

Multi-year Budget Plan Administrative Agreement Funds (BAO) 2026-2030

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1 Introduction

The Quality Agreements ¹ for Higher Education (HeQa², 2019-2024) expired on January 1, 2025. In 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) signed an Administrative Agreement on Higher Education (³) with universities and universities of applied sciences to strengthen the Dutch higher education and research system and address fundamental bottlenecks. In the accompanying OCW policy letter⁴, it was agreed that as of 2025, the so-called study advance funds ('studievoorschotmiddelen') would be continued and structurally allocated to the institutions via lump sum funding. The aim here was to create more breathing room and space in the system, both in terms of funding and administrative burden.

For higher education as a whole, this amounts to approximately €625 million per year⁵. Agreements on the distribution and expenditure of these funds are no longer made per institution, and the NVAO no longer assesses the plans in advance (as was the case with the Quality Agreements).⁶ By structurally allocating these resources in this way, the government is placing its trust in the universities to maintain the current level of quality of education and, where possible, further improve it.

The institutions must use these funds structurally for the (promotion/strengthening of) the quality of their education, in accordance with the Administrative Agreement on Education (BAO). In terms of (financial) planning, a multi-year plan with an accompanying budget must be drawn up that provides insight into the intended goals and how the funds will be spent. The use of the funds is formally accounted for annually to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the institution's annual report. Institutions are also required to involve their participatory bodies in a timely and sufficient manner in the spending of these funds. Finally, results at sector and institutional level are reported on the UNL website.⁷

From 2025 onwards, EUR will receive €22.8 million annually from the BAO. Two-thirds of these funds will be allocated directly to the schools (€15.2 million) and one-third (€7.7 million) will be used for strategic and interschool themes that serve the common interest.

¹ In 2018, the education sectors, student unions, and the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science jointly signed the Administrative Agreement, which sets out how the student loan funds would be used. These funds were made available by the introduction of the 'leenstelsel' in 2015 and were used by all education sectors in the period 2019-2024 to improve the quality of education. Quality agreements were therefore made for the use of the funds. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, educational institutions, and student unions jointly decided that the funds would be spent on six themes: educational intensity, educational differentiation, teacher quality, educational facilities, better student guidance, and study success.

² HeQa – Higher Education Quality Agreements

³ Administrative Agreement 2022 – Higher Education and Science, July 14, 2022:
<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/07/14/bestuursakkoord-2022-hoger-onderwijs-en-wetenschap>

⁴ Letter to Parliament on higher education and science, June 17, 2022:
<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/06/17/aan-de-tweede-kamer-beleidsbrief-hoger-onderwijs-en-wetenschap>

⁵ This amount is kept separate/earmarked within the EUR and indexed annually in accordance with the LPO%.

⁶ The basis for quality-based funding will be abolished as of 2025. Here is the link to the relevant House of Representatives (and Senate) documents: https://www.eerstekamer.nl/wetsvoorstel/36454_schrappen_grondslag

⁷ See Appendix 2b of the Administrative Agreement: Indicators for higher education and science. The following key figures are tracked at the sector level: student-staff ratio, University Teaching Qualification (UTQ), general student satisfaction (NSE), and participatory council (via participatory bodies monitor).

2 Guiding principles for spending

2.1 Administrative principles

Erasmus University's new strategy (Strategy2030) and its revised educational vision will guide the allocation of BAO funds in the coming years. This continues the approach taken with HeQa in the previous strategic period. Both school and joint/EUR-wide BAO funds will be spent in the coming strategic period to realize the educational vision, strategic goals, and associated priorities.

As EUR, we will continue to invest in improving and innovating our education, especially in these difficult financial times. The mobilization of BAO funds helps EUR to position itself and be resilient in a changing (geo)political, administrative, and financial higher education landscape. This includes multiple and complex financial challenges such as the recent government spending cuts and the expected decline in international students (due to the WIB), the decline in Dutch students (due to demographic developments) and the decline in the reference estimate. At the same time, various geopolitical and societal developments offer opportunities for EUR to contribute to raising, interpreting, and solving (major and complex) societal issues. This commitment is anchored in our Erasmian values: socially engaged, world citizen, connecting, entrepreneurial, and open-minded.

In line with the legal OCW frameworks, both substantive and financial decisions must be closely coordinated with the relevant participatory bodies, which also retain their right of consent during the BAO period. With regard to the expenditure of the joint and school BAO funds, the University Council (BAO Task Force) and School Councils will be involved in a timely and sufficient manner in the planning, monitoring, and any adjustments.

The precise thematic focus for the multi-year deployment of the joint BAO funds is determined in close consultation with the vice-deans of education. This ensures the integrity and continuity of the interschool and EUR-wide deployment. In order to prevent fragmentation of efforts and resources and to achieve maximum impact, the number of strategic priorities/themes that are (partly) financed with BAO funds will be kept to a minimum.

2.2 Financial principles

In terms of financial principles, this plan also builds on the agreements made within the framework of the HeQa. This chapter first explains the allocation chosen during the HeQa period and the agreements and principles that applied to it. This is followed by the substantiation of the choices and distribution for the use of BAO funds in 2025.

2.2.1 HeQa 2019-2024

The HeQa plan (Working Together on World-Class Education: Quality and Innovation Calendar) describes the EUR Quality Agreements and the method used by EUR to implement them. As usual and as included in the plans of other institutions, the financial allocation of the funds was based on student numbers, with agreements made on the joint/central and school/decentralized deployment. In addition, when allocating the study advance funds, EUR

chose to only include students with a Dutch prior education in determining school student numbers.⁸

The financial distribution (school and common) was as follows:

- 63% to the schools, based on the number of students with prior Dutch education;
- 21.2% to EUR-wide policy projects (Impact@thecore, ErasmusX, and Student Well-being)
- 15.8% to the Community for Learning & Innovation (CLI).

2.2.2. From HeQa to BAO: 2025 as a transition year

Last November, the Executive Board and University Council adopted the proposal to designate 2025 as a transition year from HeQa to BAO. This was due to various internal (strategic) processes that either interfered with the transition to the new situation or had to be completed first as preconditions so that a multi-year (strategic) budget plan could be drawn up.

The new EUR strategy was also to be drawn up in 2025. The outcomes and possible new goals of the EUR Strategy 2030 will determine the prioritization of multi-year commitments in terms of themes such as goals relating to the quality of education, both at the interschool/joint level and at the school level.

It has also become necessary to use the entire year 2025 to complete and/or streamline the ongoing HeQa projects and programs, including Impact@theCore and ErasmusX. The latter also concerns the further development of CLI to CLI 2.0 and the associated multi-year perspective. For CLI, time also had to be set aside this year to carry out various evaluations of the range of services and collaborative structures/governance. Additional time was also needed for the Student Wellbeing program, which will continue from 2025 onwards with a supplement to its own budget earmarked in the 2022 Administrative Agreement.

2.2.3. Financial distribution

In June 2024, the Executive Board established the principles and guidelines for the use of BAO funds.⁹ The financial distribution for 2025 and beyond was also established as follows:

- Two-thirds (66.7%) of the funds will go directly to the lump sum of the schools (an increase of approximately 4%).
- 1/3 (33.3%) of the funds will be used EUR-wide for interschool or strategic themes, projects, and programs that serve the common interest.
- The allocation key for 2025 will continue to be based on the number of students with prior education in the Netherlands.

⁸ The following considerations played a role in the chosen allocation system:

- The assumption that the national scheme Investing in Educational Quality Quality Agreements 2019-2024 explicitly links the additional funds to the number of students with a Dutch background. EUR has translated this line into its internal allocation, which is incorporated into the budget (EP) on an annual basis.
- The funds for the quality agreements originate from the abolition of the basic grant for students with a Dutch educational background. It is logical that the proceeds are invested for the benefit of this target group.
- The then-proposed Language and Accessibility Bill (2019) states that education in Dutch is the norm. This development also supports the decision to base the allocation of funds on Dutch students.

⁹ See the letter from the Executive Board to the deans (subject: Resources Administrative Agreement on Education, June 27, 2024).

	2025	2026
		Estimate
Administrative agreement funds (BAO)	22.845.226	23.187.904
Schools	15.230.151	15.458.603
EUR-wide (joint/interschool)	7.615.075	7.729.301

Table 1. Total Administrative Agreement (BAO) funds received and internal allocation

Faculteit	Aantal studenten	Percentage	Bedrag
Er.MC	3.569	16,2%	2.499.975
ESE	3.879	17,6%	2.717.425
ESHCC	1.013	4,6%	709.759
ESHPM	1.085	4,9%	759.869
ESL	3.625	16,4%	2.539.577
ESPhil	480	2,2%	336.024
ESSB	3.642	16,5%	2.551.031
EUC	243	1,1%	170.458
RSM	4.532	20,5%	3.174.486
Totaal	22.068	100%	15.458.603

Table 2: Allocation of BAO funds per school

3 Budget agenda 2026-2030

3.1 EUR-wide funds: strategic themes

As indicated, a large part of the EUR-wide BAO funds will be used for the integral implementation of the educational vision and strategic educational goals and priorities, as set out in Strategy 2030. To this end, a multi-year agenda has been developed in close consultation with the vice-deans of education, the relevant programs and departments, and the BAO Task Force, which will enable us to improve and renew our portfolio in the coming years.

By mobilizing shared BAO resources, we are working on strategic alignment and the realization of the following strategic goals:

1. Leading academic education & research,
2. Collaboration in networks and with society (engagement), and
3. One connected EUR.

The table below (3) shows the strategic framework, including the impact domains and priorities. This chapter (3.1) briefly explains four strategic themes and initiatives that will be (partly) funded by EUR-wide BAO resources during the coming strategic period. In line with administrative principles, a limited number of strategic themes have been selected that have been designated as priorities and for which (additional) commitment from the Administrative Agreement (BAO) is considered necessary. These are as follows:

- **Impact & Engagement,**
- **Strategic Portfolio Fund,**
- **Lifelong Development, and**
- **AI in/for education.**



Table 3: Summary of strategic framework

3.1.1 Impact & Engagement

Translating our ambitions for engagement into education—in which students learn to develop a broad perspective on societal issues—is at the heart of our 2030 strategy and our recalibrated educational vision.¹⁰ We do this by having students work on issues raised by external partners, where possible in direct collaboration. This enables students to develop skills in using other interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary insights and to make an active contribution to understanding or helping to solve complex issues.

We are continuing the approach initiated with HeQa funds with the help of BAO funds. We are embedding our approach in specific areas of the curriculum (including project-based education, minors, internships, and theses). We are clustering our efforts more explicitly around the specific themes and impact domains from the 2030 strategy. This clarifies what our university stands for, both to our social partners and to our students. We are doing this by committing ourselves to issues such as: resilience of citizens (in neighborhoods with a 'neighborhood approach'), well-being and health, and the energy transition.

An important issue to tackle is how we can shape our relationship with the outside world in a more coherent way. Coherence with research where relevant, coherence between schools where appropriate, and coherence with partner networks that can draw up a multi-year development agenda with us.

From 2026 onwards, ERS will also focus on stakeholder management in education, partly through the use of Erasmus Connects. This successful program will be continued within ERS. Schools will also receive their own resources (school impact liaisons) that they can use at their own discretion to develop sustainable networks on the above-mentioned themes in collaboration with ERS/Erasmus Connects.

Budget:

- Linking engagement on themes to courses at program level:	
1. Deployment of school liaisons.....	400 k (2026 to 2030)
2. Deployment of Erasmus Connect stakeholder management.....	243 k (2026 to 2030)
- Engagement on themes/specific areas:	
Area-specific approach, including Diamonds in the neighborhood by annual reassessment)	200k (2026, followed
Total: 843k	

Strategic priorities and all impact areas: Academic education that makes an impact (1), An inspiring and innovative education portfolio (2), Open Innovation Networks (4).

3.1.2 Strategic Portfolio Fund (SPF)

In line with Strategy 2030, we want to continue working towards a future-proof, agile, and inspiring education portfolio. An inspiring and agile portfolio not only enables us to better weather the 'perfect storm' of budget cuts, demographic decline, and the consequences of the Balanced Internationalization Act (WIB/Test of Foreign Language Education (TAO)), but also to create and seize opportunities for more (inter- and transdisciplinary) collaboration, engagement, and educational improvement. By focusing specifically on EUR strategic impact areas and regional alliances, our education helps to identify complex societal challenges and contribute to their solution. In doing so, we are also training a new generation of engaged academics.

¹⁰ See the revised EUR education vision: Impact-driven education (2023)

In order to support this change task administratively and financially, a significant portion of the EUR-wide BAO funds will be invested in a Strategic Portfolio Fund (SPF). Such a fund will enable EUR to strategically manage the use of BAO funds so that EUR-wide goals can be achieved (more quickly). Such a fund also provides flexibility and scope for innovation, upscaling, and prioritization, as well as positive incentives for the schools to enrich their portfolios. Together, this will lead to a strengthening of the quality and impact of education.

The detailed structure of this fund will be worked out in the coming months in close collaboration between (portfolio holder) vice deans of education and RM¹¹. This will include further elaboration of the desired process and governance, including the application procedure and assessment. The criteria for allocation will also be further elaborated, whereby, in addition to the usual criteria such as feasibility and innovation, particular attention will be paid to strategic relevance, impact, and (interschool or interinstitutional) collaboration. In this process, the schools affected by the so-called self-governance process and the WIB will be given priority (ESSB, ESE, RSM).

Budget: In terms of size, it is proposed to make 1500k available annually from BAO funds; duration: during the strategic period (2026 to 2030).

Strategic priorities: An inspiring and innovative education portfolio (2), Academic education that makes an impact (1), and Resilient and agile organization (9).

Strategic Portfolio Fund 2030

Overview of strategic goals, priorities, and actions

Goals Strategy 2030	Strategic priorities	Elaboration of possible actions/action lines
Leading academic education with impact	Inspiring education portfolio for the region and beyond	- Investing in the development and further development of: - Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education - Focus on crossovers with medical and technical disciplines - Joint education (methods, skills, e.g., statistics and AI) - New (joint and/or impact) tracks and joint/dual degrees - Open minor (and implementation of minor policy 15 to 30 EC)
	Academic education with an eye for impact	- Operationalization of engagement in education portfolio - Further development and differentiation of EUR impact profile - Providing insight into impact education in portfolio, continuity, and strategic choices - Linking impact education to impact domains
A connected EUR	Resilient and agile organization	- Reviewing existing portfolio and capitalizing on overlap in the portfolio (increasing efficiency) - One EUR-wide course directory - Investing extra in the ESSB, ESE & RSM portfolio, preparing for the self-regulation process and WIB effects - Identifying opportunities for innovation, improvement, and interfaculty collaboration within the existing portfolio towards a connected EUR - Increasing portfolio agility by, among other things, streamlining decision-making and development processes for new educational offerings and optimizing the balance within the portfolio (ratio of MA to BA, tracks vs. programs)

Table 4: Strategic Portfolio Fund: Strategic goals, priorities, and associated elaboration/possible substantive actions/action lines

¹¹ RM: Rector Magnificus

3.1.3 Lifelong Learning (LLL)

LLL is one of the core priorities of the EUR 2030 Strategy. In order to meet the growing societal need for continuous learning, change, and self-development, we will significantly expand our LLL offering in the coming years. This is also in line with the national urgency that has arisen around this theme (including from the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science). It is therefore expected that universities will soon be given a more explicit role in this area. As a university, we must anticipate this. The aim is to have Lifelong Learning firmly embedded within EUR by 2030, with a broadly accessible, future- and society-driven offering that strengthens professionals and organizations in their development.

Although the LLL team has successfully secured substantial external funding to expand the range of courses and set up the necessary internal organization, the most important of these funds will expire on October 1, 2026. For this reason, at the request of the Executive Board and deans, among others, additional funds from BAO will be temporarily reserved for LLL. The requested funds would be used to provide the necessary support and infrastructure for LLL. The explicit intention is to use the BAO funds as a temporary stimulus (and not to create structural dependency).

Budget: 79k in 2026, after which the exact financing will be determined annually in close consultation with VDE and the Executive Board/Deans.

Strategic priorities: Lifelong Development (3), Academic education that makes an impact (1), Resilient and agile organization (9), Inspiring and innovative education portfolio (2), Diversification of income sources (6), Open Innovation Networks (4).

3.1.4. AI in/for education

Although our educational vision places great emphasis on the physical learning environment that challenges and stimulates students, AI technology enables students to apply their knowledge to complex societal issues and thus generate impact in a responsible manner. Artificial Intelligence can be a tool for better understanding complexity and finding practical and sustainable solutions. This is a focus point in our 2030 strategy. AI also has a much broader impact on integrated education. It greatly influences how education is shaped, what knowledge and skills are relevant in an AI era, and how people learn. This development has a risky side, but at the same time offers many new opportunities and possibilities. Both must be anticipated in order to continue to offer future-proof, adaptive, and high-quality education.

In the period up to 2030, we will allocate annual resources for the revision of the curriculum, learning environment, pedagogy, didactics, assessment, and teacher development. In a systematic plan with the schools, these resources will be translated into the following tasks:

1. AI is rapidly changing a number of professions. How do we adapt our educational programs to this and how do we best prepare students for this reality?
2. AI is also changing the way students learn. How do we organize our education (with the help of AI) (pedagogical-didactic environment, student guidance, learning content, etc.) and how do we shape the (final) assessment?
3. Teachers must not only be AI-proficient; AI also has a direct impact on the pedagogical-didactic approach and learning environment. With formative feedback and the use of digital resources, students can be adequately informed about their development, enabling them to gain sufficient insight into their learning process and make important decisions about it in an informed manner. How do we develop a new didactic approach?

Together with the schools and the participatory councils, we will carefully coordinate what is being developed and which initiatives can be scaled up. Partly because AI is developing rapidly, we invest in active experimentation. We create space for the deployment of expertise in the field of AI in order to implement educational innovations and develop sustainable educational modules, initiatives, projects, etc. We implement approaches that have proven successful across the campus. Where possible, schools develop their initiatives based on the programmatic approach developed by AI@EUR.

The goal is to offer students a future-proof education portfolio by 2030 that is in line with the changing academic professional field and to train students to become skilled professionals who can make a positive impact with the help of AI.

Budget: 700k in 2026. In Q1 2026, a more detailed plan (including plans and deliverables) will be presented, after which a fixed amount will be reserved for school deployment from 2027 onwards.

Strategic priorities or domains: Impact domain *Responsible use of technologies*, Academic education that makes an impact (1) Inspiring and innovative education portfolio (2)

3.2 EUR-wide funds: going concern and preconditions

Although the focus within the multi-year commitment of the EUR-wide BAO resources is on the implementation of the new strategy, part of the resources will be used for two themes that are preconditions and/or going concern and safeguarding basic quality, namely: implementation of WIB (investment in language skills and stay rate) and follow-up on ITK. This commitment is, of course, also in line with our new strategy.

3.2.1 Implementation of WIB

A national OCW policy process that directly affects the future-proofing and agility of the EUR education portfolio is the implementation of the Balanced Internationalization Act (WIB). The impact of this legislation and the associated measures, in combination with the current budget cuts, is expected to be significant. There are concerns about financial challenges (including loss of income due to declining student numbers and market share), reduced progression of students to master's programs, loss of talent, decline in educational quality, weakened partnerships, and fewer opportunities for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education.

At EUR, we recognize the need for a clear language policy and measures to improve language skills, better alignment of education with the labor market, and strategies to increase the stay rate of international students. Therefore, in 2026, we will invest part of the BAO funds in the following subprojects and associated actions:

1. Development of a language policy and language skills training courses, including expansion of the capacity for language training courses (117k)
2. Development of a strategic plan to strengthen the stay rate and actions aimed at strengthening the stay rate (110k)

Budget: 217k in 2026, after which the necessary adjustments/additions to the plans will be made and the associated financing determined on an annual basis until at least 2030.

3.2.2 Follow-up ITK

In April 2026, an NVAO panel will visit EUR as part of the Institutional Quality Assurance Assessment (ITK). As usual, the panel will formulate a number of recommendations in its

assessment of our internal quality assurance that EUR should work on in the coming years. By mid-2026, there will be more clarity about the scope of the recommendations and what follow-up steps/efforts are needed. The follow-up to the ITK panel's recommendations is included in the multi-year BAO agenda and will be on the agenda for the Erasmus Perspectives and 2027 budget discussions.

Budget: to be determined (from 2027).

3.3 EUR-wide funds: CLI and Wellbeing

3.3.1 Community for Learning & Innovation (CLI)

Since 2019, the (joint) HeQa funds have been used to finance our Community for Learning & Innovation (CLI). CLI uses these funds for teacher development, innovation and digitization projects, community building, and educational research. The financing of CLI will continue to be based on HeQa, with the use of BAO funds. From January 2025, CLI will house educational expertise in the field of impact and AI in education.

CLI objective

In 2022, CLI was consolidated as a flexible network organization that collaborates with the Learning & Innovation (LI) teams of the schools and professional services. Since its inception in 2017, the elements of community, learning, and innovation have been deliberately chosen to emphasize CLI's objective: to connect, enable, and stimulate continuous educational improvement and innovation.

Community

CLI is a community in which we connect the EUR schools with each other and with professional services in order to develop new educational (research) insights and to share successes and lessons learned. The community consists of teachers, students, and support staff.

Learning

CLI's starting point is that learning also includes teaching, as teachers themselves learn every day. CLI supports teachers in their ongoing professional development. The team involves students and supports them in shaping their own learning improvement.

Innovation

CLI believes that both small-scale or incremental innovations in education and larger, technology-related or more radical innovations in education are necessary for EUR to move forward, together with the schools.

CLI's mission is realized within the context of Erasmus University's Education Vision (2023) and the EUR Strategy 2030. CLI's contribution to the EUR Strategy 2030 lies both in strengthening our leading academic education and research and in connecting with our society and strategic alliances (such as Npuls and UNIC).

CLI's commitment

CLI's services consist of four pillars that are in line with what is currently expected of a Centre for Teaching & Learning (CTL) by the National Growth Fund program Npuls: teacher development, innovation and digitization projects, educational research, and community building. The current budget (see Appendix 1) was submitted in July 2025, at which time the insights from the evaluation of teacher development offerings (Turner agency) and the

evaluation of CLI/Risbo collaboration (results expected in January 2026) could not be included. These insights will be incorporated into the CLI's multi-year perspective (for 2027 and beyond).

Budget: a total of 4.2 million, of which 3.45 million comes from BAO (750k from the Direct Purpose Fund)

Appendices: CLI policy-rich budget (including the annual plan), (to be sent in Q1 2026: CLI multi-year perspective)

3.3.2 Student Well-being Program (SW)

Since 2019, the Student Wellbeing Program (SW) has been a strategic priority within EUR as part of the HeQa Plan. The program is also firmly embedded in policy through the Manifesto on Student Wellbeing (2022).

Student wellbeing remains an urgent issue. Both the EUR Student Wellbeing Monitor and national studies (Trimbos) show that stress, performance pressure, loneliness, and mental health issues among students remain structurally high. At the same time, the program has become a national leader in integrated, evidence-based approaches and serves as a model within the Administrative Agreement on Education and the National Framework for Student Wellbeing (2023–2030).

The 2026 Annual Plan (see Appendix 2) marks the consolidation phase of the program: continuation, strategic evaluation, and preparation for sustainable assurance from 2027 onwards.

The mission remains: to promote student success by structurally embedding well-being and personal development in education and policy through the following main objectives for 2026:

- Strengthening student well-being and self-regulatory skills: students take responsibility for their well-being and development.
- Strengthening identification and guidance: teachers and counselors recognize and support students in a timely manner.
- Structural embedding in education: well-being and personal development become an integral part of education.
- Knowledge development and positioning: EUR profiles itself as a knowledge and practice hub for student well-being.

Commitment & implementation

The program is implemented through collaboration between central services, schools, and Student Wellbeing Officers. The emphasis in 2026 will be on:

- Implementation and evidence-based further development of the central program.
- School implementation plans and strengthening local control.
- Strategic evaluation of the program structure and preparation for sustainable embedding from 2027 onwards.

Student Wellbeing Officers:

Within the student wellbeing policy, the deployment of Student Wellbeing Officers (SWOs) is a structural and essential part of promoting cooperation and knowledge sharing between schools and the student wellbeing program.

The costs for the deployment of SWOs will also be covered in 2026 from the EUR-wide BAO funds (continuing the financing from HeQa funds). This offers a temporary solution, as the SWO roles have not yet been established as a structural part of the student wellbeing policy. The year 2026 will be used for a strategic evaluation of the role, with the aim of determining how the roles can be continued and embedded in the longer term. The temporary coverage via the BAO funds makes it possible to continue the current deployment during this evaluation period, while at the same time leaving room for a joint reconsideration of the structural positioning and financing.

Budget:

- 1040k from BAO funds (Administrative Agreement on Education 530k and BAO funds specifically earmarked for student wellbeing 510k) for 2026
- €300k from EUR-wide funds for Student Wellbeing Officers (SWOs).

Appendices: Budget and annual plan for the Student Wellbeing program, (follow-up Q1 (January/February) multi-year perspective)

3.3.3 Summary of allocation of funds for 2026 (and beyond)

The table below (5) summarizes the total distribution and allocation of the Administrative Agreement funds for 2026. The funds budgeted for CLI and the Student Wellbeing program for 2026 have remained largely stable (compared to 2025)¹² The multi-year spending plan for the deployment of EUR-wide funds for (strategic) themes is described in Table 6.

		€ 2026	Context and remarks
Total	Administrative Agreement Funds	23,2 M	Comparable to 2025
	Schools	15,5 M	Added directly to the lump sum, in line with the educational vision and strategy, contributing to educational quality.
EUR-wide/joint circa 7,7 M	CLI	3,45 M	Including 750k Direct Purpose Fund. Absorption Erasmus X en Impact@theCore
	Student Wellbeing	530 k	Programme Wellbeing receives additional 510k from Administrative Agreement Wellbeing (BAO SW), 277k from HeQa reserves and digital innovation funds
	Strategic themes: Impact & Engagement, Future proof portfolio, AI, LLL, Implementation WIB and follow-up ITK	3,7M	Requests I&E (843k), Strategic Portfolio Fund (SPF, 1.5M), AI in Education (700k), LLL (79k), Implementation WIB (227k), follow-up ITK (from 2027), Wellbeing SWO's (300k)

Table 5: Allocation of the 2026 Administrative Agreement funds

¹² See the budget proposal for the use of BAO funds for 2025 (including the budgets for CLI and the Student Welfare program)

Overview of multi-year budget plan for EUR-wide/joint BAO resources						
Themes	Subthemes and clarification	%	Allocation in € (k)			
			2026	2027	2028	2029
Impact & Engagement Establishing a thematic connection with the outside world	Liaison Impact & Engagement Education – Schools	10,8	400	400	400	400
	Erasmus Verbindt	6,5	243	243	243	243
	Diamonds in the neighbourhood	5,4	200			
	<i>Total</i>	22,7	843			
Strategic Portfolio Fund (SPF)	Investing in agile, future-proof and inspiring educational offer	40,5	1500	1500	1500	1500
AI in/for Education	Curriculum design & didactics, AI literacy, teacher development	18,9	700			
Life Long Learning (LLL)	Investment and safeguarding of EUR-wide core team	2,1	79			
Implementation WIB	Language policy & language training courses	3,2	117			
	Strengthen stay rate	3	110			
	<i>Total</i>	6,2	227			
Follow-up ITK	Follow-up on recommendations NVAO - ITK panel 2026	0	0			
Programme Student Wellbeing	Use of Student Wellbeing Officers (SWOs)	6,8	300			
Support	Coordination and support for BAO process	1,4	50	50	50	50
Total		3700	3700	3700*	3700*	3700*

	Commitment to specific theme, further elaboration and precise financing to be determined annually
	Detailed plan (including activities and deliverables) ready in Q1 '26, followed by a fixed annual amount
	Commitment in terms of both content and amounts will only be determined in the second half of 2026.
	Commitment already fixed in terms of content; the amount of funding from BAO is determined annually.

Table 6: Overview of the multi-year budget plan for the deployment of joint BAO funds 2026-2030

3.4 School funds

The schools drew up draft multi-year plans for the use of school BAO funds in the second half of 2024.¹³ In 2025, some of the plans were slightly adjusted in certain areas, but for the most part, these plans remained essentially unchanged for the 2026-2028 forecast¹⁴. In line with the agreements made (see section 4.3 of this plan), all plans have been approved by the school participatory bodies. The educational vision and strategy form the common thread, in line with the agreements and guidelines that have been made.

The schools have indicated that they will use the school BAO funds in the coming years for the following themes:

- **Impact-driven education and engagement**
Sub-themes: connection with societal issues, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education, external stakeholder involvement
- **Student success and well-being**
Sub-themes: personal and professional development, learning skills, wellbeing (officers), student journey & learning pathways, tutors & mentors, maintaining small-scale education
- **Diversity & inclusion as well as Access & Equity**
Subthemes: accessibility, equal opportunities, inclusive learning environment
- **Teacher development**
Subthemes: teacher training, teacher support, recognition and rewards
- **Education & Technology**
Subtopics: innovations in AI, hybrid/online education, AI, and EDTech
- **Basic quality themes**
Subthemes: assessment, strengthening OC's and EC's
- **Internationalization/WIB**
Subthemes: language policy, international classroom, TAO

The schools are deploying resources on a mix of themes relating to strategic and constructive alignment, with a mix of innovation and safeguarding innovation. This means that resources are sometimes used to maintain existing (basic) quality in times of austerity (e.g., tutors, mentors, small-scale education) and to improve the preconditions for high-quality education, such as teacher development and assessment. There is also significant investment in student success/well-being themes, often continuing the lines of action implemented during the HeQa period (personal and professional development and skills). Finally, some schools are using their BAO resources for new (strategic) initiatives such as the Smarter Academic Year or as a pre-selection measure for national developments such as the WIB.

¹³ With the exception of ESE, for which a new/revised plan will be submitted in early 2026.

¹⁴ All final school multi-year plans are part of this plan and will be added as appendices.

4 Governance, monitoring, and accountability

4.1 Context and principles

With the structural allocation of study advance funds (via the lump sum) to institutions, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science sought to create more stability and flexibility in the system, not only in terms of funding but also to reduce the administrative burden.¹⁵ From 2025 onwards, institutions will no longer have to make agreements with the government about the allocation and spending of these funds, and the plans and interim (annual) reports will no longer be assessed externally (by the NVAO). This has significantly reduced the accountability pressure, but it has certainly not eliminated it entirely. Institutions are required to report on the use of funds in their annual reports in a clear and comprehensible manner and to involve participatory bodies in a timely and effective manner.

Based on these developments, among other things, the **following principles** have been formulated for the organization of monitoring (of progress), adjustment, and accountability for the use of BAO funds within EUR:

- (Future-proof) compliance with OCW accountability requirements: Expenditure must be traceable and effective;
- Minimal reporting burden: Reporting should be as efficient and effective as possible;
- Alignment with P&C cycle: Optimal alignment with or reinforcement of existing quality assurance cycles at school and institutional level;
- Participatory councils: School and EUR-wide participatory councils remain involved in a timely and sufficient manner in planning, monitoring (of progress), and adjustment

4.2 Governance, monitoring, and accountability: From HEQA to BAO

In line with the principle of optimally aligning the use of BAO funds with the existing quality assurance cycle, the EUR Institutional Quality Assurance Policy¹⁶ briefly describes the development of governance from HeQa to BAO (with associated tasks and roles) in the appendix 3 (Figure 1). This also explains the role and further development of CLI, as well as developments in terms of monitoring, assurance, and accountability for the use of BAO funds. It also explicitly links the monitoring of the use of BAO funds to the program quality (assurance) cycle.

This chapter then goes on to discuss the practical organization of monitoring and accountability for the use of both school-specific and EUR-wide resources, specifying the objectives for reporting and discussing both substantive and financial monitoring and accountability for the use of resources. Finally, the annual cycle of itself, including the crucial

¹⁵ Various (self) evaluations and studies have shown that the institutions have experienced the administrative burden surrounding the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the Quality Agreements as (unnecessarily) high. The institutional plans for the use of resources had to be assessed by external panels, and mid-term/annual reports in the annual reports had to provide fairly detailed accountability for the results achieved and the process followed.

¹⁶ Reference here to EUR Institutional Quality Assurance Policy...

moments for monitoring, accountability, and coordination, is explained and presented visually in a diagram (figure 2).

4.2.1 Monitoring and accountability at school level

In the second half of 2024, the schools were tasked with drawing up multi-year plans for the deployment of BAO funds for their school. The form and approach for the planning was free, provided that the plans: 1. are in line with the institutional strategy and educational vision, 2. contribute to (improving) the quality of education, and 3. are coordinated with the school participation councils in a timely and sufficient manner.¹⁷

In their multi-year plans, the schools have outlined the spending targets and associated activities at the project/program level. In addition, the schools will explain any adjustments or changes to targets/activities in relation to the multi-year plan in a separate section/chapter of their annual plans. The use of school BAO funds will also be accounted for in the school annual report. From 2025 onwards, this P&C cycle will be implemented in full at school level and will be the responsibility of the dean. At the institutional level, this, together with input from joint/interschool projects/programs, forms the basis for an overall picture in the institution-wide (multi-year) budget and EUR annual report.

The substantive monitoring and evaluation of progress will mainly take place at institutional level via a reporting format that will be completed twice a year (May/June and December/January) by the schools. The school reports serve the following purposes:

- As a basis for **external accountability to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, student unions, and UNL via the annual report.**¹⁸
- For **internal accountability to school and institution-wide participatory bodies**
- To **monitor the progress of ongoing projects/initiatives**
- For **knowledge exchange on best practices and bottlenecks and to (continue to) develop a common language.**
- For **strategic coordination of joint/interschool BAO resources:** The school reports also serve as input for EUR-wide coordination and decision-making regarding the use of joint/interschool BAO resources (including CLI and multi-year commitment to strategic themes).
- An explicit link has been made to **development goals operationalized at the program level.**

In addition, **financial monitoring and accountability** will take place twice a year: for the annual report in January/February (review) and for the outlook in May/June. In order to limit the administrative burden across EUR, the schools no longer need to account for their financial commitments at project level in their financial BAO reports to central departments (CPC, PS & AZ).¹⁹ However, schools are expected to keep track of this information within their own school to enable school participation councils to monitor progress and provide timely input/feedback based on sufficient information (see next chapter).

¹⁷ See the letter from the Executive Board to the deans (subject: Resources Administrative Agreement on Education, June 27, 2024).

¹⁸ Although the accountability burden is considerably lower than during the HEQA/Quality Agreements period, EUR still has to account for the use of resources (at institutional level) in its annual report. As in previous years, school reports are necessary in order to account for the effective use of these OCW-earmarked resources for the entire institution (including distilling narratives, common threads, and focal points for the institution). This is also the reason why the reporting template asks for projects to be linked to themes.

¹⁹ The schools have created a BAO WBS number for this purpose, which makes it possible to monitor and account for the under- or overspending of BAO funds across the institution. This also provides us with sufficient information about the progress made in the use of quality funds should questions arise at a later date.

4.2.2. Monitoring and accountability for the use of EUR-wide BAO funds

This budget plan contains a multi-year agenda for the use of EUR-wide BAO funds. The administrative and financial principles laid down in this plan build on the agreements made in 2024. In terms of monitoring and accountability, the policy advisors/program managers at the central level will also follow the same annual cycle and reporting lines as the schools. At the institutional level, substantive monitoring and accountability will take place using the same reporting format that forms the basis for bilateral discussions with the Executive Board (applies to CLI and program SW), horizontal discussions by the vice-deans of education, and coordination with the University Council task force. The EUR-wide BAO reports also largely serve the same purpose as those of the schools: external and internal accountability, monitoring of ongoing projects/initiatives, and knowledge exchange.

In addition, where possible, the EUR-wide reports also link to the programs that are supported by these funds. In this way, we provide insight for both management and participatory bodies into how EUR-wide funds (directly or indirectly) flow back to the schools.

The main difference with the schools' monitoring and accountability approach is the requirement to also account for the financial commitment at project level twice per year. Regular substantive and financial reports and updates enable us to monitor the use of the total BAO funds so that necessary adjustments can be made in a timely manner and the participation bodies are able to provide timely feedback and input.

ANNUAL CYCLE

Monitoring, accountability and coordination of the use of Administrative Agreement Funds (BAO)

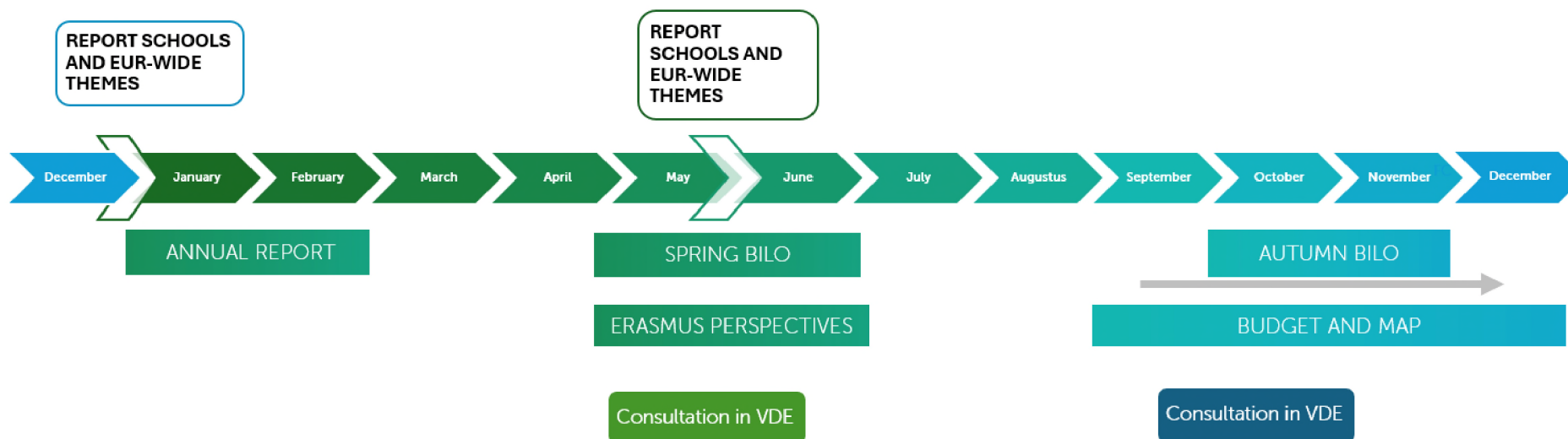


Figure 2. Annual cycle: monitoring, accountability, and coordination of the use of Administrative Agreement funds

4.3 Coordination and involvement of participatory bodies

In the new BAO structure, the participatory bodies formally retain only advisory and consent rights with regard to the main points of the budget. However, at EUR we attach great importance to the close involvement of the participatory bodies in the entire process surrounding the allocation and distribution of these funds.

The participatory bodies must function as a well-supported and informed strategic sparring partner, capable of making proactive contributions and receiving sufficient recognition for their efforts. Participation (by employees and students) must remain an integral part of policy processes and administrative agendas, but must remain independent of the decision-making authority. Efficient and effective cooperation is essential, with clear role descriptions, open dialogue, and room for proactive involvement as guiding principles²⁰.

4.3.1 Participatory bodies: transition from HeQa to BAO

As described earlier, the use of the Quality Agreements (HeQa) was subject to a fairly strict accountability requirement and, as a result, very intensive cooperation with the participatory bodies. Like all universities, EUR had to draw up a quality plan for the use of the funds in collaboration with students and lecturers, which was subject to the approval of the University Council and relevant school councils/participatory bodies. The NVAO assessed these plans and checked whether they met the requirements, with a clear focus on improving education and monitoring and close involvement of the participatory bodies. In addition, there was an obligation to report extensively on the spending each year, with the participatory bodies remaining closely involved in the implementation and monitoring (including through annual reflection by the University Council) of the use of the funds, and the NVAO supervising the process. A task force was set up within our University Council, which made concrete working agreements to shape the approach in co-creation. Similar committees/task forces were also often set up within the schools.

The very close cooperation between the (central and school) participatory bodies and decision-makers during the HeQa period meant that the input and feedback from lecturers and students could be fully incorporated into both the planning and monitoring of progress and the accountability part of the process. Both the original HeQa plan and the mid-term and final evaluations of the use of the Quality Agreements funds were therefore assessed positively by the NVAO.

Although, with the start of the Administrative Agreement period, the (central) participatory bodies formally retained only the right of consent on the main points of the use of these funds, the importance of continued intensive coordination and involvement of participatory bodies in the use of these funds has been emphasized by both the Executive Board and participatory bodies. The aforementioned letter from the Executive Board to the schools (June 2024) about which principles and guidelines would remain unchanged for the use of BAO funds therefore included the following passage:

²⁰ For more information and policy on participatory councils within EUR, see chapter 4.2 of the institutional policy on quality assurance (EUR Institutional Policy on Quality Assurance in Education – ‘Quality Dialogues: Connecting & Improving’).

'Based on the Quality Agreements scheme, the participatory councils (central and school) must give their annual approval for the substantive and financial implementation of the funds. We will base our approach on the quality culture guidelines that form part of Erasmus University's policy. Where possible, we will continue to work in the same way as we did in the 2019-2024 period (HEQA).'

4.4.2. Involvement of the University Council

The implications of the above developments and decision-making for coordination with the University Council were discussed during the regular Taskforce HeQa meetings.²¹ In November 2024, during a Taskforce HeQa meeting, the most important principles for future cooperation between the University Council and internal stakeholders on this issue were discussed. The Taskforce emphasized the importance of both close involvement (in all phases of the cycle) and independence within this cooperation. The central project Strengthening Participatory councils contributed ideas on the framework of the new agreements in line with our Erasmus values and national/policy developments in this area. Specific working arrangements/agreements were then implemented, including the frequency of meetings and a distinction between broader progress updates and smaller, thematic meetings to improve focus and effectiveness.

It was also agreed to extend the HeQa Task Force allowance (linked to the term of the HeQa 2018-2024) until September 2025, so that the current work can be completed properly (also in the context of 2025 as an interim year). The newly formed BAO Task Force started in September 2025. It no longer has special status, but given the desire for close coordination and involvement, it does require more intensive commitment from its members.

Agreements made:

- Involvement must be **timely and sufficient** and, where possible, in line with the consultative role as laid down for HeQa.²² At the same time, account must be taken of the less stringent accountability requirements from NVAO/OCW and the desire to limit administrative pressure.
- In concrete terms, 'timely and sufficient involvement' means that the Task Force contributes ideas and input to the (multi-year) planning process, monitors the progress of the implementation of the plans, and provides input for any interim adjustments.
- The planning and monitoring of the use of resources is coordinated with both the relevant policy advisors/managers (including CLI, the Well-being program, and policy advisors) and the vice-deans of education. Since this year, consultation has taken place with (a delegation of) the vice-deans of education, both for the total mobilization of EUR-wide resources and for the specific deployment of resources on strategic themes.
- The HEQA term 'co-creation' is being abandoned because it sometimes led to differences in interpretation and raised questions about the guarantee of independence (see minutes of TK meeting 9/11/'24).
- Internal coordination between participatory bodies: To ensure consistency and the exchange of best practices, contact between School Councils and U-Council BAO

²¹ This was discussed during the HeQa Task Force meeting on November 9, 2024, among other occasions. This session was facilitated by the Strengthening Participation project management and the secretary of the University Council.

²² The following sentence is included in the Administrative Agreement on Education: *'The continued involvement of the participation bodies in the allocation of these funds is guaranteed. The starting point is timely and sufficient involvement.'*

Task Force takes place at least once a year. In any case, the Chair Meetings organized by the UR are used for this purpose.

4.4.3. Involvement of participatory bodies at school level

Involving School Councils at an early stage in strategic decisions about these investments in educational quality is of great value for meaningful policy and decision-making. The schools themselves must determine how they will involve their participatory bodies in a timely and sufficient manner in the planning, monitoring, and adjustment of the use of school BAO resources so that timely feedback and proactive input can be provided.

For example, consideration could be given to how timely and sufficient involvement of school participation bodies can be ensured within the existing quality cycle. This would alleviate and streamline the more intensive coordination with participation bodies that was customary and necessary during the HeQa period, while still remaining in line with the above agreements.

Specific recommendations/guidelines for involvement:

- **Initial consultation:** School participatory bodies are informed of the principles and strategic frameworks for the use of resources no later than the start of the planning phase. This can take place via a separate session or a regular consultation structure.
- **Formal advice and approval moments:** Clear moments will be established in the planning cycle during which participatory bodies can formally advise and/or approve, in line with their legal powers. Where this was not already the case, the use of BAO funds could be included as a fixed part of the Erasmus Perspectives and budget consultations with the participatory bodies.
- **Interim feedback:** During the implementation of the plans, participatory bodies are involved in discussions about progress and any necessary adjustments. This gives the participatory bodies the opportunity to provide input.
- **Facilitation of involvement:** Schools will ensure sufficient time and resources, such as access to relevant documents and support from policy officers, to enable the participatory bodies to participate in a well-prepared and informed manner

Appendices

Appendix 1 CLI budget

Appendix 2 Student Wellbeing Budget

Appendix 3

Figure 1: Development of governance with regard to the use of quality funds, including tasks, roles, monitoring and evaluation structure, and alignment with the PDCA cycle at the program level

HeQa (2019-2024):

- o School boards claimed funds to strengthen the quality of education via the route of approval by the Executive Board of decentralized project plans. The condition was that plans were drawn up in co-creation with the school participatory bodies and were in line with one or more themes from the EUR-wide quality and innovation agenda.²³
- o CLI played an important role in connecting schools in this process by facilitating mutual learning and collaboration on educational innovation in core themes (including in communities and through exchanges between school Learning & Innovation Teams), teacher development, and educational research.
- o The central strategic programs, also funded by quality funds, focused on the implementation of their own program plans and the (demand-driven) promotion and support of schools in the implementation of innovations in line with these plans, including through the further concretization of visionary elements and the deployment of central L&I officers with specific expertise.
- o Monitoring and evaluation combined a project and program control approach with a focus on financial expenditure and the realization of intended outputs with a broad reflection, in the context of the communities, on the added value of the joint efforts on the theme in question.

BAO (2025 and beyond):

- o Decentralized ownership of the implementation of the plans is strengthened by allocating the resources for improving the quality of education as part of the lump sum to schools within the framework of the agreed distribution model.
- o At the same time, planning is streamlined through the implementation of institution-wide policy frameworks based on the educational vision, within which the development activities of schools and study programs must take shape²⁴
- o Schools define their substantive goals for the use of these resources, structured along a number of (predominantly vision-driven) themes, and report on their progress. This provides visibility at the institutional level of where and how themes are being worked on in the schools and where the opportunities for collaboration and mutual learning lie.
- o Based on this, vice-deans of education jointly determine the work agenda for the new CLI 2.0. The EUR strategy and educational vision are, of course, leading in this regard.
- o In the school reports, the activities are also explicitly linked to one or more study programs, laying the foundation for monitoring the achievement of the development goals for educational quality at the program level.
- o Study programs are asked to embed program-specific goals and reflection on progress in their own PDCA cycle at the program level, for example by including them in their program development plan (or similar system).

²³ The six themes elaborated in the Quality Agreements protocol are also included.

²⁴ Think of issues such as SAY, teacher development, and impact-driven education.