**Hellenic Republic**



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**PRESS RELEASE**

**The Kick-off Meeting of EU-CONEXUS Plus was held in Paris - A significant progress accomplishment towards the implementation of the institution of European Universities.**

On the 16th and 17th of November 2022, the Kick-off meeting of EU-CONEXUS Plus took place in Paris, with the presence of all the Rectors of the nine (9) Universities, of EU-CONEXUS – the European concerning *Smart Urban Coastal Zone Sustainability*. The Persons in charge of the work packages and all the involved stakeholders, who are going to collaborate with the Agricultural University of Athens, along the lines of the EU-CONEXUS for the next four years, have been present at the meeting. The participants have had the chance of becoming aware of all the actions envisaged in the years to come, looking for synergies and getting to know each other better.

EU-CONEXUS Plus having the Rector of the Agricultural University of Athens, Mr Spyridon Kintzios, Professor as the Scientific Coordinator, has established an alliance of nine (9) European Universities that share the same vision, consisting of the following Universities, namely:

the Agricultural University of Athens (Greece) – AUA, La Rochelle Université (France) – LRUniv, University of Zadar, (Croatia) – UNIZD, La Universidad Católica de Valencia (Spain) – UCV, Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest (Romania) – UTCB, Klaipeda University, (Lithouania) – KU, Frederick University (Cyprus) – FredU, Rostock University (German) – UROS, South East Technological University (Ireland) – SETU.

EU-CONEXUS Plus aims at the institutional transformation suitable for all the Universities - Partners, with the intention of creating favourable conditions for the development of an interdisciplinary, taking into account the challenges, inasmuch an internationally competitive education, research and innovation areas based on a transnational campus.

In view of the attainments achieved throughout the three years passed, like Minor Courses at an Undergraduate Level, Joint Master Program “Marine Biotechnology”, which has been running since September 2022, the students’ contests, workshops, mobility of the administrative and academic staff (job shadowing/ researcher mobility) besides digitalization, EU-CONEXUS Plus keeps on developing further strategic targets, set in the light of the common mission of the Alliance.

Under the framework of the European Education Area (EEA), European Research Area (ERA) and European Higher Education Area (EHEA), EU-CONEXUS Plus will continue functioning as a model, in addition to participating actively into the formulation and implementation of European Policies for a European Degree, as far as the joint Study Programs and Life Long Learning Programs (LLL) are concerned, with reference to Erasmus Without Papers, Digital Education Action Plan, adopting at the same time, policies for the establishment of a legal framework.

The general European strategies will be taken into consideration by all the EU-CONEXUS Plusactivities**,** like European Green Deal for the promotion of sustainability, Human Resources Strategy for Researchers associated with the recognition of international activities, such as teaching collaboration, integration policies and the gender equality policy, as well.

Priority of EU-CONEXUS Plus involves acquiring a wide impact upon the whole Academic Community, strengthening in a significant way, the completeness of the institutional development of the European University, empowering the provision of a full university service, handling evenly the areas of education, research and innovation.

A bright path has been predicted for the next four years, through the actions that are to be held by EU-CONEXUS Plus, offering priority to students and the development of their skills, who are actually the future change factors regarding Smart Urban Coastal Zone Sustainability across Europe.

The actions that shall take place comprise the development of common international Undergraduate/Master/Doctoral Degree Study Programs, the further development of four Joint Research Institutes (JRIs) already established, with the goal of developing common research programs, inasmuch fostering access policy to the Joint Research Infrastructures. The Action, called “Research back to Education”, planning on connecting research results and innovation with education, is equally important. In addition, the Action EU-CONEXUS Teaching Academy, with the purpose of promoting high quality education, tailored to the needs and demands of society, economy and industry, is included, too. Moreover, scientific conferences and festivals will be held, a network of research and mobility will be developed, the career center development and that of the green Campus will be completed, in addition to achieving Transfer of Knowledge and Technologies.

The ultimate hope of all the participants involves the engagement of the Academic Community in the aforementioned actions, gaining, not only a simple international experience but also the international cooperation on all sectors, by means of the family of the European Univeristy EU- CONEXUS.