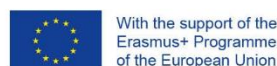


# EUniWell Declaration on Academic Freedom

4 July 2025



## **There can be no well-being without academic freedom**

### **Declaration from the European University for Well-Being**

On 5 May 2025, science in Europe experienced a historic day at the Sorbonne University in Paris, France. We witnessed the launch of the initiative “Choose Europe for Science!” to attract scientific talent to Europe. French President Emmanuel Macron and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen affirmed that research, education and innovation in Europe are free and pursued by free minds, today and in the future. Von der Leyen also expressed the desire to “enshrine freedom of scientific research into law in a new European Research Area Act. Because as threats rise across the world, Europe will not compromise on its principles. Europe must remain the home of academic and scientific freedom.”

With this Declaration, the European University for Well-being (EUniWell), a European University Alliance of 11 member universities, dedicated to research and education on well-being, uncompromisingly professes and reaffirms that freedom of science and scientific values are our steadfast foundation and our compass for everything that we do. Freedom of science “encompasses the right to freely define research questions, choose and develop theories, gather empirical material and employ sound academic research methods, to question accepted wisdom and bring forward new ideas. It entails the right to share, disseminate and publish the results thereof openly, including through training and teaching. It is the freedom of researchers to express their opinion without being disadvantaged by the system in which they work or by governmental or institutional censorship or discrimination.”<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, EUniWell recognises that academic freedom must be exercised with a deep commitment to ethical and responsible research. This commitment includes ensuring integrity, transparency, and accountability in all stages of the research process. It includes respecting the dignity and rights of all participants and promoting sustainability and societal relevance. We believe that true scientific progress arises not only from the liberty to explore but also from a shared responsibility to uphold the highest ethical standards and to contribute meaningfully to the public good.

We recognise the responsibility not only to uphold academic freedom, but also to actively disseminate its underlying values and to embrace it within and beyond the academic community, within and beyond Europe.

As a European University Alliance, EUniWell is flourishing according to the principles of democracy, diversity and inclusion, inter- and transdisciplinarity, research- and challenge-orientation, an entrepreneurial mindset, and co-creation.

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<sup>1</sup> [Bonn Declaration on Freedom of Scientific Research, 2020.](#)

Through research, education, innovation and civic engagement, EUniWell's purpose is to understand, improve, measure and rebalance the well-being of individuals, our own community, our environment and society as a whole at regional, European and global levels. EUniWell is therefore resolutely committed to defending the freedom of science and the openness of research. We are convinced that building the European Research and Education Area is a political, economic, cultural, and hence a democratic necessity.

For while research and education are essential to the development of a strong and sovereign Europe (for example, in order to implement the proposals of the Letta<sup>2</sup> or Draghi<sup>3</sup> reports), they are also both pillars of and the embodiment of democracy. At a time when our society faces major ecological, social, health-related, industrial and democratic challenges, and when false information spreading in social media carries more weight than years of scientific research and education, we need more – and free – science. Without research and education, we deprive ourselves of our ability to describe and objectify our shared reality. Without research and education, we fail to understand people, “more-than-humans”, the world, our environment, and its evolution. Without research and education, we will struggle to imagine and share desirable futures and contribute to peace and the well-being of people and our planet.

By affirming that academic freedom is an imperative, and recalling the 1988 Bologna Magna Charta<sup>4</sup> we are proclaiming that science is not an ideology at the service of a power, we are guaranteeing the freedom of thought for everyone, and we are calling for a model of society and conditions to enable a good life for all – not just the few – under a well-being agenda.

Making Europe the home of academic freedom means demonstrating that Europe is much more than a market and a trade union. It means consolidating the foundations of democracy and advancing well-being for all. This is the Europe we promote, stand for, and defend.

EUniWell fully supports the programme “Choose Europe for Science.” EUniWell will continue to host international scientists who seek a scientific environment characterised by freedom of research, education and innovation, and the core scientific and European values of democracy, diversity and inclusion.

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<sup>2</sup> [Letta, Enrico. 2024. \*Much more than a Market\*.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Draghi, Mario. 2024. \*The future of European competitiveness\*.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [The Magna Charta of European Universities, 1988.](#)