year, YUFE partner universities are actively discussing ways to enhance their support for students, particularly in assisting those with disabilities. This aligns with YUFE's commitment to being open, inclusive, and equitable. Efforts are underway to map and, where possible, align the rights of students with disabilities, along with the support services available to them.

6. YUFE Virtual Campus

Besides in-person support, YUFE's multilateral mobility scheme is supported by means of a digital support system.

The YUFE Virtual Campus, a digital platform enabling students to discover and enrol in a broad range of academic courses, was launched in December 2020 and offers easy access to a rich offer of academic courses, language courses and skills trainings. By bringing together online, hybrid and physical opportunities from 10 universities at a single virtual location, it allows for more inclusive multilateral mobility across Europe.

Our YUFE Virtual Campus also acts as a central hub for students, facilitating course and Minor enrolments, and providing a straightforward view of academic progress. The platform allows students to access detailed information about the curriculum, including descriptions of courses and Minors. It shows an outline of each student's path toward meeting the programme requirements, ensuring clarity and structured guidance throughout their academic journey.

A single sign-on solution is being explored to enable seamless access to existing resources, such as learning management systems, across the alliance. By strategically expanding the functionalities of the YUFE Virtual Campus, YUFE aims to enhance the diverse hybrid and virtual mobility opportunities that complement physical student and staff mobility now and in the future.

By establishing a European inter-university campus, YUFE facilitates seamless mobility — physical, virtual, and blended — allowing students, staff, and researchers from across Europe to create new knowledge across borders and disciplines. This initiative marks a significant shift from a local university model to a more global educational framework.

7. Facts & Figures

Since 2020, YUFE has provided students with the opportunity to enrol in courses and activities at one or multiple partner universities across Europe.

Since the 2022/23 academic year, over 1,806 students are actively participating in the OpenYUFE programme, collectively occupying more than 5,120 spots in YUFE courses and activities throughout Europe. On average, this translates to approximately 2.84 course seats per student since 2022/23. During the COVID-19 pandemic, from 2020 to 2022, YUFE students averaged even 5.5 courses and/or activities during their YUFE experience, engaging in virtual or blended (and sometimes physical) mobility to approximately 2.8 partner universities across Europe.

Students are enthusiastic about participating in multiple YUFE courses and activities across various partner universities, utilising different forms of mobility (physical, virtual, or blended) during their YUFE journey. Since the 2022/23 academic year, 84% of active YUFE students have engaged in mobility by enrolling in courses or activities at one or more partner universities beyond their own.

Since YUFE encourages *multiple* mobilities per student, the 1,516 mobile students jointly took up 122 physical mobilities. 1,369 virtual mobilities. 201 hybrid mobilities which shows that some students take up more than one form of mobility during their YUFE journey.

Mobile students				
AcademicYearTitle	# Virtually Mobile Students	# Physically Mobile Students	# Blended Mobile Students	# Mobile Students
2023/2024	713	55	134	812
Bachelor (or equivalent)	299	30	36	321
Master (or equivalent)	171	15	24	180
Doctoral candidates	36	3	6	39
Other	7	1	1	8
First Law exam	4	3	1	5
Pre-master programme	5		1	5
2024/2025	468	46	27	517
Bachelor (or equivalent)	222	25	11	246
Master (or equivalent)	102	17	7	114
Doctoral candidates	49	1		50
Other	8			8
First Law exam	6	1		7
Pre-master programme	6			6
2022/2023	483	28	44	502
Bachelor (or equivalent)	262	17	15	266
Master (or equivalent)	100	8	15	104
Doctoral candidates	25	3	3	25
Other	4	1	1	4
Pre-master programme	4			4
First Law exam	2		1	2
Total	1369	122	201	1516

Figure 7: YUFE Data Dashboard, 7 November 2024

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Overall, students express satisfaction with the multi-institutional mobility options offered by YUFE, particularly the diverse experiences available. Among students who joined OpenYUFE in Spring 2024, 31% indicated interest in combining physical and virtual mobility during their upcoming journey, while 24% preferred 100% virtual mobility across *multiple* destinations. In contrast, only 18% expressed a desire for 100% physical mobility to a single destination.³

³ YUFE student expectations survey, 11 October 2024.

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8. YUFE Position

In view of the open character of our student-centred and personalised learning trajectories, where students can freely choose onsite and / online courses from all the participating universities, the YUFE Alliance suggests the following adjustments to better align Erasmus+ KA1 with innovative types of learning and mobility developed by Alliances and other HEIs:

- Introduce support mechanisms specifically for multilateral mobility. As an Alliance of 10 partners, YUFE is promoting multilateral mobility allowing students to follow on-site and academic courses and skills training activities at various universities within one semester. This type of multilateral and blended mobility is not yet sufficiently recognized and funded in KA1. YUFE and other consortia have put in place multilateral Erasmus+ agreements that need to be matched with financial support for individual multilateral Erasmus+ mobility. European consortia like European Universities Alliances could be a testbed for such adjustments. To better support institutions implementing multilateral mobility already, we further suggest enabling electronic versions of such agreements – similar to the traditional bilateral Erasmus+ Inter-institutional agreements.
- Further roll-out and develop a more inclusive understanding of hybrid and virtual mobility. YUFE welcomes the introduction of hybrid mobility in the 2021 – 2027 Erasmus+ programme. The programme has started to embrace novel types of online and short-term mobility which is a key step towards greater equity, diversity, and inclusivity of learning experiences. The Alliance is happy with some of the new formats promoting hybrid mobility like e.g. the Blended Intensive Programmes that individual partners have made use of to support Alliance activities. Towards easier implementation of the BIPs we would like to see a simplification of the relating administrative processes and requirements. Towards an increase in hybrid and virtual mobility, we are hoping to contribute to increasingly harmonized national Erasmus+ mobility regulations. Specifically, we would like to see harmonization concerning (i) the ECTS requirements for mobility periods, and (ii) the flexibility towards allowing for ECTS acceptance of virtual courses as part of mobility periods. We ask the European Commission to support such requests towards member states.
- Increase flexibility in the maximum duration of mobility periods. The current maximum duration of mobility periods under KA1 is defined as 12 months. Alliances are developing novel study programmes that include longer obligatory mobility periods. To enable HEIs to adequately support students that choose to follow such programmes, we suggest an increase in the maximum mobility

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period for e.g. multilateral and / or novel type of study programmes. European consortia like European Universities Alliances could be a testbed for such adjustments.

- Include possibilities for inclusion of skills training activities in mobility periods. European Universities Alliances such as YUFE emphasise equipping students with future-proof capabilities by complementing academic education with personalised skills training in key areas such as Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity, as well as Entrepreneurship, and Civic Engagement. The focus for those activities lies on the personalized and student-centred learning trajectories and thus the personal skills development of learners more than on intra-curricular ECTS acceptance of such activities. In light of the horizontal priorities of the Erasmus+ programme, we would like to see greater flexibility in KA1 support for extra-curricular skills development. Such an adjustment could pave the way for the work on micro-credentials and badges.
- Create a scheme comparable to the Erasmus Mundus Masters at Bachelor level. YUFE is currently working on setting-up a joint Bachelor programme of YUFE universities contributing to the full roll-out of our open programmes take on personalized learning. At present, there is no initiative under Erasmus+ that would allow us to receive dedicated funding for joint programmes set up by European consortia like the European Universities Alliances. We would welcome a scheme similar to Erasmus Mundus to support joint Bachelor programmes at the European level. Creating joint European programmes at all levels and dedicated support for that could go hand in hand with the work and efforts towards a European Degree (Label). Erasmus+ contribution to mobility of individuals within EUIs (KA1).
- Further improve IT systems supporting Erasmus+ administration. The YUFE Alliance is not managing any KA1 actions centrally, it is rather the individual partner universities and their mobility offices that are in charge of the administration relating to individual student and staff mobility. They indicate that they would like to see further improvements in the functionality and simplicity of the available support systems. The Alliance is supportive of this wish, especially in view of increasingly diverse and multilateral mobility, we believe that simple and mainstreamed processes can ease the workload of those concerned with the administration of the programme.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

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Annex: Characteristics of YUFE education

The following key characteristics make YUFE education:

a. Open curriculum approach

YUFE has an open curriculum approach, which means that students have the opportunity to self-design parts of their learning path. YUFE education allows students to tailor their course selection, and align their academic journey with their individual interests. Completing YUFE education equips students with essential academic skills, while cultivating transferable competencies and a strong learner autonomy.

b. Inter- / Multi disciplinarity

Cross-disciplinary approach combines insights from different academic fields to address complex issues comprehensively. This allows students to generate inventive solutions to challenges, as exemplified by successful project results achieved by students in the pilot phase.

c. Multilateral mobility

With YUFE, students can learn at multiple universities; simultaneously if needed. Students in 2020-2022 on average learned at 2,8 different universities within the Alliance during their YUFE education.

d. Different methods of delivery

Within YUFE, courses and activities are offered through various delivery methods. Some are conducted exclusively on-site, while others are available solely online. Additionally, certain courses utilise a blended format, requiring both on-site and online learning components.

e. Challenge Based Learning

Challenge Based Learning is integrated in different educational offers and encompasses a framework for learning while solving real-world challenges. The framework stimulates collaboration to create new ideas and to identify, investigate and solve challenges. Challenge Based Learning helps YUFE learners to gain in-depth knowledge and to develop the skills necessary in an ever-changing world.

f. International classroom

At YUFE, the international classroom plays a vital role in enriching the educational experience. Many courses are existing academic offerings that are also accessible to students from the host university, bringing together diverse backgrounds, cultures, and nationalities. This environment fosters inclusivity, ensuring that all students feel welcome, regardless of their cultural heritage. Furthermore, the international classroom prepares students for a diverse global labor market while enhancing their language and communication skills.

g. Multilingualism

YUFE strongly believes in multilingualism and its contribution to our core mission and vision. To build and fulfil these, YUFE promotes, encourages, supports and rewards multilingualism among all stakeholders. It builds upon the idea of multilingualism as a reflection of cultural and linguistic richness and diversity, an idea which is also strongly promoted by the overall European Language Policy. YUFE's focus on all languages (not just European languages) also reflects and fosters the alliance's openness to the world, global outreach and inclusiveness. The YUFE Education offer contains both intracurricular and extracurricular opportunities for students to improve their language and intercultural skills.

h. Values-based

YUFE places a strong emphasis on values and identity, with its core ambitions centered around achieving true equity, diversity, and inclusivity (ED&I). Developing knowledge and commitment to ED&I is an integral part of the YUFE educational experience. Our mandatory online course, "Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity: What's it Got to Do with Me?" is a key component of the induction process. The curriculum is designed to encourage students to seek out and embrace diverse perspectives, cultivate curiosity about the experiences, backgrounds, and cultures of others, and take personal responsibility for fostering inclusive environments where everyone feels welcome, respected, and connected through their words and actions.

i. YUFE Stars

YUFE Stars are an innovative recognition system for activities with specific and personalised learning goals that go beyond academic education in a European University setting.

j. Lifelong learning



Lifelong learning initiatives in YUFE will further develop the employability of its students, promote a culture of lifelong curiosity, and contribute to the broader goals of creating a more knowledgeable and interconnected European community.



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