

EUR Global Engagement Policy:

Global Academic Partnerships

Executive Summary: Guidelines for Reliable International Partnerships

The Global Engagement Policy provides a framework which can be used as a base to initiate, strengthen, and evaluate international partnerships. Thus, serving as an instrument to strengthen the body of partnerships. The aim of the Policy is twofold. On the one hand, the Policy serves to support the staff involved in the initiation and evaluation of partnerships by providing an overview of the steps to take and the themes to consider in the process. On the other hand, it is aimed to stimulate discussion about partnerships within the organisation while ensuring that attention is given to the Erasmian values as well as the mitigation of risks. This Policy harmonises partnerships within the organisation; contributes to safeguarding the reputation of the EUR; aligns with the ambition and Strategy by emphasizing sustainability, impact, and the Erasmian values; and provides tools to navigate in the changing world. *The Executive Board is, therefore, asked to:*

(1) to approve the EUR Global Engagement Policy; (2) to communicate the Policy to the Deans, Directors of the Support Services, and the Heads of the Schools International Offices to request them to implement the policy within their respective Schools; (3) to make Academic Affairs department together with the Central International Office responsible for regular update and evaluation of the Policy.

The Policy defines 'global engagement' as the formal arrangement between the EUR or one of the EUR Schools and one or more institutions or faculties, located in a different nation state. The Policy focuses on formal arrangements which are either a legally binding contract, or a non-legally binding arrangement between two or more institutions or Schools, like a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). These formal arrangements regulate finance, resources, and the exchange of knowledge or human capital [further in this document - *Arrangement*]. The Policy is aligned with the developments of the EU legislation in the field and focuses mainly on non-European partners.

The Global Engagement Policy provides an overview of the operationalisation of the guidelines. It establishes basic principles for international cooperation and demonstrates the processes for initiation, implementation, and evaluation of partnerships.

The summary below provides a general overview of the guidelines arranged by theme:

1. Societal engagement guidelines: Focuses on both impact and sustainability.
2. Knowledge security guidelines: These are the result of the growing national attention on foreign interference and protection of the Dutch position as a knowledge producer. The first type are 'no-go' guidelines, which need to be adhered to in order to continue the partnership.

The second type are the guidelines that act as due diligences checks. These guidelines are based on the 'Kader Kennisveiligheid Universiteiten'.¹

3. Educational guidelines: These require the use of the IO checklist (see appendix) and the availability for accredited education offered by the partner. In the case of student exchange, there are extra requirements for example: Students need to be prepared for a safe exchange especially if they are (extra) vulnerable in that country. Furthermore, sustainable travel will be promoted. Except for the checklist, the guidelines are often already considered in practice, but have not yet been formalised.
4. Research-related guidelines: Next to following the EUR business travel policy the focus is on the compliance with arrangements that the EUR has made in a national or international context. The partner needs to underwrite the signed codes of academic integrity, the Strategy Evaluation Protocol for research (SEP), and arrangements need to be made about open access. Regarding PhD exchange, a clear added value is needed of the exchange for the PhD student.

The Global Engagement Policy is a living document meaning that it will be adapted following (inter)national developments. Therefore, the Policy needs to be updated and evaluated regularly (together with the EUR Internationalisation policy).

¹ *Kader Kennisveiligheid Universiteiten* ([VSNU](#))

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Introduction: A base for impact-full cooperation in education and research

An international outlook and especially global engagement are key to realise the mission of the EUR of creating a 'positive societal impact'. To be able to successfully operate in the changing international arena, the Global Engagement Policy helps to navigate by focusing on impactful collaborations while using proper due diligence mechanisms. The Policy is a deliverable from the Policy Framework 'Advancing Internationalisation' and is based on the premise that: *"The key criterium for EUR is not the quantity of partners, but the strategic benefits that each alliance can bring for EUR to strengthen its position at the international arena of education and research"*.² The central question this Policy answers is, therefore, 'How to create a sustainable body of partnerships that strengthen the position of the EUR internationally?'

The aim of the Policy is twofold. On the one hand, it serves to support the staff involved in the creation and evaluation of international partnerships by providing an overview of the steps to take and the topics to consider in order to establish successful partnerships. On the other hand, the Policy is a common framework which stimulates discussion about partnerships within the organisation, while ensuring that attention is paid to the Erasmian values, the EUR's sustainability ambitions, and the mitigation of risks. It allows to discuss which academic partners (and perhaps countries) the EUR wants to collaborate with and which not. Therefore, the document discusses how to initiate and evaluate international partners in research and higher education through a process description and practical guidelines in the fields of societal engagement, knowledge security, education, and research. For industry relations a separate monitor is in development that will support decision making with regards to those types of partnerships.

Global Engagement is defined through the definition for 'strategic partnerships' of the EVALUATE project.³ In line with EVALUATE, global engagement in this Policy refers to:

Global engagement: *The formal arrangement between the EUR (or one of the EUR Schools) and one or more institutions located in other nation states.*

This Policy defines/considers institutions in a narrow sense to fit the scope of the Policy by referring to: academic institutions or organisational parts like Schools of higher education and/or research. The formal arrangement is either a legally binding contract or a non-legally binding arrangement between two or more institutions like a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or a Letter of Intent (LoI). These partnerships have consequences since the parties make arrangements about finances, resources, and the exchange of knowledge. Furthermore, the formal arrangement as mentioned above focuses on either one of the four forms of activity between the universities:

² *Advancing Internationalisation Policy Framework 2021-2024* (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2020), p 25.

³ The policy follows the definition used for strategic partnerships used by the EVALUATE framework and handbook. *The EVALUATE Framework and Handbook* (The university of Copenhagen, Denmark, et al., 2022). Right now, global engagement and international/strategic partnerships are used interchangeably throughout the policy, however, the policy leaves room extent the meaning of global engagement is further versions. Since this policy is written in the context of academic internationalisation, partnerships are interpreted as being part of global engagement.

- Research collaboration arrangements;
- Academic and student mobility arrangements;
- Transnational education arrangements;
- Knowledge sharing, advocacy, and policy arrangements.

Within the European Economic Area (EEA) there are rules, regulations, and checks regarding partnerships, for example, through Erasmus plus. This Policy is an addition to the leading EU guidelines on partnerships.

Furthermore, the Policy focuses on the different forms in which partnership can grow and formalise by looking at education, research, and societal engagement. Educational partnerships focus on student and staff exchange, joint (degree) programs, and educational projects. Research partnerships focus on academic staff exchange, joint (degree) programs for PhD students, and funded research projects. Partnerships often start through informal contact or in the case of research by sharing ideas and starting projects together. This informal cooperations can be formalised through a MoU, a LoI or a Grant Agreement.

The scope of this Policy excludes the following forms of partnerships:

- Internships agreements with or funding by private international companies are not (yet) considered. The Policy starts with a narrow scope, however with time the scope shall be broadened;
- Agreements with Dutch partners, due to different nature of these partnerships and different forms of contract;
- Clusters of partnership resulting from initiatives initiated by the Dutch government;
- Research Consortium agreements for funded research.

In line with the European Universities Initiative, the EUR, a coordinator and a driving force behind the UNIC (the European University Alliance of ten European partners), jointly building one strategic institutional framework for future learning, teaching, research, and societal engagement.⁴ As such, EUR looks at the non-EU partnerships through the lens of the European Strategy for Universities. To stay true to the European agreements the EUR has committed itself to. This means that:

“Through deeper international cooperation within Europe and beyond, support universities in becoming more outward looking and competitive on the global scene, and in contributing to the strengthening of higher education systems in partner countries, in line with European values. This will help in turn boosting Europe’s attractiveness not only as a study destination, but also as an attractive global partner for cooperation in education, research, and innovation.”⁵

As a result, the EU encourages partnerships in the form of transnational alliances through funding and the lifting of administrative barriers. The extensive European Policy framework on facilitation of partnerships and mitigating possible risks, through for example the European Innovation Policy, makes

⁴ <https://www.unic.eu/en>

⁵ Communication from the Commission on ‘European Strategy for Universities’ (European Commission, 2022), p.8.

European partners reliable.⁶ As the EU already offers an extensive framework of guidelines for European partnerships, this Policy focuses mainly on the cooperation with non-EU partners, based on the EU framework of the EU and further adapting it to the EUR context.

The Policy should be read as a living document adapting to international and national dynamics in global academic engagement and foreign interference through geopolitics. Simultaneously, to drafting the policy steps are taken to create a digital tool to support this process and the provide an overview of the arrangements the EUR is involved in. This Policy is the result of a collaboration between the departments of Academic Affairs, the International Offices at EUR and School levels, and the team Integral Safety. The Policy was drafted following the earlier set objectives in the EUR Policy Framework Internationalisation 2021-2024. It considers the international and external developments of both the EUR Schools and national actors such as the UNL and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW).

⁶ Kristi Polluveer, *Innovation Policy Factsheet* (European Parliament, 2022).

EUR Context: Being a Reliable Partner in Challenging Times

According to the EUR Policy Framework Internationalisation, “*Erasmus University Rotterdam aims to be recognised as a responsible and reliable partner with a unique profile, focused on positive societal impact*”.⁷ The present Global Engagement Policy adds to that in the following ways:

- I. *Uniformity*: This is the EUR first shared vision of global engagement. There has been a large diversity of approaches to concluding partnerships within the university. These differences cause a lack of transparency and complicated attempts to expand, intensify, or monitor partnerships.
- II. *Impact-driven*: The previous ‘focus countries’-approach to partnerships no longer fits the EUR Strategy. Creating positive societal impact, which includes the furthering of a sustainable society, cannot be limited to geographical locations.
- III. *Reputation*: The partners a university works with influence the reputation of the university. By creating unity through guidelines, unwanted, or undesirable partnerships are filtered. This safeguards EUR reputation regarding international collaborations.
- IV. *Ambition*: The EUR Strategy, with the three central themes of Impact, Sustainability and Leadership & Culture, is the foundation for the guidelines EUR sets for partners. The EUR is a highly regarded university that can afford to be critical of its partners and should strive for a well-balanced body of partners. The Policy is intertwined with other engagement projects, for example the ‘impact at the core’ initiative and UNIC.
- V. *Adaptation*: The Policy offers support in formulating the EUR approach to continuous (geo-)political and sustainability related changes internationally or to specific changes in bilateral relations. Furthermore, it makes it easier to terminate unwanted partnerships or mitigate risks with due diligence measures.

The EUR had 265 registered partners in 2022 of which 30 are university-wide which means most are bilateral arrangements between Schools. The real number of partnerships is expected to be higher as there is often some delay in updating the status of partnerships. The duration of partnerships has been somewhere between a few years to an undetermined period. Currently, the maximum duration is limited to 5 years with the option of renewal. In most cases, renewal takes place automatically (without evaluation).

The need for and use of the Global Engagement Policy would differ per School, due to the different nature of education and research. ESHPM and ESL, for example, have a lower number of international students due to the Dutch orientation of the education. ESHCC and RSM have a large body of international students because of the international nature of their programmes.⁸ Nevertheless, due to the shared reputation and changing world, unity will be profitable for the whole organisation. As this Policy is part of the larger strategy for internationalisation adopted in 2021, there are no risks related to this Policy. There are however some footnotes; the Policy requires a change in the processes and culture throughout the organisation, therefore, it is essential that those involved in international partnerships take their responsibility. Secondly, the IT software and technical support need attention in the first period of the implementation to help to incorporate the Policy in a sustainable way. Lastly,

⁷ *Advancing Internationalisation Policy Framework 2021-2024* (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2020), p. 23

⁸ See ‘AZ, *Plan van aanpak: programma toegankelijkheid 2022-2023 (2022)*’. For more information about accessibility and internationalisation at the EUR.

as the scope of the current Policy document is limited, in future it is advised to broaden its current scope to include e.g., partnerships in the Netherlands, and internships at foreign companies as well as strengthen the link to the industry monitor that is being developed.

Operationalisation: How to Collaborate Globally

General Principles

International cooperation is based on several basic EUR-wide principles which need to be adhered to in the process of initiation, implementation, and evaluation.

- The Erasmian values and the EUR's sustainability ambitions are the foundation of how the EUR interacts globally with (possible) partners.
- The partnership is based on a signed agreement; preferably a MoU.
- The need for a FLAT Check is assessed, and if so, FLAT Check is followed.⁹
- Communication shall take place in EUR's working languages i.e., English or Dutch or a legally binding translation in the working languages is available when applicable (See dual language policy)
- The partnership logically follows from the partner's research and educational themes, topics, methodologies and/or output strategy.
- All documentation related to the partnership is archived and findable for successors and other EUR staff working on the topic.
- Evaluate the partner before renewal/extension of the arrangement (MoU), to ensure the partner still meets the guidelines as stated in this Policy.

⁹ More information about the FLAT is found on: <https://my.eur.nl/nl/eur-employee/organisatie/algemene-bestuursdienst-abd/juridische-zaken-iz/legal-advice/flat-check>

Clarification on Evaluation:

The evaluation is a follow-up to see whether the partnership still brings the added value (positive impact) and to examine if the partnership still fits the EUR strategic context and the (national) regulations. The evaluation is done by going through the information gathered by following these guidelines and updating them. This should be done at least 1,5 years prior to its expiry because the renewal process can take up to a year. Big changes or arrangements that were not lived up to, might be a reason to discontinue the partnership.

The evaluation will allow the Dean or Executive Board, who signs the continuation of the partnership to have context as to why and how a partnership is continued. This can have three likely outcomes:

1. The partnership is continued because the evaluation is positive. A positive outcome could include extra due diligences measures.
2. The partnership is put 'on hold' meaning that due to unpredictable context such as war or political instability/conflict, a continuation of the arrangement will be evaluated after the situation is stabilised.
3. The partnership is terminated because the outcome of the evaluation shows that arrangement was not lived up to, the risks exceed the potential, or the partnership is not in line with or does not contribute to the strategic (sustainable) goals of the Schools or the EUR.

The result of the evaluation should be documented and archived accessibly as it could be useful later when a new partnership is considered with that partner. When the guidelines are violated during a partnership, especially in the case of 'knowledge security' guidelines, the partnership should be assessed and terminated if necessary. This can be done with the help of the EUR International Office; the Health, Safety and Wellbeing service; and/or the program manager knowledge security.

Responsibilities

The ownership and the responsibility to sign an arrangement is based on the rules and regulations laid down in the Administration and Management Regulations (BBR-EUR 2022):

Dean signs when:	Executive Board signs when:
Arrangement up to four years	Arrangement of five years
Involves the own School	More than three EUR Schools are involved
Finances are below 206.000 per year	Finances exceeds 206.000 per year

Process

The process of initiation:

- All the above-motioed general principles are followed.
- Check if there are/were already existing partnerships within the EUR with this specific party. If there are the information about the partner can be exchanged to simplify the process.
- Check if the partner university has an easily accessible contact person and/or an active International Office.
- Checks guidelines and adds documentation on the guidelines to the arrangement.

- Send the signer of the arrangement the documentation and arrangement a week before the deadline to sign the document.
- Optionally, an advisor checks the documentation and arrangement.
- The arrangement is signed or send back for additional information/due diligence measures.
- The person responsible for initiation stores the documentation and arrangement and is responsible for the operationalisation and implementation of the arrangements.

Process of implementation:

- All the above-motioed general principles are followed.
- Visits and networking activities with partners are communicated with relevant parties. (The visiting relations document can be used as a template to document and communicate the visit contact Central International Office for more information)
- In case of discrepancies regarding safety and security or when the arrangements are not respected this is added to the documentation and the Central International Office or Programme Manager Knowledge Security are notified.
- The stored documentation is updated when there are changes regarding the arrangements.

Process of evaluating an existing partnership:

- The person responsible for the implementation and documentation of the partnership is responsible for having the partnerships evaluated.
- All the above-mentioned general principles are followed.
- The preparation of the evaluation starts at least 1,5 years prior to the renewal of the partnership.
- Evaluation is done by updating the documentation and reflecting on the in the outcomes of the long-term impact goals.
- The documentation on the evaluation is sent at least a week before the deadline to the person signing the renewal.
- Optionally, an advisor checks the documentation and arrangement.
- The renewed arrangement is signed or send back to the drawing board for additional information or due diligence measures.
- The drafter of the arrangement stores the documentation and renewed arrangement and is responsible for the operationalisation of the renewed arrangements.

Guidelines: Societal engagement, Knowledge Security, Education, and Research

Societal Engagement: Desired Long-Term Impacts

Guidelines:

- The ethical committees are notified/give advice when there is a possible conflict with the sustainable agenda of the EUR.
- The sustainability impact of the partnership is mapped and monitored.
- Explain how the partnership links to one of the following outcomes, to motivate the desired long-term impacts of the partnership.
 - Strengthening our thematic priorities;
 - Advancing innovation in methodologies in teaching, research, and engagement;
 - Furthering shared values;
 - Accelerating societal impact.

Instructions:

There are several potential outcomes that can be kept in mind to motivate these partnerships and bring them in line with the impact-driven EUR Strategy. To adhere to this guideline, write down (approx. 300 words) what outcomes the partnership is expected to reach, and why.

- **Strengthening our thematic priorities:** Refers to partnerships in which partners can have a positive impact by being an asset on certain 'crown jewel' themes, for example, because a partner shares the EUR focus on health and well-being, or sustainability.
- **Advancing innovation in methodologies in teaching, research, and engagement:** There are progressive forms of education or ground-breaking research forms or facilities, which would allow students and researchers to explore new ways to approach societal challenges. Both forms of impact look at information and skills exchange and the positive effects of this.
- **Furthering shared (Erasmian) values:** The motivation for a partnership can be the shared (Erasmian) values. The EUR Strategy 2020-2024 has laid down five key values: socially engaged, world citizen, connecting, enterprising, and open-minded. A partner that is an ally in propagating and promoting (most of) these values is a welcome addition to the EUR network because it makes it possible to join forces on these values internationally.
- **Accelerating societal impact:** Orientation towards societal impact is an impact marker. The EUR distinguishes six forms of societal impact: conceptual, cultural, instrumental, as connectivity, on capacity development, and transformational change.¹ Partnerships that engage with society on these subjects (the non-academic world) would be a good addition to the partnership body.

If it not possible to motivate the partnership on one of these outcomes, explain why the partner is an interesting addition to the network in terms of impact. This will make it possible to evaluate the (potential) realisation of these long-term desired outcomes.

Clarification sustainability:

Sustainability is at the heart of the EUR's organization as part of our impact mission; as of 2023 the EUR declared a climate and ecological crisis meaning that the university acknowledges that urgent and coordinated action needs to be taken, in education, research and operations. Sustainability is interwoven with every activity and interactions including (academic) partnerships as has proven successful before. UNIC, for example, made Virtual Exchange a central focus to smaller the ecological footprint of students, researchers, and staff. Furthermore, the UNIC partners find each other in harmonising the initiatives for climate-neutral and smart cities. These guidelines aim to make it possible to reflection on sustainable corporation both before the partnership and during evaluation.

In 2023, the EUR is reflecting on sustainability as an integral part of the university through the sustainability dialogues. The results of these dialogues and possible policies that follow from them will overrule the current guidelines and the Policy will be updated.

Clarification impact:

The aim of the impact criteria is to reflect in the process of drafting a new partnership on the long-term outcomes and benefits of the collaboration. Furthermore, to consider during the evaluation if the activities thus far added to the desired long-term impacts. These long-term outcomes, the impact of a partnership, should be placed in the larger context of the ambitions of the EUR. 'Creating positive societal impact' is at the core of the Strategy 2020-2024 of the EUR. It is incorporated into education, research, and outreach. As the EUR strives to create impact-driven forms of education and research there is a related need for impact-driven global engagement in the form of partnerships.

There are hundreds of potentially suitable partnerships for the EUR and its Schools, but it is impossible and ineffective to establish them all. Therefore, the question arises which partnerships to pick up. Where the previous focus was on quality indicators, a shift has been made towards strategic alignment and desired outcomes of the (proposed) partnership. Until now rankings have a commonly used tool to assess the quality of universities. However, rankings are at the heart of (international) controversy in the academic world. With growing attention on the reformation of research assessment internationally through CoARA, and the renewal of 'academic career path'-profiles at national level through the recognition and reward program. Rankings are said to be lacking transparency and focusing too much on the publications and research output instead of the full career of a scholar and the student experience abroad. At the same time, rankings attract students and staff and are, therefore, a great marketing tool. As these contradictions in views on rankings still dominate the debate within the EUR, it is advised to use rankings as an indication of international reputation until the dispute is settled with a clear consensus. Furthermore, there are also alternative rankings that provide information about possible partners for example the Times Higher Education Impact ranking, these would also be interesting to take into consideration.

An impact-based motivation for future partnerships will allow for a broader and more inclusive range of arrangements that add to the strategic goals of the university and its Schools. The goal of the impact guideline is to function as a tool to incorporate impact in the decision of starting and continuing the partnership. For all partnerships, the following question are at the heart of this criteria:

- What will make this partnership successful?
- What will make it distinctive?

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- Prof. Dr. A. van Buuren, Impact-driven Education at Erasmus University Rotterdam, Position Paper (2022), Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (CoARA, 2022),

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Knowledge security: Legal Requirements and the Mitigation of Risk

Guidelines:

GO/ NO-GO checks:

- The topic of (or persons involved in) a research partnership is not on a sanction list of the EU and/or Dutch government. This would make cooperation on that topic a criminal offense.
- The program manager knowledge security is notified and/or gives advice if the partner university is in a country with a score below 0.5 according to the Academic Freedom Index (AFI); when the organisation is on the SAR's academic freedom monitor; or the China Defence Universities Tracker (ASPI).¹¹

Instructions sanction guideline:

The first criterium is straightforward and is linked to sanctions imposed by the European Union or international organisation upon different countries, organisations, and/or persons. This means that certain forms of cooperation could be forbidden, and non-compliance would constitute a criminal offense often causing severe reputational damage. In the case of questions about the sanction list, please contact the EUR legal department. Below an overview of relevant information about sanctions:

- European sanctions can be found at <https://sanctionsmap.eu/#/main>
- European regulations about dual use can be found at: https://trade.ec.europa.eu/consultations/documents/consul_183.pdf
- International sanctions can be found at: <https://mtrc.info/guidelines-for-sensitive-missile-relevant-transfers/>

Due diligence checks:

- The Program Manager Knowledge Security is notified if there are suspicions of (self) censorship or other forms of breaches of academic freedom. Both before and during the partnership.
- The Ethical Committees are notified and/or give advice on the partnership if the values of an institute differ on the human rights, academic freedom and /or academic integrity.
- The Ethical Committees are notified and/or give advice on the partnership if the content of the MoU or Lol can potentially cause reputation damage.
- Legal Affairs Department needs to be asked for approval when the partner asks for another form of arrangement than the standard MoU or Lol.

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- <https://recognitionrewards.nl/nl/>,
 - When using rankings as an indication of international status the following guidelines are proposed: the focus is on the subject-level rankings. In that case, the universities are preferably in the top 200 of large rankings like the U-Multirank or THE with the exception to universities in countries or regions that are underrepresented in the current body of partners see World Bank data on low-income countries. In that case, the university needs to be in the top 10 of the country/region.

¹¹ <https://www.fau.eu/2022/03/03/news/research/academic-freedom-on-the-decline/#:~:text=The%20AFI%20provides%20data%20on,the%20country%20that%20they%20assess>) and <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/academic-freedom-monitoring-project-index/> and <https://unitracker.aspi.org.au/>

Clarification:

Due to increasing globalisation, international cooperation has never been more interwoven with academia. At the same time, this gives research, innovation, and education a prominent role in geopolitics. As the EUA puts it: *“Europe’s universities must share and co-create knowledge on a global scale against a backdrop of foreign interference, security threats, and political worries about Europe’s technological and strategic autonomy. This requires Europe’s universities to make a delicate assessment of collaborations based on their academic values.”*

According to the *‘Kader Kennisveiligheid Universiteiten’*, foreign interference refers to preventing unwanted transmission of (sensitive) knowledge and technologies because of negative effects on national safety or the innovation strength of the country. Moreover, it focuses on foreign interference that results in (self) censorship that goes against our values regarding academic integrity. Foreign interference is inherently related to international partnerships since the threats come from international actors that have hidden/alternative motives for cooperation. It is crucial to pay attention to these possible risks and to look for ways to mitigate them.

Foreign interference by state actors in academia (known in Dutch as *‘kennisveiligheid’*) is part of the national agenda and receives growing attention from the Ministry of OCW. At the national level, there are two documents that address the topic and provide guidelines on mitigation of foreign interference: the *‘Kader Kennisveiligheid Universiteiten’* (UNL) and the *‘Nationale Leidraad Kennisveiligheid’* (Ministry of OCW). The guidelines in this Policy are based on the evaluation process proposed in the *‘Kader kennisveiligheid Universiteiten’*. It is expected that the Ministry of OCW will present an additional framework that universities need to adhere to, when the framework is known, this will be incorporated into this Policy. Furthermore, when general national guidelines on knowledge security are formulated, they will overrule the current guidelines and the Policy will be updated.

The EUR strives for fruitful academic collaboration even in case of existent political tensions, provided that the EUR’s own values and culture are respected. Meaning that there are boundaries if a risk is deemed beyond reasonable for safety/security both at national, institutional, and personal (involving individual risks for students or staff) level. Furthermore, working together can mean that the EUR monitors the partnership or has restrictions on it. Outside the EU framework we need to realize that the practice requires a much more pluralistic approach with collaborations based on mutual understanding and respect of each other’s research and teaching practices, norms, and values. At the same time, the EUR cannot put aside its own values to which the EUR is actively committed.

The guidelines for partnerships allow the creation of framework of measures that mitigate the risks that come with foreign interference and make a quick reassessment during the partnership possible. The guidelines require a larger role for the support services and Schools, for example, for the programme manager knowledge security, and the ethics committee in checking the risks related to cooperation. These services and their role are laid down in the Integral Safety and Security Policy 2021-2024. Furthermore, the EU document *‘Tackling R&I Foreign Interference’* offers advice on the preparation, negotiation, and implementation of an arrangement with partners in high-risk countries. Furthermore, a tool is being developed by UNL on how to deal with knowledge security in international cooperation. In future, this tool can further support staff with guidance and information about knowledge security.

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- *Universities Without Walls A Vision for 2030* (EUA, 2021),
- In Dutch, knowledge security is described as *‘Kennisveiligheid’*. The European Commission speaks of foreign interference. (See *Tackling R&I Foreign Interference*, European Commission) Internationally,

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Education: The Best Experience for Students

Guidelines:

General

- The checklist Global Engagement is filled in and possible required follow-up research or communication took place.
- The partner university offers accredited education, and the Examination Board is consulted about the quality of the education.
 - In case of an intensified partnership, for example, a joint degree extra attention should be paid to quality assurance. The Redeem guidelines should be checked and the quality assurance team at the central level should be notified.¹³

Student Exchange

- Due diligence measures and information needs to be available for students going on exchange in adherence with the travel advice of the Dutch government. The travel advice of the Dutch government can be used as a guideline when the context of the advice is considered. Special attention needs to be given to groups that are (extra) vulnerable in the partnering country and take proper measures in the form of information or due diligence measures. Furthermore, sustainable travel should be taken into account. In case of doubt, EUR International Office shall be contacted for advice on student safety and security.
- There are matching mobility windows.
- The level of English of students from the partner university is in line with the School's/programme's language requirements.
- The exchange students from the partners university comply with courses requirements and have a sufficient academic background to take part in the programme.
- When a partnership takes the form of a joint programme, the 'Handreiking gezamenlijk onderwijs en dubbel programma's is consulted.¹⁴

different terminology is used, therefore, this policy will use a mix of foreign interference and knowledge security. EUR's Integral Safety Department, *Integral Safety and Security Policy 2021-2024: From an Incident-driven Approach to a Structural one* (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2021).

- Tackling R&I Foreign Interference (European Commission, 2022), p. 39-48.

¹³ https://www.redeemproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/26/2018/04/REDEEM-Guidelines-Manual_final.pdf

¹⁴ This 'handreiking' currently being developed by the Academic Affairs department it is expected to be formalised in the fall of 2023. As it is a living document it already proves useful as a draft. For more information or the draft please contact the quality assurance department at the Academic Affairs department

Clarification:

For educational partnerships, a lot of practical information is needed to judge a partner. These practical aspects are collected in the checklist collaboration (for the checklist contact the Central International Office). This checklist needs to be added to the arrangement and shall be consulted before an arrangement is signed. This checklist serves as an overview and insight into the main characteristics of the partner, and later - as a base for evaluation. The partner has to offer accredited education otherwise the courses offered by the partner will not be acknowledged by the Examination Board. The EUR International Office and NUFFIC can advise on the accreditation of foreign universities. When a partnership is intensified through, for example, a joint degree, there should be extra attention for quality and risks. A check should be done through the Redeem guidelines and these outcomes should be checked by the Central Quality Assurance team in the Academic Affairs Department.

Due diligence measures and information needs to be available for students going on exchange in adherence with the travel advice of the Dutch government. The safety of the students is key. The EUR International Office and the Integral Safety Department are currently drafting a travel policy for students. When this is formalised, the policy will overrule this guideline. The EUR International Office provides information for students about safety and security abroad this together with country specific measures will ensure a safe stay for students. For (extra) vulnerable groups in the partnering country, the EUR IDEA office can help to find ways to reach and help these students. Furthermore, the partner needs to offer the possibility for EUR students to obtain enough ECTS during a semester, to ensure a fruitful exchange. Regarding incoming students, they need the proper academic preparation to take the courses offered at the EUR to ensure the quality of teaching; meaning they have a related study programme and good grades. Furthermore, the level of English should be high enough to enable students' participation in the courses.

Lastly, joint programmes are a multifaceted form of cooperation between universities. There are many options like a dual or joint degree and the process is an intensive and complex process. To help navigate in this field, Academic Affairs is currently developing a guideline, due in the fall of 2023. However, the draft is available and already proves useful. It is advised to consult this document as it provides information about the process, for example, about governance, finances, and risks management.

Research: Commitment to International Agreements and Frameworks

Guidelines:

- It is possible to adhere to the EUR Sustainable Travel Policy when it is necessary for a partnership to visit or have (staff) exchanges. This means that sustainability has to be taken into account.¹⁵
- The partner university underwrites either the Code of Scientific Integrity (see [Code of Scientific Integrity 2018](#)) or ALLEA (<https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>) the European Code of Conduct.
- EUR Policy on [open access](#) need to be adhered to or otherwise clear arrangements about open access are made and researchers are supported when they cooperate with the partner.
- The partnership underwrites the quality standards laid down in the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP) 2021-2027.
- If the partnership is based on PhD exchange:
 - There should be a clearly defined added value of the exchange for PhD-researcher.

¹⁵ <https://my.eur.nl/en/eur-employee/news/train-instead-plane-eurs-new-business-travel-policy>

- It should be checked with HR if the social security is sufficiently covered to make exchange possible.

Clarification:

The checklist Global Engagement discussed above will also be a useful tool to examine a research cooperation. The practical information about the partnership can be written down in the checklist and will be useful when the partnership is evaluated. Please contact the Central International Office for the checklist. As for the guidelines, the EUR travel Policy is adhered to for outgoing visits or academic staff exchange extra attention should be given to sustainable ways of traveling.

The EUR committed itself to different codes of academic integrity and freedom. These codes need to be adhered to also in relation to international partners. The guarantee of academic freedom is less apparent outside the European Union. As a university, the EUR looks at ways to adhere to their own standards not because they are better but because the codes are the foundation on which the EUR operates. With this comes the responsibility to act against code breaches within the EUR itself through phenomenon such as 'ethical dumping', which refers to the export of unethical research practices from higher-income to lower-income countries. By signing the code for academic integrity, the EUR is obliged to make sure this is not happening in the framework of international research partnership. Therefore, it is essential that the codes are followed.

The EUR has also committed itself to open access and SEP; however, this is not a common practice around the globe. Therefore, it is necessary to arrange with partners on how to deal with open access and SEP to make sure these arrangements are followed. The EUR established the possibility for the EUR party to always publish Open Access. For partners this is not always a given often due to awareness or financial limitations. For questions about open access contact the Open Access and Publication Support Team (openaccess@eur-nl.libanswers.com). When the partnership goes against these policies or does not live up to the arrangements on these topics, this could serve as a ground for terminating the partnership.

Lastly, the EUR has partners with whom they share PhD programmes. Currently, a PhD Policy is being developed, this policy will override these guidelines and be leading for PhD-researchers. For now, partnerships for PhD exchange offer many great opportunities for PhD researchers and for both institutions. However, a key criterium should be that the partnership is of added value for the PhD researcher. Having to deal with two institutions can cause a lot of practical issues and additional expectation for the PhD researcher, therefore, the added value should always be a priority. Furthermore, the social security should be sufficient to make exchange possible. This can be checked with HR.

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Implementation

The Executive Board shall take the responsibility for introduction, evaluation, and update of the Policy (via the Academic Affairs Department and EUR International Office). The Deans are responsible for the implementation of the Policy in the existing process of starting partnerships and communication within their Schools. The implementation of the Policy will in most cases be the responsibility of the International officers/Exchange Officers at the Schools (for educational partnerships) or academic staff (in case of research collaboration with a non-EU partner). The guidelines will be incorporate into the decentralised FLAT check.

¹⁶ <https://my.eur.nl/en/eur-employee/hr/international-matters/working-abroad/what-prepare>

The Executive Board shall facilitate support to all staff responsible for the implementation of the Policy to ensure that the transit period is smooth. Furthermore, the Executive Board is asked to assign a periodical audit of the Global Engagement Policy to see if the Policy is put into practice. The evaluation will start after the adoption of the Policy and will result in a five-year during process in which all partnerships are eventually evaluated (prior to their planned extension). Some of the partnerships will be terminated. After this 'clean up' period the EUR will have a body of partnerships that adheres to the guidelines of this Policy. The advised period for audit would be four years since most partnerships have a duration of four years.

The Policy is a living document meaning it will change with (inter)national an internal development, it must be updated and evaluated regularly. The document refers to policies that are currently drafted one these are finalized they will be updated into the document. The International Office at central level will provide support documents and information on the implementation of the Policy. The evaluation should focus on whether the Policy is known and used by the organisation and whether it serves its purpose. This task lies with the Academic Affairs Department together with the EUR International Office. A yearly review by the Policy Advisor Internationalisation together with the EUR International Office would help to keep the Policy updated. The intention is to broaden the scope of the Policy to build upon this document, the following time-path is proposed:

Proposed update pathway for the Policy	When
Portal or digital system for documentation on the guidelines	2023-2024
Broaden scope to include private companies through a connection with the Industry Engagement Monitor that is being developed.	2024-2025
The Knowledge Security Guidelines are evaluated and updated	2024-2025
The new EUR Strategy is incorporate in the guidelines	2025-2026
All Guidelines are evaluated by the Academic Affairs Department together with the EUR International Office and adjusted to the organisations needs	2026

Further recommend next steps

To successfully integrate the guidelines into the already existing processes the following steps are required:

- The process needs to be adjusted to consider all the guidelines during the start of a new partnership.
- An evaluation process needs to be set up to see if partnerships are worth being renewed.
- All current partnerships need to be evaluated in light of the guidelines. In five years, all partnerships shall go through evaluation prior to their renewal. To evaluate the partnerships, a database should be created and maintained through which user-friendly monitoring of partnerships becomes possible.

- Information about the guidelines should be widely available in the organisation and needs to be promoted.
- Awareness needs to be raised about the guideline's *rationale*, especially regarding foreign interference, , contribution to the realization of the EUR strategy, and the mitigation of risks.
- The Policy should be integrated into other projects like engagement, accessibility, well-being, sustainability, and diversity and inclusion. With extra attention to the development of online education partnerships in this regard. In the case of sustainability, it is the other way around: sustainability needs to be fully integrated into the policy.
- With these guidelines in mind, a vision of the body of partners for the future should be created in which the EUR strives for a diverse body of equal or valuable partners. With extra attention for the EUR's Strategy 2024 regarding research partnerships.
- A clear exit strategy to end partnerships should be created by Legal Affairs.
- A Travel Policy for students and a visitor protocol for foreign relations should be created.
- Other related forms of cooperation need to be examined to see if additional guidelines are needed, such as national partnerships, and internships.
- In the cause of knowledge security, a country-specific tools/protocols need to be developed to deal with high-risk countries.
- The Policy should be updated regularly, to consider national and international developments, especially measures regarding foreign interference.

Appendix

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