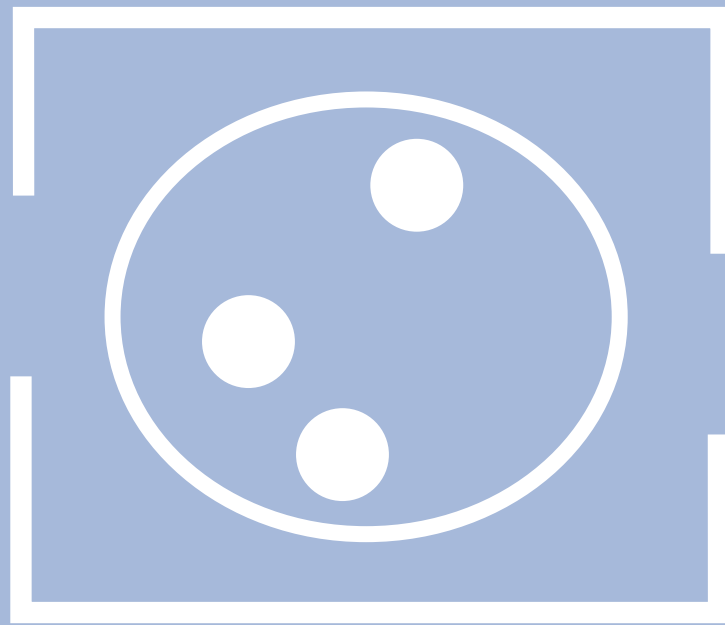
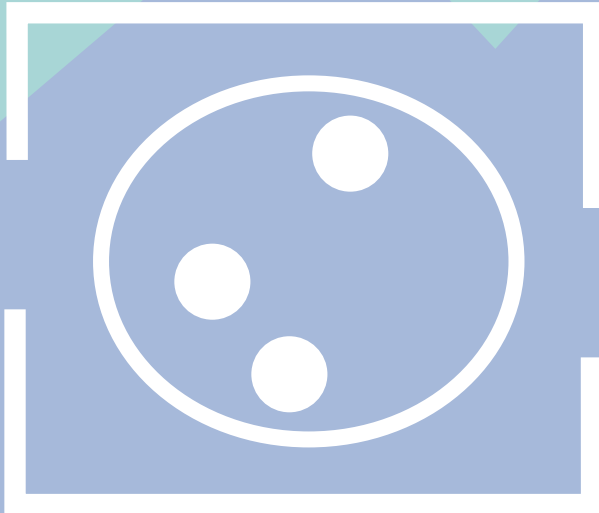


2.

Creating a participative, open, inclusive, and effective European university

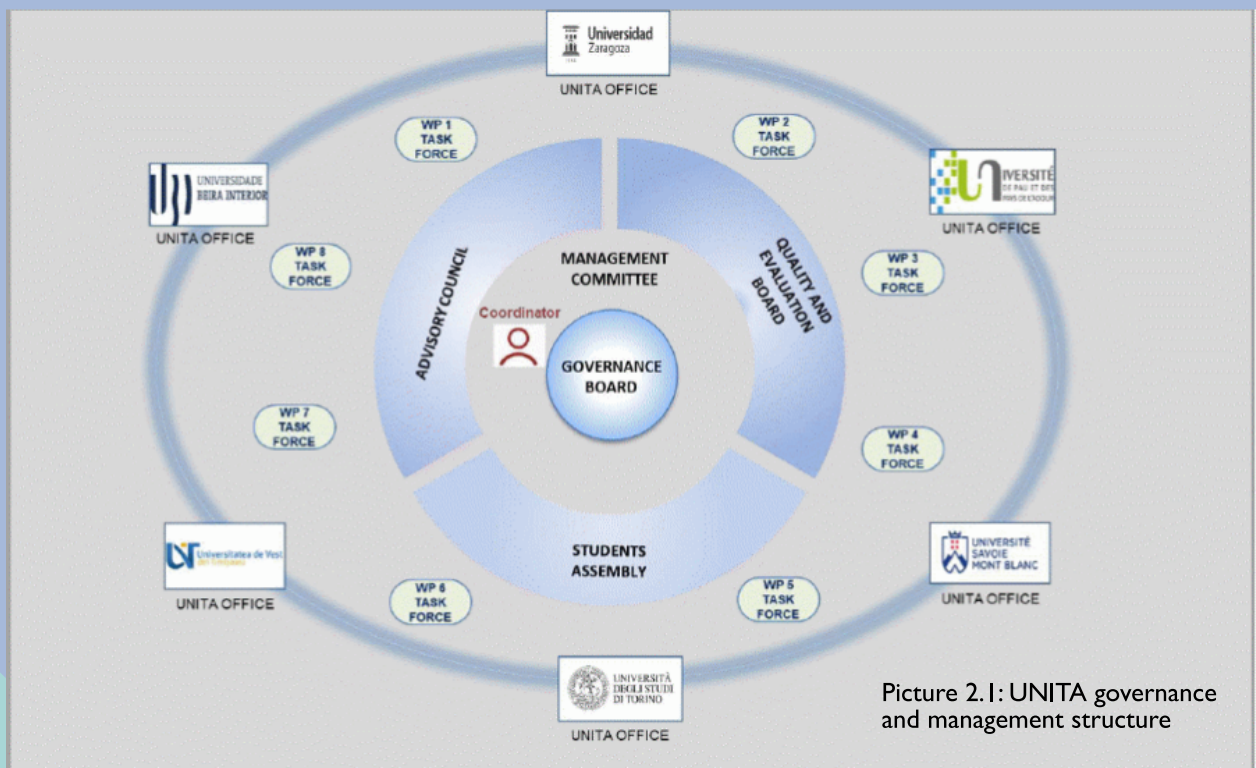




The path to the establishment of an open, inclusive and efficient European university is via the creation of decision-making and operational bodies that work closely together. UNITA is meeting this challenge with participatory governance led by the Governance

Board, the strategic decision-making body responsible for the overall direction of the project, strategic decision-making and the budgetary decisions. Its decisions are based on the reports and recommendations of the Student Assembly, the Advisory Council, the Quality and Evaluation Board, and the Management Committee. Picture 2.1 depicts the interaction among the bodies in our Alliance.

The Management Committee (MC) is the main operational decision-making body, creating links between decisions and actions. It is in charge of the overall coordination for the implementation of the project, operational decision-making and budget compliance. This committee gathers together the representatives of the different Work Packages Task Forces (WPs) and UNITA Offices (UOs) representatives. While WPs are directly responsible of the implementation of the project actions and of the coordination of the different transversal Working Groups, UOs are national coordination teams established with the dual purpose of gathering input from



Picture 2.1: UNITA governance and management structure

local academic communities, and guiding the transformational impact the alliance is having on our universities. The MC works closely with the Advisory Council and the Student Assembly to make proposals, and with the Quality & Evaluation Board to follow the monitoring and thus to quickly take corrective action.

UNITA is for the students, it aims to offer them a whole new catalogue of education, training and research activities using innovative pedagogies. But being for students means making them part of this change. UNITA not only recognizes the importance of students in the educational process and in the restructuring of the higher education area, but also gives them a voice, through the **Student Assembly (SA)**, the self-determined meeting place of our student community. In addition, two student representatives sit on two decision-making bodies, the Governance and the Quality and Evaluation Boards. After fruitful, diverse, long and very profitable meetings of the first students who signed up to be part of the SA, the first appointments took place in a democratic environment, ensuring respect for gender policies and transparency. After this first year, we can proudly say that the SA has written its own Mission Statement with general functioning rules, agreed on a final organization with teams to be built around the Work Packages of the project, participated in conferences and initiatives regarding European Alliances (e.g. Conference on the Future of Europe, FOREU2 Student representative group) and, last but not least, we organised our first physical meeting in November, 2021. This first encounter strengthened our ties as a community and help us develop greater strategies around recruitment policies and how we will build our teams to be effective for students but also useful for the workforce.

The Advisory Council (AC) is the think tank of our Alliance, based on the challenge approach. It is in charge of leading collective intelligence workshops and thinking outside the box. With the mission of providing added value to UNITA's objectives, it is composed of a large pool of various types of UNITA actors, such as the Associated Partners (private sector, NGOs, federations, local authorities), university staff (Professors, Researchers, Administrators), and students. It meets at least twice a year: the AC met for the first time in a workshop from April to June 2021, focusing on the role that inter-comprehension and multilingualism can play in the working environment of our Associated Partners, while the second meeting, held on 18th November 2021, focused on discussing the design and implementation of internships in the different UNITA settings. The AC organises regular challenge workshops (every 6 months or on request if specific issues arise).

The Quality and Evaluation Board (QEB) is in charge of ensuring transparency, mission statement & indicator monitoring in terms of Quality, and evaluation of implementation and budget monitoring. It is a source of proposals regarding continuous improvement. The QEB has defined Guidelines for benchmarking UNITA's Quality Assurance, the current guidelines in the Alliance universities and ENQA's recommendations.

The Governance Board (GB) met four times since the kick-off of UNITA on November 6th 2020, in which Stefano Geuna was unanimously designated as President of the GB for the 1st year. The meetings were held in February and April online and in July and September face-to-face. In the first meeting the GB recognized the importance of enlarging the network of

collaborations for our Alliance. To this purpose, the rules of involvement of new Associated Partners (APs) and of University Associated Partners (UAPs) not involved in other alliances were approved. In the same occasion, the GB approved the involvement of the first two UAP: University of Brescia and University of Roma Tre.

An important discussion that took place in the second meeting focused on the financial sustainability of the Alliance beyond Erasmus Plus Horizon, in view of our ultimate goal of a financially sustainable European University. This financial sustainability has to be pursued also through networking and monitoring among partners of all complementary/dissemination activities/initiatives (defined as UNITA Constellation) that can result from the alliance and be eligible for EU or international funding.

During the third GB meeting, the decision on the expansion of the Alliance to new UAPs that share the same values and characteristics, such as the location of rural and cross-border mountain regions and romance languages, was on the table. The discussion followed the main inputs received during the consultation meet-

ings with the Commission on the expansion of the Alliances, in order to support the idea of the extension of the HEIs to new university partners and within the objective of strengthening the alliance. The GB approved the expansion to a final composition of 2 partners for each current Country, reaching the number of 10 Universities as part of the UNITA Alliance.

This decision led, at the fourth meeting, to the inclusion as UAPs, with the perspective of becoming members of UNITA in the next phase, of the Universidad Publica de Navarra (Spain), the Transylvania University of Brasov (Romania), the Università degli Studi di Brescia (Italy), and the Instituto Politecnico da Guarda (Portugal).

The sustainability strategy of UNITA alliance gave interesting results in our first year: the Alliance successfully proposed the projects Re-UNITA under the Horizon action Science with and for Society, INNOUNITA under the EIT call Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education, and CONNECT-UNITA under the Erasmus+ action Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education.



Picture 2.2: 22-24 September 2021 GB in Pau