

MISSION STATEMENT

The European University of the Seas “SEA-EU”

“Living sustainably by, from and with the sea”

Mission

The social responsibilities of our universities and, at large, the scientific, academic, artistic, and intellectual communities, are at the forefront of global mobilisation movements, the full implementation of the sustainable development goals, and of the Agreements on Climate Change.

The SEA-EU mission will target three different levels: (1) each partner university and the Alliance, (2) people, who are the heart of our considerations, including students, staff and citizens, and (3) European education/research area and international cooperation.

By joining the efforts, expertise and capacities of nine allied universities from Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Spain, SEA-EU will discover, develop and share multidisciplinary knowledge, as a representative platform of European sustainable development. The choice of academic partners enables us to continue ongoing effective cooperation in the field of common research interests and didactic profile, but also covers practically all European sea basins with its geographical scope. In this way, our Alliance also intends to reconsider and rethink the knowledge from the periphery, supplying other vision about equality and development in higher education for Europe.

The impetus for this project springs from a fusion of the ambitions of its partners, which are leading international education, research, economic and institutional organisations placed in different coastal areas around Europe.

In that sense, the SEA-EU mission is to develop the conditions that:

- permit an increase in the level of integration between the universities of the alliance sharing analyses, policies, procedures, services, databases, infrastructures and governance.
- offer a broad spectrum of personalised skilled-based curricula and a development-oriented education environment to strengthen European students' creativity and engagement.
- offer a full range of mobility (international, intersectoral, virtual) within SEA-EU, for both students and staff, and foster multilingualism/ multiculturalism, providing them with the widest scope of opportunities for developing their potential.
- offer research-based education and make the knowledge triangle a reality.
- promote inclusion and situate its educational and research activities within the broader social context.

- foster open educational resources, open science and open data to our communities and the world at large.
- guarantee the sustainability of the alliance in the future.

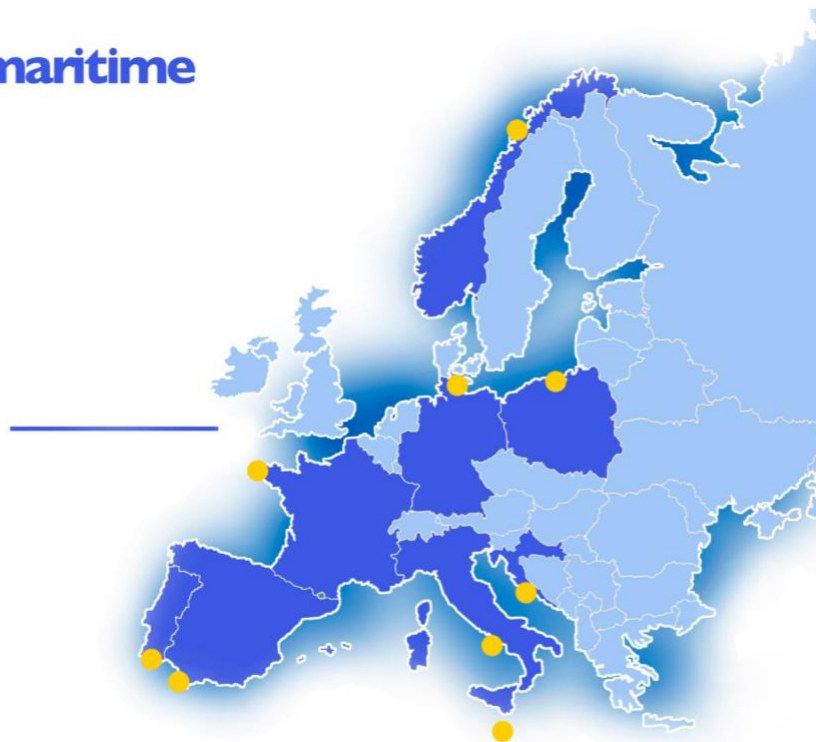
These aspirations need to be seen in the broader **international perspective offered by the SEA-EU Alliance**, with sustainable cooperation offered across various levels of the organisation, all the while acknowledging and respecting each university's individuality in terms of language and culture.

Vision

Our **joint strategy** is to pursue the **building of a true university Alliance** (in both governance and tasks) dedicated to the creation of a European campus where all students and staff could experience Europe through a rich and varied offer of activities and cooperation that generates an organisational culture based on **open governance and co-creation with internal and external stakeholders in line with our vision.**

SEA-EU marine and maritime perspective

- **22 out of 27 EU countries** have a marine coastline
- European coastline is **7 times** as long as that of the US and **4 times** as long as Russia's
- EU has **the world's largest maritime territory** (including its outermost regions)
- **EU's maritime regions are home to almost half its population** and account for almost half of its gross domestic product



SEA-EU supports a healthy society that pursues European democracy, wellbeing and competitiveness, empowering our universities as actors of change in the twin Green and Digital transition. Europe is a maritime continent and its seas are fundamental to its history, traditions, development, trade, and resources. SEA-EU builds on a marine and maritime perspective of Europe, which serves as a powerful basis for building and nurturing new and better connections and collaborations, within Europe, while also bridging to other continents, reinforcing EU'S global role and leadership. Our universities, our cities, our ports, our communities, represent both frontier spaces and sites of connectivity.

Most seas are also connected as one ocean, being also a natural interdisciplinary medium for the implementation of a sustainable development policy; and where economic challenges, social aspects and environmental problems churn, mix and meld like nowhere else. SEA-EU's ambition is also contributing to the strengthening of higher education systems in partner countries, in line with European values, boosting Europe's attractiveness for global cooperation in education, research and innovation

Dimensions of Sustainability



Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. To be achieved, economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection need to be harmonised. These elements are interconnected and all are crucial for the dignity, peace and well-being of individuals, societies and the planet, now and in the future.

In this context, education for sustainable development offers an opportunity to fundamentally rethink education. Increasingly, this means taking a holistic system approach, one that makes

education a key catalyst for change.

The vision, mission and values of SEA-EU are boosted by our communities' desire to embrace challenges driven by sustainable development, in the blueprint of the UN's *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. In this agenda, four of the goals are intended to take urgent action. To ensure quality and equality in education as well as in all the opportunities we offer (Goal 4 and Goal 5) and to combat climate change and its impacts (Goal 13), and to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (Goal 14).



Climate change and global warming are threatening coastal areas due to the rise in sea levels. The expected consequences include destructive erosion, wetland flooding, submersion of low-lying islands, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination, loss of habitats for fish, birds and plants, and more powerful storm surges. Our ocean and seas also face other threats related to the high densities of population and massive tourism pressure in coastal areas (heavy urbanisation, damaged natural landscapes, loss of biodiversity, higher stress on endangered species, reduction of freshwater resources, increase in industrial and municipal waste, cultural disruption and changed in local livelihoods, gentrification), pollution

(pesticides and nutrients coming from agriculture, plastics and microplastics, sewage discharge, oil spills), the appearance of invasive species disrupting the ecological balance, overexploitation of living resources, etc. Our seas are also the main route by which the vast majority of migrants and refugees have crossed into Europe, and are likely to continue to do so. Some 134,000 migrants came to Europe in 2018 via the Mediterranean Sea: unfortunately, around 2,200 migrants are reported to have perished trying to make the crossing in the past year. In addition to the humanitarian crisis, migrant arrivals have seen European countries trying to cope with the influx, creating division in the EU over how best to deal with accepting and/or resettling people. There is a need to improve resilience in the coastal communities through a continuous focus on societal safety, not the least in the maritime domain. This includes emphasizing risk areas and future threat pictures to increase understanding on both own safety and cooperation across regions to improve the robustness of the coastal industries and societies. It is important to increase joint efforts towards risk reduction through safety measures, and the strengthening of the crisis preparedness competence and collaboration in and between the coastal regions.

All these challenges require joint efforts of knowledge-generating institutions and decision-making bodies. We strongly believe that SEA-EU marine / maritime expertise and perspective can nurture fresh, new approaches to this great civilisational challenge which we currently face. To actively motivate all institutional partners to be SEA-EU, in the inspiration global thinking and transformation of daily actions in new, creative ways and long-lasting change, with Love and Knowledge to transform our collective relationship with the seas. This will be the way of answering societal challenges and achieving protection of life under and above water in the Global Ocean with Global positive impact the Planet Earth

SEA-EU wants to be recognised as:

- An international **reference point in knowledge**, for other universities, across Europe and beyond, and for public agencies, through excellence in teaching and research, providing leadership in the “Science – Technology – Business” nexus, contributing to the competitiveness of industries and technology, and hence to the sustainable economic development of the territories where it is located and which it serves. SEA-EU continues to guide and advise in the construction of **sustainable management** models, combining economic and social development with the preservation of natural / marine resources.
- A **public space for transnational collaboration between universities, centres of professional training, and businesses**, developing an integrated European campus to strengthen the mobility and the continuous education over the course of the professional life of university students and staff, with microcredentials in transferable skills and focus on employability, especially in marine and maritime oriented areas, with a multidisciplinary approach covering natural sciences, social sciences, the humanities, health sciences and engineering.
- A **focal point in Europe for creativity, innovation and a generator of knowledge**, particularly on the marine environment, marine resources, blue growth and the sustainable management of the seas, preparing the new OCEAN economy 2030.

Developing these skills also in other areas, aligned with the “New Bauhaus of the Seas” aiming to promote renewed ethical and aesthetic regenerative development from a widely diverse range of dimensions of our continued relationship with the seas.

- A **standard for social, institutional, business and territorial integration**, raising public awareness of the natural, historical and cultural heritage of the sea and the importance of the oceans and coasts for European identity.

Our vision is **to establish a distinctly international, pluri-ethnic, multilingual, multicultural and interdisciplinary European University**. This vision is rooted in the high quality and excellence in education and research of the Alliance with the intent to strengthen the links between teaching, research, innovation and knowledge transfer. The convergence of media and digitalisation has changed the way we work and live. Change, going forward, will continue to be rapid, in a world of perpetual connectivity. Consequently, traditional training models are being found wanting. In a rapidly changing context, developing both critical-thinking and creativity with students is key. As a consortium, we will create the conditions in which a student will be able to freely and confidently move between disciplines, languages, countries, sectors. This seamless mobility will provide a substantial leap in quality, performance, attractiveness and international competitiveness.

In this long-term vision, we are committed to taking a **flagship role** in the creation of a European Education Area, strengthening European identity and values and securing the international competitiveness of education and research linked to innovation and knowledge transfer. SEA-EU will actively foster an entrepreneurial, ownership-taking, mind-set, supporting green/blue growth and sustainability. We will develop innovative pedagogies and promote the latest digital technologies in order to deliver personalised content, enable sharing and promote open science. This will result in good practices which will, from the start, embed adaptability to different regions in Europe and beyond Europe.

Values

As signatories of the Erasmus + Charter, members of the European Higher Education Area and proponents of the Bologna Process, and in respect to **Article 2** of the EU, SEA-EU upholds the set of values encompassing academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy and accountability, participation of students and staff in governance, and public responsibility. SEA-EU is **socially committed and pluralistic**, with universities **open** to all students, staff, researchers, and entrepreneurs, regardless of their age or ideological, political, cultural or social background. SEA-EU values and recognises societies in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, mutual respect, justice, solidarity, full integration of people with disabilities and members of minority groups, and gender equality prevail.

SEA-EU wants to be recognised by the following values:

- **Sustainability**: Advancing the harmonious development of the alliance and its activities from environmental, social and economic perspectives.
- **Resilience**: Using knowledge to increase our opportunities to bounce back quickly from hazards and threats.



- **Excellence:** Ensuring the highest quality in all actions that the alliance undertakes or supports.
- **Differentiation and Specialisation:** Promoting a unique and differentiated project that strengthens the distinctive areas of excellence of the partners.
- **Cooperation:** Developing teamwork for achieving the objectives of the alliance.
- **Creativity:** Generating new and exciting ideas, in a multidisciplinary context.