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ON



ANNUAL REPORT



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FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to report on a creative and inspiring year of activities as the COPERNICUS Alliance's new Leadership Team. Supported by the previous Leadership Team – who continuously provided information about significant links, events, and strategic matters along the year – and by a very helpful Advisory Board, we succeeded in launching a new Action Plan, new types of events, and new forms of communication. We also enjoyed engaging with our members, some of whom joined us as new members in the course of the present year.



We are grateful to our organizations – the University of Bern and the University of Girona – for hosting the Presidency and Executive Office of the CA. We realized after three months of operations, however, that we would not be able to run activities as planned in the ambitious new Action Plan without devoting a significant amount of the budget to consistent and enhanced network management. Luckily, Mario Diethart agreed to take on the responsibility of the CA Network Manager. In addition to administering the CA's finances, he is now running the CA website and the conference websites, he organized the new e-conferencing format, is administering membership and Advisory Board files, coordinating communication and newsletters, preparing all CA documents, and generally supporting the Leadership Team in all activities. This has enabled us to maintain the pace of our activities and we'd like to extend a big thank you to Mario for his continuous and creative support.



Our term of operations started with a wonderfully inspiring event in Girona, Spain, in January 2019: Ingrid organized a three-day "Vision-and-Action Workshop" to develop a revamped Vision and Strategy for the CA together with member representatives and launch new partnerships. Based on the workshop results we developed an Action Plan and asked our Advisory Board and members to comment on it; the Action Plan was finalized in July. We also refreshed the CA website and the newsletter – introducing new formats, in particular the "CA Conversations" series – and launched the CA's first e-conference, entitled "Reaching out for the stars: Consolidating the HESD constellation". This has undoubtedly been the highlight of the year, also in terms of international impact. In May Anne had an opportunity to present the CA to a French-speaking audience on the occasion of a major UNITWIN-UNESCO ESD Chair conference, leading to a first CA (individual) membership from France.

We are currently working with members on a COST Action proposal and preparing the next CA conference – entitled "Higher Education Summit 2020: How can we assure quality and transformative learning for sustainable development?" – which aims to get different communities together, foster creative listening, and spark new inspirations for transformation of higher education. We look forward to meeting you in Bern!

Dr. Anne Zimmermann, President & Dr. Ingrid Mulà, Executive Director

1. OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision

“The COPERNICUS Alliance will be the leading European network helping people and institutions in a higher education environment to creatively address the challenges of tomorrow in a collaborative way, to jointly build the knowledge and competences needed for global sustainable development, and to actively engage with policy-makers and community stakeholders.”

Mission

The COPERNICUS Alliance (CA) aims to enable European higher education institutions and their partners to jointly identify challenges in higher education for sustainable development (HESD) and spearhead development of processes, tools, and knowledge to address these challenges from a whole-institution perspective. The CA provides a platform and organizes events where its current and future members can share resources and co-develop innovative education for sustainable development initiatives. It provides Micro Funds for members’ networking efforts and supports joint HESD proposals through advice and alliances. The CA also promotes engagement with policy-makers and community stakeholders at the European and global levels and regularly celebrates members’ ambassador activities. The CA resolutely commits to reducing the ecological footprint of its activities.



Values

Respect, commitment, and collaboration are deemed the highest values of the CA.

- **Respect** underpins members’ interactions and collaboration. Our members greatly appreciate the diversity of the CA community and the inspiration they get from exchanging.
- **CA members commit to walk the talk**, guided by a holistic perspective of HESD and the Agenda 2030. This commitment is supported by the possibility of exchanging with other people and institutions, and engaging in common activities.
- **Collaboration** is the mode of work of the CA community, who shares knowledge and resources, seeks to increase the impact of their work together, and find common solutions and funding for projects.

2. MANAGEMENT

2.1. Leadership Team

The COPERNICUS Alliance has a rotating Secretariat and Leadership Team. As of 1 January 2019, Dr. Anne Zimmermann (University of Bern) and Dr. Ingrid Mulà (University of Girona) assumed their roles as President and Executive Director, both with terms of two years. The latter replaces the former position of the Vice-President. In addition, a Network Manager (Mario Diethart, University of Graz) is responsible for communication, administrative and financial issues.



2.2. Advisory Board

The Advisory Board members are elected for a period of four years by the CA members. They can be *member representatives*, *student representatives* or assume an *extended advisory board role*. The current members are:

- ✦ **Prof. Matthias Barth** Member representative
Professor for Education for Sustainable Development, Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Germany
- ✦ **Prof. Kim Ceulemans, PhD** Extended Advisory Board Role
Assistant Professor, Department of Control, Accounting and Auditing at Toulouse Business School, France
- ✦ **Dr. Jana Dlouhá** Member representative
Researcher at Charles University Environment Centre and former CA Vice-President, Czech Republic
- ✦ **Prof. Miren Onanindía** Member representative
Professor on Ecology at University of the Basque Country, Spain
- ✦ **Prof. Doris Wastl-Walter** Member representative
Professor of Human Geography and former Vice-Rector for Quality, University of Bern, Switzerland



3. ACTIVITIES & INITIATIVES

In the CA Action Plan 2019-2020 five priorities were identified that characterise the CA's unique strengths and important areas of action. The first two are thematic priorities (Goals 1 and 2), the third epitomises the CA's mode of operation and commitment to sharing resources and learning (Goal 3), the fourth confirms the CA's involvement in European and global policy work (Goal 4), and the fifth characterises the CA's operational needs as a learning organisation (Goal 5):



For each of the **five strategic goals**, actions were defined along with indicators to measure them. We report below on the activities and initiatives organized in relation to the above-mentioned goals throughout the year 2019.

CA Vision-and-Action Workshop



Goals 1, 5



31 January – 1 February 2019



Girona



16 persons

CA members and friends met near Girona to envision the future of the network. The two-day event was organized by the University of Girona. It was instrumental to identify key priorities for the CA and develop the network's Action Plan for 2019-2020. The meeting was attended by colleagues from

Charles University Environment Center, Ecocampus – Flemish Ministry of Environment, Nature and Energy, Connex – Université Libre de Bruxelles, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Rectors' Conference of Spanish Universities (CRUE), Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in Andorra, University of Tallin, University of Hamburg, University of Lüneburg, Camilo José Cela University, SAPIRR, University of Bern, University of Graz, and University of Girona.

CA Online Conference 2019: “Reaching out for the Stars: Consolidating the HESD Constellation”



Goals 1, 2, 3, 5



9 – 11 September 2019



online



80 persons



30 countries from 5 continents



0 € (3,000 € mandate from CDE, University of Bern, and in-kind contributions from all participants and the University of Bern)

In line with our ambition to reduce CO₂ emissions, the CA hosted its first online conference this year. It focused on the following topics: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT, TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING, LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, and ASSESSMENT.

The event attracted over 80 participants from 30 countries and was hosted at the University of Bern. The program offered different formats including sessions with "thought provokers", who uploaded brief videos ahead of the conference, "next practice" sessions where the audience learned about innovative approaches in Germany, Spain, Belgium, and the West Indies, and "co-creation labs" where participants worked together on different topics in small self-organized groups.

Feedback from participants was unanimously positive and all those who participated in the post-conference survey agreed that it would be good to alternate in future between one online CA Annual Conference and one face-to-face event. Guidelines for online conferencing were produced and a brief article was submitted to GAIA for the February 2020 issue, summarizing the challenges and innovative aspects of the event.

The Leadership Team would like to thank all contributors – in particular our thought provokers: Marta Fonolleda, Bonnie McBain, Marilyn Mehlmann, Geoff Scott and Daniella Tilbury – for contributing to this experiment on an entirely voluntary basis, and for their excellent contributions. The thought-provokers' videos will remain accessible on the CA's website in future.

Micro Funds



Goal 5



4 supported initiatives



9 member institutions involved



3,911 €

The CA aims to invest in members' activities by putting part of its annual budget aside to fund members' initiatives. Activities that contribute to the overall CA ambition to build capacity in higher education for sustainable development can be supported with up to 1,000 EUR.

In 2019, four activities were supported with CA Micro Funds (another one has been granted for 2020):

- **Research on connections between sustainability competences and pedagogical approaches**
January – June 2019
Participating CA members: University of Gävle, Autonomous University of Madrid
- **Workshop on universities and the Sustainable Development Goals**
11 September 2019
Participating CA members: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna, University of Hamburg, University of Zurich
- **Seminar about environmental and social footprint of universities**
9 October 2019
Participating CA members: University of the Basque Country, CRUE (Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities)
- **Multiplier event of "Education for Zero Waste and Circular Economy" project**
24 October 2019
Participating CA members: University of Maribor, University of Warsaw

CA Conversations



Goals 1, 3, 5



3 interviews

The newly introduced series "A conversation with..." puts CA members and their activities in the spotlight. In 2019 we published three interviews in our newsletters and on the CA website.

CA website and newsletter



Goal 5



34 website news entries



20,420 website views by 4,781 users



6 newsletters

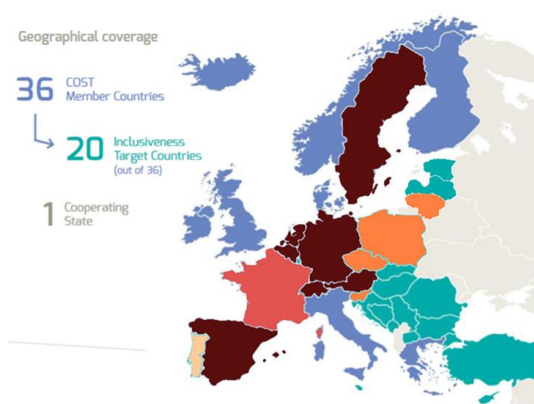


305 newsletter recipients (+77)

The CA website and the CA newsletter were redesigned and restructured in 2019. Besides general information about the network and its activities, the CA website now promotes members' activities more actively on the starting page.

The CA newsletter informs around 300 subscribers about CA initiatives, members' activities, as well as ongoing developments in the area of HESD. We introduced new formats such as the CA conversations and special editions of the newsletter to strengthen the bonds between CA members and provide greater visibility to innovative HESD initiatives.

COST Action



Goal 2, 5



7 online meetings



10 countries to date



16 institutions or individual members

Using the opportunity of offering a co-creation lab during the e-conference in September, the CA Leadership Team launched discussions with members and potential members on the possibility of submitting a joint proposal for a COST Action. Subsequent online meetings have led to a nucleus of engaged potential partners who have committed to preparing a proposal by April 2020. Further members are encouraged to join the COST action, which will focus on assessment for transformative learning, possibly adding a work package on quality assurance.

Outreach activities



Goals 4, 5



Participation in 2 international events











Contacts with 4 new organisations in Switzerland





The CA continues to engage with outreach activities. An important event attended by CA President Anne

Zimmermann was the 3rd Conference of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chair, focusing on “Education for Sustainable Development: A Transition Lever for our Societies” (27-29 May 2019, Bordeaux, France). The CA also delegated former CA Vice-President Jana Dlouhá to represent the CA at the annual meeting of the UBUNTU Committee of Peers for Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development, which took place in Japan.

The Leadership Team has networked in Spain with key organisations such as GUNi and CRUE, and with several leading Swiss sustainability-oriented organizations (saguf, td-net, swissacademies, Centre interdisciplinaire de durabilité de l’UniL) in the context of preparing the upcoming Higher Education Summit 2020. The CA has also renewed its membership with IAU and GUPES (which is now YEA!). Former CA President Clemens Mader is maintaining contact with UNESCO.

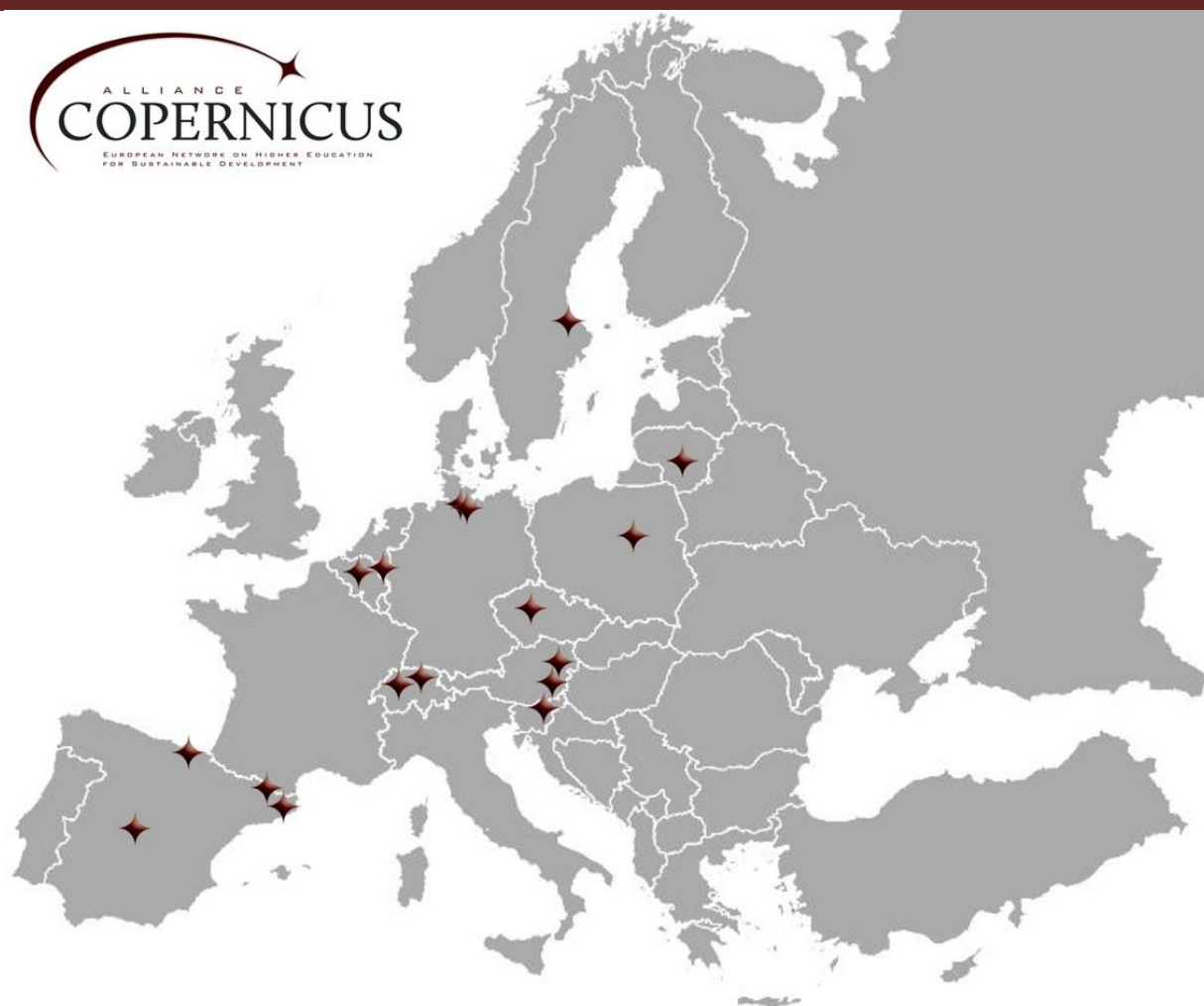
4. MEMBERSHIP

Members in 2019 according to membership type and change to 2018			
Institutional Members	Trial Members	HE NGOs, Associations & Agencies	Observers & Individual Members
 	 	 	 
15 +1	2 +2	2 ±0	5 +4

Members in 2019			
			
Vienna University of Economics and Business	Austria	Institutional Member	2010
University of Graz	Austria	Institutional Member	2010
Leuphana University of Lüneburg	Germany	Institutional Member	2010
Open University in the Netherlands	Netherlands	Institutional Member	2010
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna	Austria	Institutional Member	2012
Charles University Environment Centre	Czech Republic	Institutional Member	2012
CRUE (Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities)	Spain	NGO	2012
University of Basque Country	Spain	Institutional Member	2013
The University of Warsaw	Poland	Institutional Member	2014
University of Hamburg	Germany	Institutional Member	2015
University of Zurich	Switzerland	Institutional Member	2015
University of Maribor	Slovenia	Institutional Member	2016
University of Bern	Switzerland	Institutional Member	2016
University of Girona	Spain	Institutional Member	2017
University of Gävle	Sweden	Institutional Member	2017

Autonomous University of Madrid	Spain	Institutional Member	2019
KU Leuven	Belgium	Institutional Trial Member	2019
Kaunas University of Technology	Lithuania	Institutional Trial Member	2019
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education of Andorra (AQUA)	Andorra	Governmental Agency	2019
Individual Researchers	2 Belgium 2 France 1 Ireland	Individual Member	

Location of the 19 Institutional Members in 2019



5. FINANCES






The CA is officially acknowledged as an NGO under German law. Its finances and accounting are assessed on a regular basis by the tax authority of Lüneburg, Germany. They approve the status of CA as a Non-Profit Organisation serving society with a research and science purpose.

The figure below provides an overview of the CA's finances. The CA's **income** consists exclusively of membership fees. In 2019, the membership fees contributed € 17,900.00 (from 24 member institutions/members) to the annual budget.

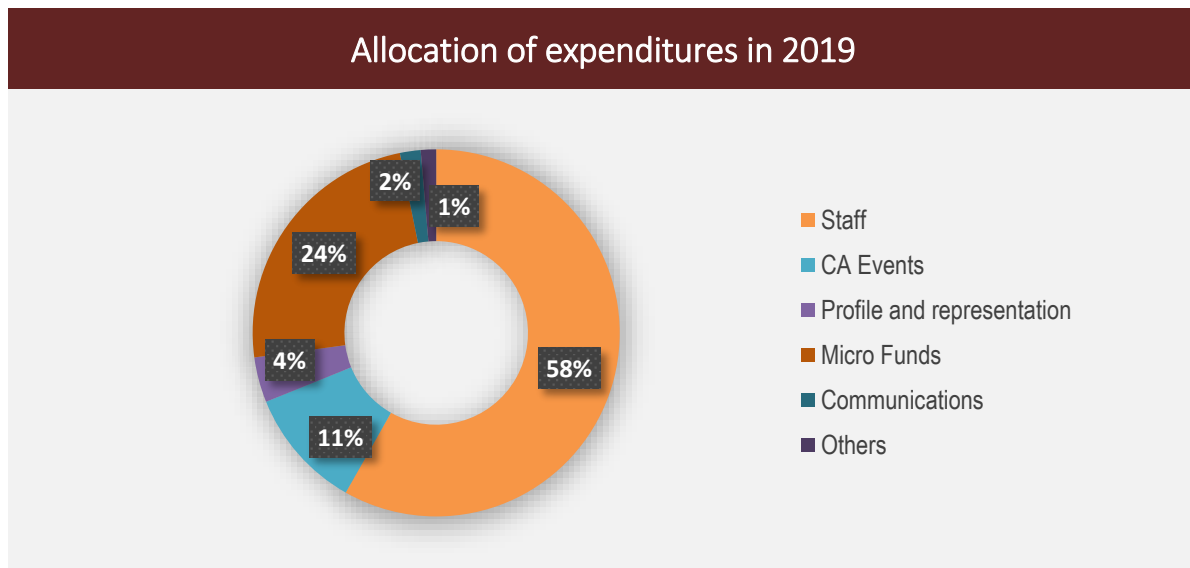
Expenditures in 2019 relate to staff (Network Manager), events, Micro Funds, communications, profile and representation (includes memberships, travel, subsistence and fees to participate in important events where the CA has profiled its work and activities). The CA Online Conference was hosted by the University of Bern, which covered all the expenses of the hosting team.

In addition, an important part of the workload is covered by in-kind contributions of the whole CA Leadership Team.

The year 2019 closed with a positive balance of € 1,579.05 resulting in a total account balance of € 14,906.55 at the end of 2019.

Finances in 2019 (in €)		
		
	Membership fees	
	15 Institutional Members	15,000.00
	2 Institutional Trial Members	1,200.00
	2 HE NGOs, Associations & Agencies	1,200.00
	5 Individual Members	500.00
		17,900.00
		
	9,500.00	Staff
	1,742.03	CA Events
		Action and Vision Workshop Girona
	650.00	Profile and representation
		incl. membership in IAU
	3,911.31	Micro Funds
	297.14	Communications
	220.47	Others
	16,320.95	
	1,579.05	Balance 2019
	13,327.50	Carried forward from 2018
	14,906.55	TOTAL BALANCE

As the figure below shows, in 2019, staff costs comprised the largest part of expenditures. About one quarter was spent for Micro Funds. Only a small percentage went into CA Events, which is due to generous in-kind contributions from the University of Girona for the Vision-and-Action Workshop and from the University of Bern for the CA Online Conference.



COPERNICUS ALLIANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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