5th OpenEU Rectors' Council Meeting – Minutes

Date: 30 April 2026
Time: from 9.00h to 10.30h
Meeting Venue: Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to the EU, Rue de la Loi 227, 1040 Brussels

List of attendees

- Àngels Fitó, Rector UOC and OpenEU president
- Laura Alba, representing Ricardo Mairal Usón, Rector UNED
- Arvīds Barševskis, Rector DU
- Theo Bastiaens, Rector OUNL
- Paulo Bento, Vice-rector representing Carla Padrel, Rector UAb
- Constantinos Leonidou, Vice-rector representing Stavros Stavrou, Rector OUC
- Manolis Koutouzis, Rector HOU
- Stefan Stürmer, Rector FeU
- Pastora Martínez Samper, OpenEU coordinator

Agenda

1. Current agenda and minutes of the previous meeting
2. Updates on the Erasmus+ programme
3. Alliance follow-up: from the Lisbon meeting to the Brussels meeting
4. Zoom in the OpenEU Joint Virtual Community Campus
5. Advocacy activities
6. Any other business

Annexes

- **Annex 1** - 4th OpenEU Rectors' Council Meeting minutes
- **Annex 2** - Support presentation for the meeting

Minutes

1. Current agenda and minutes of the previous meeting

Rectors approved the 4th RC meeting minutes with any amendment.
At the proposal of the Alliance coordinator, it was agreed to include a new item 5 to address the advocacy activities discussed the previous day.

2. Updates on the Erasmus+ programme

See Annex 2 for information.

Agreements:

- The OpenEU coordinator will informally contact the Open University UK asking them if they will be willing to participate in a future call as part of an OpenEU full partner.

3. Alliance follow-up: from the Lisbon meeting to the Brussels meeting

See Annex 2 for information.

Agreements on the expansion of the OpenEU educational model:

- The RC agreed to include the approved principles of the educational model in the external message of the Alliance.
- The RC asked that the document elaborated by WP6 be shared with them before the ExBo discussion in May. Comments and suggestions by the ExBo will be sent afterwards.

4. Zoom in the OpenEU Joint Virtual Community Campus

See Annex 2 for information.

Agreements:

- The RC mentioned the importance of aligning IT units with OpenEU strategic goals. However, it was emphasized that the level of effort and dedication required by the Alliance must be carefully monitored to ensure the workload remains manageable and sustainable for these teams.

5. Advocacy activities

See Annex 2 for information.

- The RC agreed to address a letter to the EC regarding the European Degree Label criteria guidelines to be published in May-June, explaining the side effects of the decision made during the last Policy Lab session and formally requesting a review of said decision.

6. Any other business

Without any other business, the meeting ended at 10.35h.

4th OpenEU Rectors' Council Meeting minutes

Date: 6 February 2026
Time: from 12.00h to 13.00h UTC
Meeting Venue: Universidade Aberta. Rua Almirante Barroso, 38 Lisbon, (PT)

List of attendees

- Arvīds Barševskis, Rector DU
- Theo Bastiaens, Rector OUNL
- Christopher Christodoulides, Director of Finance OUC, on behalf of Stavros Stavrou, Rector
- Àngels Fitó, Rector UOC
- Anna Ivanova, Vice-rector UVT, on behalf of Dimitar Dimitrov, Rector
- Margrét Jónsdóttir Njarðvík, Rector BU
- Manolis Koutouzis, Rector HOU
- Ricardo Mairal Usón, Rector UNED - virtually
- Carla Padrel de Oliveira, Rector UAb
- Stefan Stürmer, Rector FeU (via video conference; finally not present due to technical difficulties)
- Àlex Hinojo, OpenEU secretary general (non-voting)
- Pastora Martínez Samper, OpenEU alliance coordinator (non-voting)

Agenda

1. Current agenda and minutes of the previous meeting
2. Approval of the OpenEU work plan for Y2
3. Official constitution of the External Advisory Board
4. European Degree: Updates and OpenEU alliance next steps.
5. RC meetings in 2026
6. Any other business

Annexes (provided separately)

- **Annex 1** - Draft minutes of the 3rd OpenEU Rectors' Council Meeting
- **Annex 2** - OpenEU Y2 work plan

Minutes

1. Approval of the current agenda and previous meeting minutes

Rectors approved the agenda as well as the 3rd Rectors' Council meeting minutes. The draft minutes were open to be amended by the RC members. The agenda was open to additional items under item 6 - *Any other business*.

Annex 1 - Draft minutes 3rd OpenEU Rectors' Council Meeting

2. Approval of the OpenEU work plan for year 2

RC formally approved the OpenEU Work Plan for Year 2, which comprises the strategic contributions of the 8 Work Package Boards as supervised by the Executive Board. Following the Executive Board's prior endorsement during the first day of the Lisbon meeting, the RC validated the plan's alignment with Alliance objectives and mandated its immediate commencement.

Annex 2 - OpenEU Y2 work plan

3. Official constitution of the External Advisory Board

The OpenEU External Advisory Board (EAB) is currently composed of four members: **Xavier Prats Monné** (former EC DG Education) acting as president, **Karl Dittrich** (former President at the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education), **Tamara Ciobanu** (Executive Committee member of the European Students' Union), and **Tülay Ates-Brunner** (CEO at the German NGO Tür an Tür and member of the EU Migration Expert Group). As agreed in the previous RC meeting, two additional representatives from the industrial sector have already been invited to join (answer still pending): **Beth Havinga**, Managing Director of the European EdTech Alliance, and **Sebastiano Toffaletti**, Secretary General at European DIGITAL SME Alliance.

As announced in early January, it was agreed that the **official constitution** of the EAB will take place **in Brussels on 29-30 April 2026**, together with a forthcoming Rectors' Council meeting taking place the same day.

An agenda proposal was presented and approved:

- Wednesday 29 April 2026
  - 16.00 - 18.00h: RC and EAB joint meeting - *introduction and objectives*
  - 19.30h: Dinner
- Thursday 30 April 2026
  - 9.00 - 11.00h: separated meetings of the RC and the EAB
  - 11.00 - 12.00h: RC and EAB joint meeting - *exchange and next steps*
  - 12.00h: Farewell lunch

4. European Degree: Updates and OpenEU alliance next steps.

The Alliance Coordinator updated the RC on the European Degree initiative, building on previous discussions in Hagen and Lisbon.

Significant concern was raised regarding the "Digital European Degree" label, which was identified as a strategic risk; instead, the RC preferred to advocate for the digitalization of general European Degree criteria.

The RC deliberated on whether to submit an application to the Erasmus+ open call (ERASMUS-EDU-2025-PE-EUED), with a consensus emerging to pursue the submission provided it focuses on optimizing and adapting existing joint programmes rather than creating entirely new workloads.
To move forward, it was proposed to include in the application the OpenEU joint degrees - joint Bsc on software development and testing and the open Master on climate change - plus an existing joint master degree between Hellenic and Cyprus partners, while also exploring potential synergies with EU4Dual alliance.
The OpenEU coordinator will now develop a specific proposal based on these parameters for submission by 17 March.

5. RC meetings in 2026

The RC meetings in 2026 will take place on a hybrid format on:

- 6 February at the Universidade Aberta in Lisbon
- 30 April in Brussels *(exact location tbc)*
- 28-30 October *(date and time tbc)* at Open Universiteit in The Hague, during the EADTU Annual Conference

6. Any other business

For information and discussion

With no other item the meeting ended at 12.35pm.

OpenEU

The Open European University

Co-funded by the European Union

Rectors' Council meeting

Brussels, 30 April 2026

Follow us
@openeualliance

Co-funded by
the European Union

Agenda

1. Current agenda and minutes of the previous meeting
2. Updates on the Erasmus+ programme
3. Alliance follow-up: from the Lisbon meeting to the Brussels meeting
4. Zoom in the OpenEU Joint Virtual Community Campus
5. **Advocacy activities**
6. Any other business

Co-funded by the European Union

2. Updates on the Erasmus+ programme

DG EAC & EACEA on sustainability

From the EC Alliance coordinators' working retreat (BXL 14/04, summary) and FOREU4ALL Policy Learning Lab on Sustainable Funding for Alliances (20/04, recording)

- **Transformation** cannot be dissociated from sustainability. The EC is looking for **institutional transformation AND sector transformation**
  - Where do we add value? **Visibility and impact** are key to be incorporated in the OpenEU narrative and initiatives.
- **Funding** The intention for the MFF 2028-2034 is a new **funding model** for the Alliances to better connect with objectives, so:
  - with a longer timeframe (from 5 to 7 years)
  - with additional national/regional funding streams

Discussions to be continued during the EC and Rectors' meeting (BXL 10/06)

Co-funded by the European Union

2. Updates on the Erasmus+ programme

European Degree Label next steps

Proposed version of EDL criteria guidelines included an exception to mobility formats, **but it has been withdrawn on late April.**

To be informed at the EU Council Education Committee on 26 May and to be published in June.

The resolution of the European Degree Exploratory Action is expected by June-July.

Next steps: **continue the lobbying process!**

UK is back on Erasmus+ by January 2027

Co-funded by the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

OpenEU joint programmes and degree framework (WP6)

Expansion of the OpenEU educational model approved by WPB as agreed in Lisbon.

Starting point: Each university maintains its own pedagogical model, while simultaneously participating in a shared methodological proposal at alliance level.

Proposed Principles of the Expanded Model

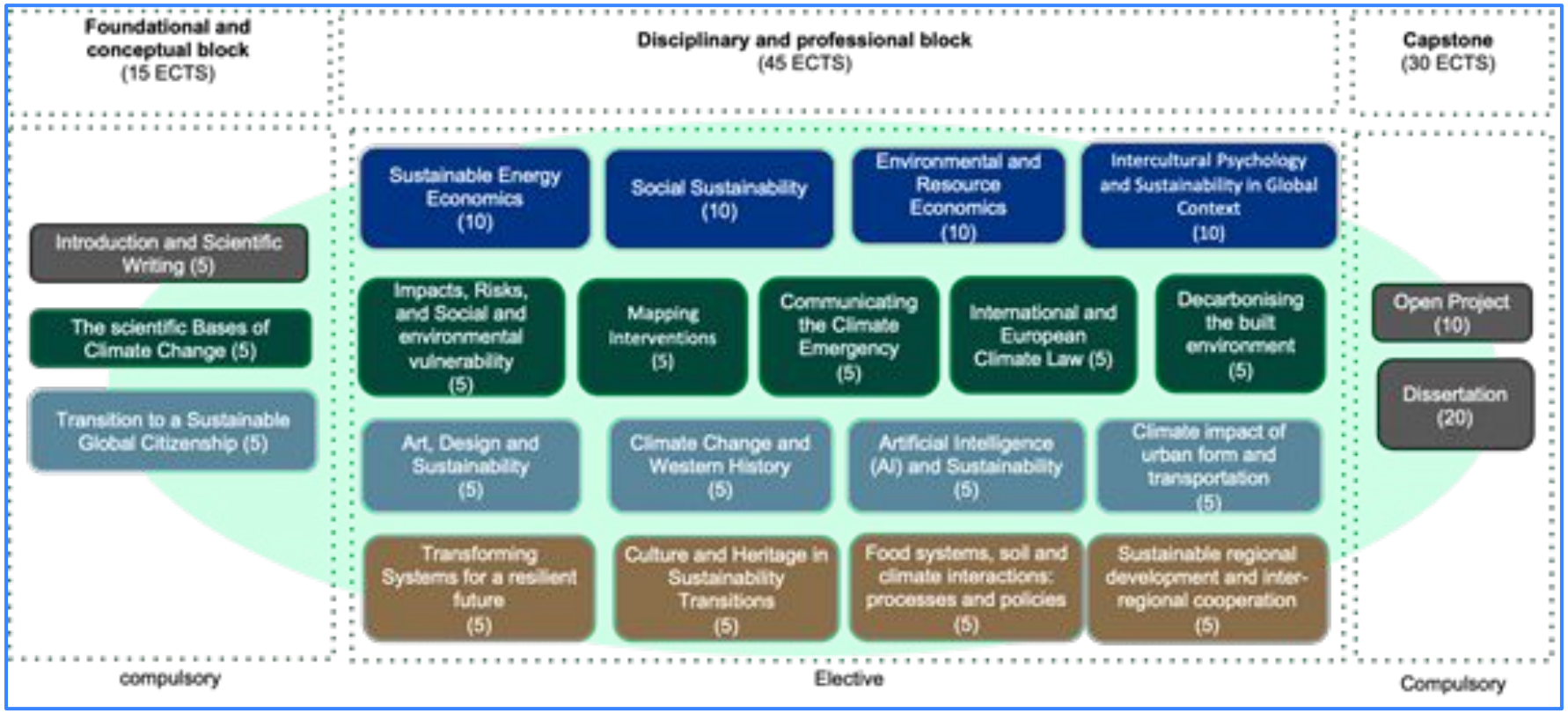
PRINCIPLE 1 · Student-Centred Model and European Learning Experience
PRINCIPLE 2 · Digital Pedagogical Design (Not Merely Online Format)
PRINCIPLE 3 · Methodological Flexibility within a Shared Coherent Framework
PRINCIPLE 4 · Learning Outcomes and Competences
PRINCIPLE 5 · Coherent, Transparent and Recognised Assessment
PRINCIPLE 6 · Mobility Integrated into Programme Design
PRINCIPLE 7 · Flexibility, Inclusion, and Lifelong Learning
PRINCIPLE 8 · Alignment with the European Degree

Addenda: Guidance on the Elements of the Pedagogical Minimum Denominator

Co-funded by the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

Open Master on Climate Change curriculum co-designed (WP2)



FeU (Germany) coordinator

UNED (Spain)

UAb (Portugal)

DU (Latvia)

Co-funded by the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

Upskilling with Eurocities (WP2)

52 city officials from 27 EU cities in the **course** (3 ECTS) on evidence-based policymaking with **Eurocities**

OpenEU Rural network survey (WP7)



+500 answers by OpenEU students so far (more to come) distributed across all alliance members

Co-funded by the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

R&I workshops on SDGs (WP4)



10 workshops (one per partner) with **+500 stakeholders** from academia, industry, public administration, and civil society.

OpenEU Innovation Agenda on Digital Education (WP5)

cat	item	n	Miss	median	mean	sd	iqr	top2_pct	bot2_pct	onsensus_top2_7
1	Ethical, inclusive, and human-centered	16	0	5.0	4.50	0.89	1.00	87.50	0.0	TRUE
1	Competency-oriented and lifelong lear	16	0	4.0	4.31	0.79	1.00	93.75	0.0	TRUE
1	Reflective and evidence-based digital	16	0	4.0	3.88	1.26	1.25	75.00	6.25	TRUE
2	Ethical, pedagogy-driven, and human-	15	1	5.0	4.40	1.06	1.00	86.67	0.0	TRUE
2	Inclusive and equitable access infrastr	16	0	5.0	4.44	0.81	1.00	81.25	0.0	TRUE
2	Secure, privacy-preserving, and well-g	16	0	4.5	4.44	0.63	1.00	93.75	0.0	TRUE
2	An infrastructure that supports the dev	16	0	4.0	4.38	0.62	1.00	93.75	0.0	TRUE
2	Infrastructure that provides culture of	16	0	4.0	4.31	0.70	1.00	87.50	0.0	TRUE
2	Strategically, sustainable and sovereig	15	1	4.0	4.33	0.72	1.00	86.67	0.0	TRUE
3	Self-regulation, agency, and lifelong le	16	0	5.0	4.56	0.51	1.00	100.00	0.0	TRUE
3	Developing critical, reflective, and met	16	0	5.0	4.44	0.73	1.00	87.50	0.0	TRUE
3	AI literacy for students and educators,	16	0	5.0	4.38	0.81	1.00	81.25	0.0	TRUE
3	Collaborative, co-creative, and inclusiv	16	0	4.0	4.25	0.58	1.00	93.75	0.0	TRUE
3	Providing educators and students with	16	0	4.0	4.31	0.70	1.00	87.50	0.0	TRUE
3	Encouraging teachers and students to	16	0	4.0	4.25	0.77	1.00	81.25	0.0	TRUE
4	Human-centred AI use that preserves	16	0	5.0	4.50	0.63	1.00	93.75	0.0	TRUE
4	Transparency and integrity of AI syster	16	0	4.5	4.31	0.79	1.00	81.25	0.0	TRUE

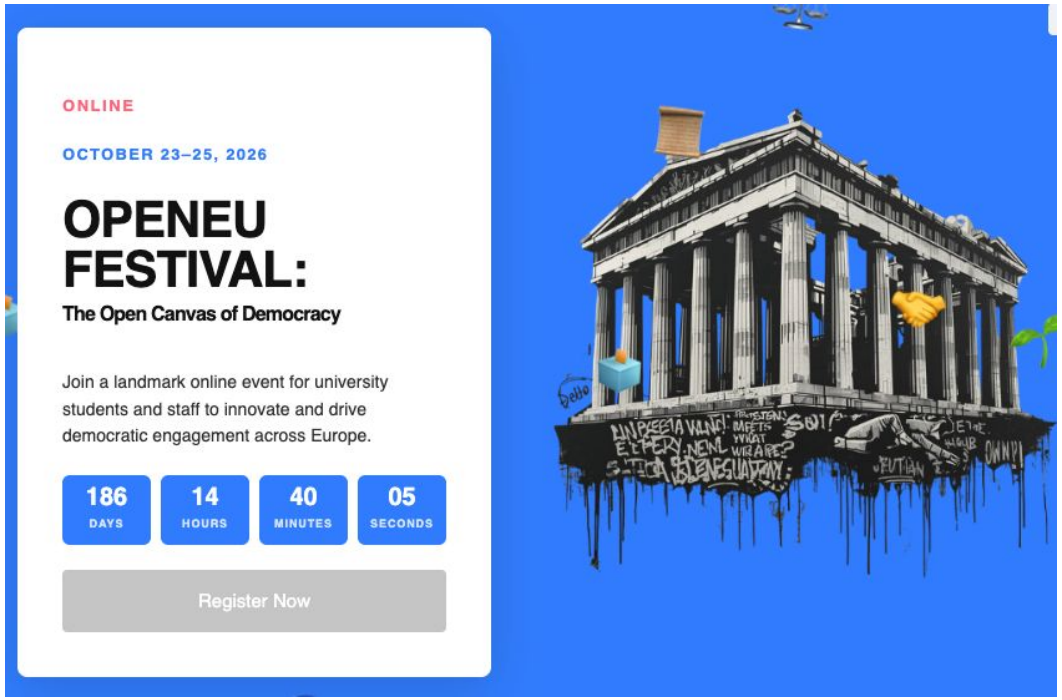
Report to be published with the result of a Delphi process of **82 experts** of the Think and do Tank

Co-funded by
the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

OpenEU Festival led by students (WP7)

- 23–25 October 2026, online
- Tracks:
  - The Democratic Self
  - Deep Democracy, Organizations & DEI
  - Governance, Health & Society
  - Digital Democracy & Futures
  - Education & Knowledge
  - Culture, Language & Expression
- Festival will engage students and other audience by various interactive means.



https://openeu.eu/assemblies/festival

Co-funded by
the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

Role model campaign (WP3)



Social media videos targeting people from the 4 underrepresented groups

Advocacy European Degree (WP1,8)



EU advocacy to recognize virtual and blended mobilities as an acceptable criterion in the ED label

Co-funded by the European Union

3. Alliance follow-up

Additional funding opportunities (WP1 & WP3)

- As part of the advocacy strategy, and actively looking for further funding opportunities to complement running activities or envision new but related ones.
- Proposals submitted:
  - **Horizon Europe - European Excellence Initiative** (deadline 20/11/25). *Institutional Transformation for Research Excellence through Digital and Inclusive Innovation.* Partners: UAb, OUC, DU, HOU, UOC, BU, FeU, UNED, OU. *Resolution negative*
  - **Horizon Europe - Enhancing the European R&I system** (deadline 12/03/26): *Advancing Digital Inclusive Gender Equality Plans for the European Research Area.* Partners: UOC, UAb, OUC, HOU, UVT, UNED, EADTU, GenCat. *Resolution pending*
  - **Erasmus+ European Degree Exploratory Action** (deadline 17/03/26): *Towards Labour-Oriented European Degrees.* Joint proposal with EU4Dual alliance. Partners involved: UOC, OUNL, UNED, HOU, OUC, FeU. *Resolution pending*

Co-funded by
the European Union

4. Joint Virtual Community Campus

Virtual Campus

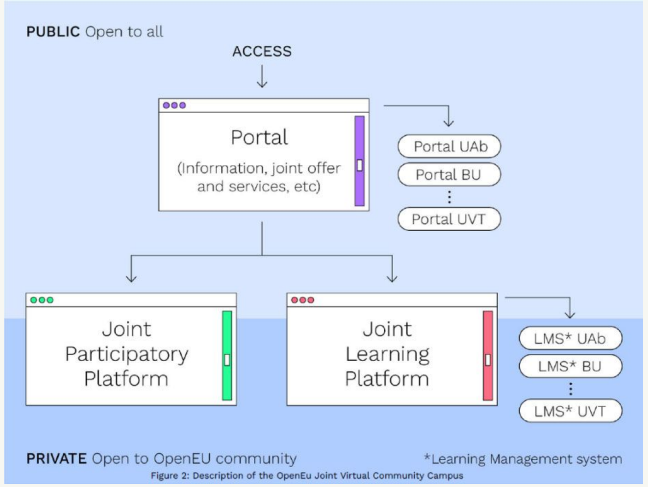


Figure 2: Description of the OpenEu Joint Virtual Community Campus

OpenEU Portal

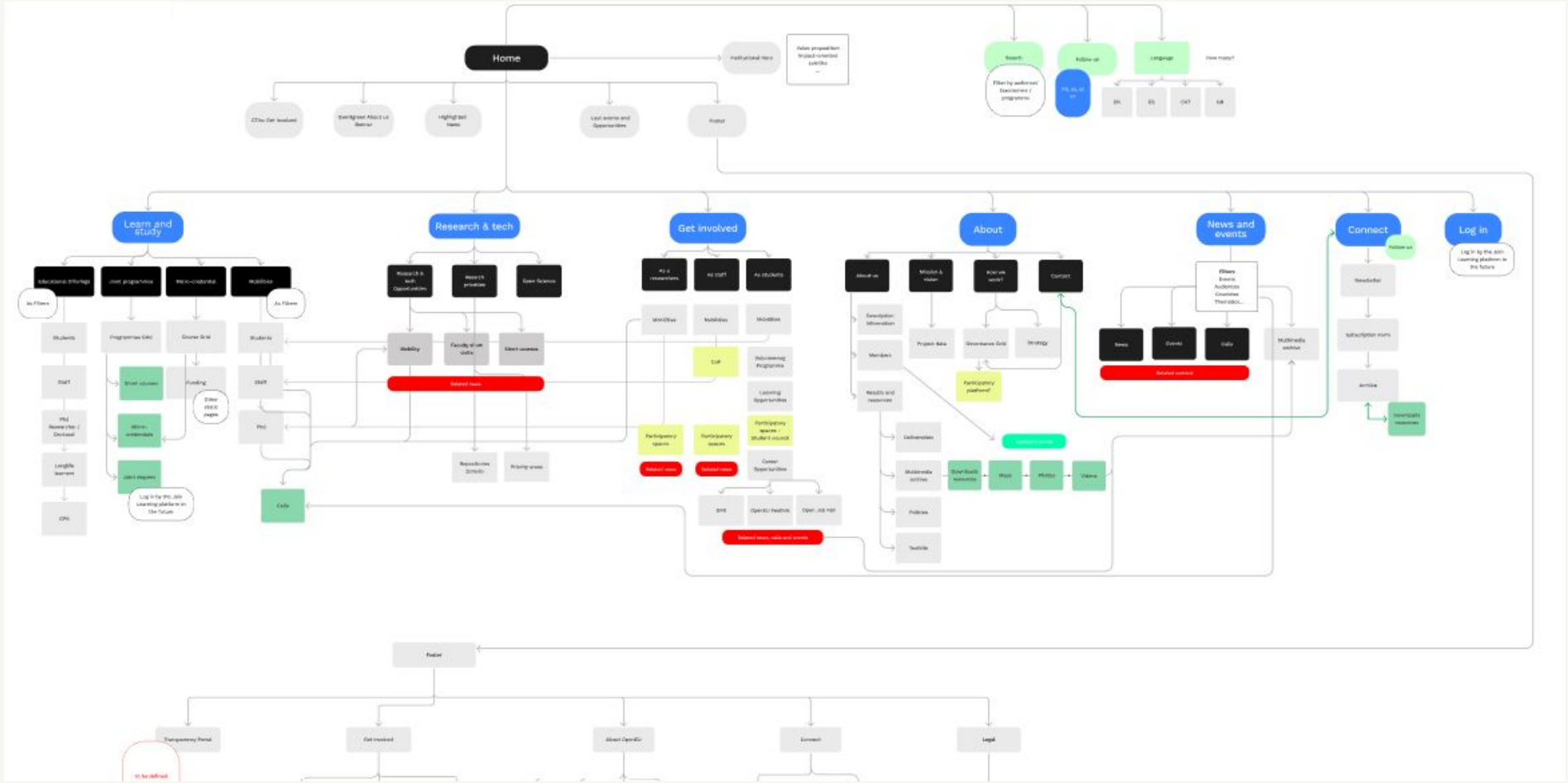
Joint Participatory platform

Joint Learning platform

More detalis

Co-funded by
the European Union

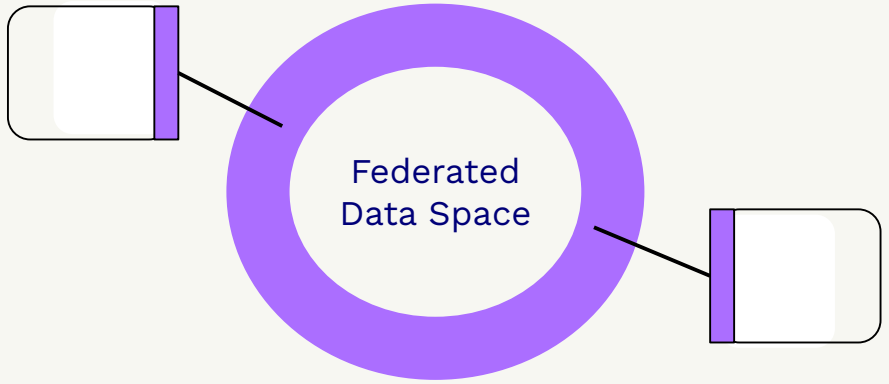
4. Community Campus architecture

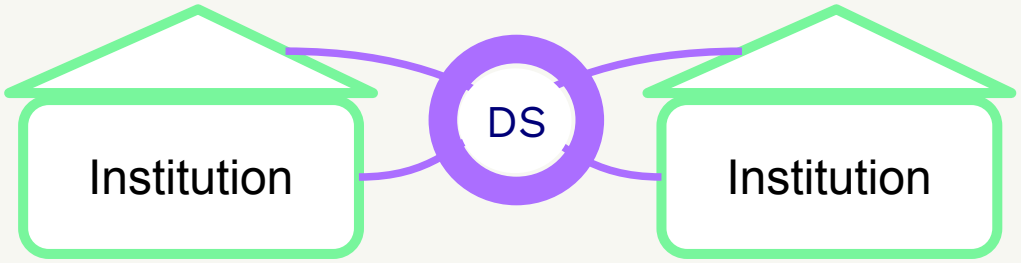


Check figma

4. Early adopter of European HE Interoperability Framework

Co-funded by the European Union







Co-funded by the European Union

5. Advocacy activities

On the European Degree Label

Nov 2025

- OpenEU statement on the European Degree Mobility Model
- European Degree Forum 2025 (Florence). Statement circulated to EC and FOREU4All representatives
- Initial informal contacts with Policy Lab
- Initial contacts at national level

Feb 2026

- Meeting with Susanne Conze and EC HE Unit team with OpenEU value proposition

Mar 2026

- Proposal submitted with EU4Dual to ED Exploratory Action call

Apr 2026

- Alliance coordinators' working retreat (Brussels)

OpenEU | The Open European University

odarya vi Danke Efkharîsto Gracia
ies Merci Obrigada Paldies Takk f
k you Bedankt Blagodarya vi Dan
arîsto Gracias Gràcies Merci Obri
ies Takk fyrir Thank you Bedankt
odarya vi Danke

Co-funded by the European Union