

**University Council  
Second Plenary Meeting  
Erasmus University Rotterdam**

**Date and Time:** 08-04-2025, 09:00-12:00

**Location:** Polak 2-09

**Present in the meeting:** Luca Hellings (chair), Hugo Speelman, Sebastiaan Kamp, Jaap Cornelese, Albert Wagelmans, Ernst Hulst, Aleid Fokkema, Esra Kahramanoglu, Federica Violi, Roxanne Austin (Clerk), Linda Dekker, Rosita Boedhai-Jansen, Nawin Ramcharan, Reinier van Woerden,

Absent: Floortje Dekker (Minutes), Katarzyna Lasak, Max Wagenaar, Jasper Klasen, Deniz Alican, Luna Becirspahic, Bachar Farousi, Daan de Boer, Achraf Taouil, Jaron Buitelaar

## **01 Opening**

### **01.01 Setting of the agenda**

There were no remarks on the agenda

### **01.02 Setting of the previous minutes**

There were no remarks on the previous minutes.

### **01.03 Announcements**

#### *Rescheduled meeting*

This meeting is rescheduled to the morning, due to the strikes this afternoon against the government budget cuts.

#### *Minutes Taker Absent*

Floortje is currently out sick. The meeting will be recorded, so Floortje can write the minutes when she's feeling better.

#### *Attendance Policy makers*

Two policy makers will be joining today's meeting to discuss the EUR profile and the all gender toilettes.

## **02 Agenda items plenary meeting UC**

### **02.01 EUR profile**

A policy maker joined the meeting to provide further information on the EUR profile. After a brief introduction, a UC member inquired about the development process of the profile and its connection to the university's overall strategy. In response, the policy maker gave a short presentation to clarify. The policy maker explained that the process began approximately one year ago, taking into account already existing visions. The EUR profile is one of three components: mission and vision, the profile, and a strategic plan. The policy maker remarked that working groups are currently looking at the strategy as well. The UC has already discussed the mission and vision before and now received the EUR profile for review. A broader strategic plan will be submitted to the UC at a later stage. During the discussion, a UC member raised a concern about the diversification of income streams and the ethical risks related to research that relies on engaging with others. The policy maker acknowledged the importance of this topic, stating that the university is currently exploring its strategic priorities toward 2030, and this will include the diversification of income streams. They emphasized that this is a continuous, evolving process and welcomed input from the UC's taskforce on the matter. The UC member asked where these considerations would be reflected in the strategic plan. The policy maker confirmed that it would be important to include them and reiterated their openness to suggestions from the UC. A UC member clarified that the current document under discussion is the profile and not the full strategic plan. The policy maker noted that a follow-up meeting involving the UC and other parties is scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> of May, where additional information will be shared.

The Chair asked whether there were any questions to forward to the Executive Board (EB) for the upcoming consultation meeting. One UC member proposed the following:

- *Is there a reason for not including a short reflection on EUR's collaborations with present and future partners in the profile?*

This prompted a brief discussion. One UC member supported raising the question, suggesting it would signal the UC's interest in having this topic addressed in the future strategy. There was no further objection therefore this question will be sent to the EB. Another UC member proposed asking about the exclusion of academic freedom from the profile. This led to debate: one member noted that academic freedom is already mentioned under "independent research," while another argued that this does not fully capture the concept of academic freedom. The Chair suggested this topic be raised during the discussion of the overall strategy, as the UC had already expressed the importance of including academic freedom to the policy makers before. Another member added that the UC would be able to verify its inclusion once the strategy is available. A vote was held on whether to submit the proposed question regarding academic freedom resulting in the following:

- In favour: 3
- Against: 8
- Abstain: 1

Therefore, this question will not be discussed during the consultation meeting.

**Action point:**

- The Clerk will send the questions regarding the *EUR profile* to the EB.

## **02.02 All gender toilettes**

Two policy makers were present to provide further clarification on technical questions related to the implementation of all gender toilettes. A UC member from the taskforce emphasized the importance of their presence, expressing that previous responses had not sufficiently addressed all technical questions. The UC member began by asking whether the current arrangement is intended as a temporary measure. One of the policy makers responded that they do not consider this a proposal but rather, the current implementation is a temporary agreement while the policy is being developed. The UC member then inquired why this initiative is being discussed now if a new policy is coming. The policy maker reiterated that this is not a new proposal but rather an ongoing initiative with some recent adjustments.

The conversation continued with the UC member asking why specifically two all gender toilettes had been selected on the first floor. The policy maker responded that the decision is not based on numbers, as these toilettes are accessible to all individuals regardless of gender. Another UC member reminded the UC to focus on technical aspects rather than policy discussions. The original UC member responded by expressing dissatisfaction with the answers provided, stating that their concerns remained unresolved. Another UC member raised a question about whether the option had been considered to retain male/female labelling on restrooms while encouraging individuals to use whichever facilities they feel most comfortable with. The policy maker explained that this approach had been explored initially but was ultimately not selected. Furthermore, a UC member asked why the distribution of all gender toilettes had not been reconsidered, such as spreading them across different floors. The policy maker answered that the current placement was chosen for ease of findability, as entrance floors are easier to remember. The same UC member then raised a concern about safety. The policy maker responded that having all gender toilettes on entrance floors was considered safer, due to this floor being busier. The UC member disagreed, citing complaints received about the crowded nature of these restrooms.

Another UC member noted that alternative options such as having one men's restroom and one all gender restrooms could be explored. The policy makers acknowledged that various options had been considered, but the current arrangement was the decision made for now. The UC member also asked whether UC members would be involved in future discussions regarding the distribution of the toilettes. The policy maker confirmed that they would be, as distribution falls under the broader policy development. The UC member proceeded to ask whether any complaints had been received about all gender toilettes. The policy maker explained that complaints could be submitted via the service desk, but no formal complaints had been recorded thus far. One UC member added that feedback from their faculty that people generally felt satisfied with the implementation of all gender toilettes.

Lastly, a question was raised about the presence of urinals in the all gender toilettes and whether this might pose an issue. The policy maker responded that the urinals themselves are not problematic, but noted that they are currently in an open space. The possibility of adding a door or other modifications is being explored. After the policy makers left, the Chair asked if the UC had any remaining questions for the EB. A UC member confirmed that there were further questions. Another UC member emphasized the importance of ensuring that these questions focus on technical clarification rather than proposing new policy directions. The following questions for the EB were agreed upon:

- *Could you elaborate on the decision to convert the first-floor bathrooms into all-gender restrooms? Were other alternatives or distributions considered during this process?*
- *What is its intended purpose of implementing a temporary solution, rather than directly implementing the new policy?*
- *Could you clarify when the EB plans to present an adjusted policy? What is the expected timeline for its implementation?*
- *How will the policy regarding all-gender restrooms take into account the safety of all EUR visitors?*

**Action point:**

- The Clerk will send the questions regarding *All gender toilettes* to the EB

**02.03 EUR doctoral regulations**

A UC member from the taskforce mentioned that there are some technical questions for the policy makers, but none specifically for the EB. The Chair noted that the deadline for submitting technical questions had already passed, so the policy makers may not be able to address them during this cycle. The UC member remarked that this is not a problem, but it remains important that these questions are still asked and answered. Another UC member raised the issue of receiving regulation documents without tracked changes, making it difficult to identify what has been altered. The Chair agreed that this is a valid concern and will bring it up to the policy makers.

**Action point:**

- The Chair will discuss *'tracked changes documents'* with the policy makers

**02.04 Diversity travel**

The taskforce had sent technical questions to the policy makers, but these have not yet been answered. A UC member from the taskforce noted that they do not have specific questions for the EB at this time. However, they do wish to inform the EB that the taskforce is working on a letter regarding the topic. The Chair asked whether the taskforce could share some indication of their position with the EB. A UC member responded that they could communicate that the letter will be critical in tone. Another member emphasized that the intention is not to go into detail with the EB, but simply to alert them that the letter is coming and should be taken seriously. There were no objections from other UC members to this way of working.

**02.05 Functioning of the EUR website**

A UC member within the taskforce remarked that there is one question for the EB, which is the following:

- *How does the EB look at a potential implementation of an AI helpdesk on the EUR website?*

There were no objections from the UC to asking this question; therefore, it will be brought up in the next consultation meeting.

**Action point:**

- The Clerk will send the questions regarding *Functioning of the EUR website* to the EB.

## 02.06 Request for review of collaborations with US universities

A UC member from the taskforce remarked they would like to ask the EB the following questions:

- How could EUR support our colleagues at US-universities in their strive to keep-up academic freedom?
- *Given that some US universities may be aligning more closely with the policies and approach of the current US government, how does the Executive Board view the level of cooperation with them? What are the potential risks and opportunities involved?*

Another UC member would also like to inquire about how many students and staff are involved in collaborations with the US and whether the UC could receive an overview of the collaborations with the US. A UC member commented that the policy makers could not know how many are involved in these collaborations so it would be difficult to assess this scope. The Chair remarked these would be technical questions. Another UC member reiterated that if you're looking at researchers every researcher could possibly be affected so the scope is hard to determine. After some discussion it was decided that the following technical question will be sent out as well:

- *Could the UC receive an overview of the collaborations with the US?*

Lastly, a UC member remarked that the travel advice should be looked at as well. For example, employees should leave their personal laptop and phone at home if they travel to the US. Other members agreed this was important and the following question was formulated:

- *How can we ensure adequate protection and support for colleagues engaging with US universities, either through travel or direct collaboration?*

### Action point:

- The Clerk will send the questions regarding *Request for review of collaborations with US universities* to the EB.

## 02.07 Preparation Consultation Meeting (15/04)

### *US Software providers*

A UC member remarked that many of the systems used within the university are based on American software, such as the Microsoft landscape. Additionally, the university is transitioning to Oracle, which is also an American system. The member pointed out that these systems can potentially be shut down, which could pose a risk given the current geopolitical context. The UC member proposed the following questions for the EB:

- *How does the EB view our dependency on American software cloud providers?*
- *In light of the current geopolitical context, how does the Executive Board view the decision to transition to Oracle, a US-based system, following the recent tender process?*

Another UC member commented they think it's important to ask the EB about whether they have information on how the government or other universities are dealing with this. As they

are in the same situation. A UC member also remarked it should be kept in mind that for many systems there are no alternatives yet. The following question was formulated:

- *Does the EB have information on how the government and other universities are dealing with this dependency?*

#### *Ius promovendi*

A UC member remarked that they had received a response from the EB regarding *Ius promovendi*, in which the EB stated they do not agree with the suggestions put forward by the UC. The UC member expressed frustration with how the EB has been handling matters related to PhD candidates. They noted that previous advice and letters on these topics have consistently been met with disagreement from the EB, without clear explanations as to why the suggestions were not considered good ideas. Following this, the UC member would like to ask the EB the following questions:

- *The doctorate board is of the opinion that mandatory formalisation of a quality assessment for all schools currently does not have added value. Could the EB explain why this is the case?*
- *The suggestion to, in the future, require a minimum of two PhD candidates per co-supervisor, will not be adopted. Could the EB explain why this is the case?*
- *The definition of a 'good' supervisor is not limited to the number of successful PhD trajectories alone and the doctorate board will elaborate further on what a 'good' supervisor is. What will be the timeline of this elaboration and how will the UC be informed about the outcome?*

#### **Action point:**

- The Clerk will send the questions regarding *Ius promovendi* to the EB.
- The Clerk will send the questions regarding *US software providers* to the EB.

### **03 Incoming documents**

#### **03.01 RM 300.642 Response to 38801 - Ius promovendi**

This will be discussed during the AOB in the consultation meeting.

### **04 Any other business**

#### *Sensitive collaborations*

A UC member noted that there has been no response from the Committee of Sensitive Collaborations yet. The Chair responded that while the committee has published a framework, it has not been filled in yet. The Chair expects this to be completed by the end of May. A general session with the committee is also planned to take place around that time.

### **05 Closing**