

## **BusinessEurope and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) 2024 – 2027**

### **An innovative EHEA**

“The need for Lifelong learning in society is increasing, especially for all those requiring or desiring new competences to enhance their professional, personal or civic potential. Learning paths need to be flexible, properly delivered, quality assured, and recognised. They should promote inclusion, upskilling and reskilling, and be aligned with the requirements of learners, changing societies and labour markets. This also includes the recognition of prior learning, and new forms of education provision, such as micro-credentials. We commit to fostering such flexible learning paths in all higher education programmes”

*Tirana Communiqué 2024*

BusinessEurope supports the principles of an **inclusive, innovative and interconnected EHEA by 2030**, as set out in the Rome and Tirana Communiqués.

Building on the Tirana Communiqué, it is necessary to draw attention to burning issues that affect higher education institutions, their governing bodies, and the labour market across borders more than ever before. This includes answers to the changing realities of students' lives, demographic changes, digitalisation, the need for flexible curricula, to artificial intelligence, to boost 21st century skills, up-skilling and re-skilling of workers and to understand international students and graduates as highly qualified workers for the whole of Europe.

### **Employability of graduates**

Raising the employability of graduates is a key issue for improving the functioning of European labour markets. Increasing cooperation between the world of work and higher education, and acknowledging the shared responsibility of all actors, are necessary steps to ensure that individuals can continually refresh their knowledge and skills in a lifelong learning perspective, to improve both their personal and professional competences.

In a transforming world, we must ensure that all learners have the education and training they need - in the EU and, if possible, throughout the EHEA. Taking into account the planned Union of Skills, the Draghi Report, the Letta Report and the financial funding opportunities such as under Erasmus+ or the ESF, it is important to us to discuss these key topics while taking academic values into account and thus jointly ensure a competitive, attractive and innovative higher education landscape.

### **Knowledge Triangle and Third Mission of Higher Education Institutions**

BusinessEurope recognises and fully supports efforts to foster cooperation between research, education and innovation, the so-called knowledge triangle. This is an approach that we have been advocating over many years and one that we think should receive more prominence in view of the Letta report. Bearing in mind that universities make a significant contribution to innovative regional or even cross-border ecosystems,

we support all facets of the Third Mission, and thus the transfer of science to non-university partners, companies, regional organisations and the public.

### **About BusinessEurope:**

BusinessEurope is the leading advocate for growth and competitiveness at European level, standing up for companies across the continent and campaigning on the issues that most influence their performance. A recognised social partner, we speak for enterprises of all sizes in 36 European countries whose 42 national business federations are our direct members (<https://www.buinesseurope.eu/members>).

The organisation is headquartered in Brussels at the heart of the EU institutions. We work on behalf of our member federations to ensure that the voice of business is heard in European policy-making. We interact regularly with the European Parliament, Commission and Council as well as other stakeholders in the policy community. We also represent European business in the international arena, ensuring that Europe remains globally competitive.

### **Reboot Europe - Europe's economic success, everyone's business**

Before the European elections, BusinessEurope called for a **REBOOT** in European policies, building on EU achievements, with targeted actions to tackle the structural weaknesses that are undermining companies' efforts to deliver for people. On 15 January 2025, we unveiled our priorities for the next EU institutional cycle, proposing concrete actions for the EU to take during the first 100 days and beyond. For BusinessEurope, a coherent competitiveness strategy needs to include the following 8 key ingredients:

- sound economic policy;
- open international trade and a secure world order;
- supportive climate and energy policies;
- a Single Market with less and smarter regulation;
- opportunities for the EU's digital economy;
- ambitious research and innovation policies;
- balanced employment and social policies;
- preparing for the next enlargement.



Download the full document from [here](#) (.pdf/9 MB) or visit [rebooteurope.eu](https://rebooteurope.eu) for more information.

BusinessEurope is also leading an **employers research study on access to skills**. This study is in the early stages and among its aims is to explore how to improve the labour market relevance of higher education overall, including the role that higher education can play in fostering life-life learning, for example through micro-credentials, short cycle courses.

## **Working Group Education and Training**

The Education and Training Working Group discusses and prepares positions on issues such as EU skills strategies, learning outcomes, apprenticeships, the European cooperation frameworks on vocational education and training and higher education, and EU education and training tools.

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