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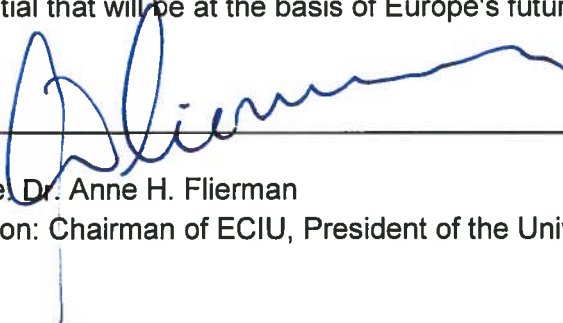
The only way out: investing in knowledge & innovation for a stronger Europe

Negotiations on the EU-budget for 2014-2020 are entering a crucial phase. The European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) calls on the European Heads of State to uphold the proposed budgets for Horizon 2020 and Erasmus for All.

The persisting financial crisis forces all levels of governments to scrutinize expenditures, yet invest strategically in opportunities to emerge from the crisis. Member States of the European Union have adopted the European Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, laid down in the Europe 2020 strategy and underlying Flagship Initiatives, as the European strategy to emerge from the crisis. Strengthening the knowledge-based economy lies at the very heart in this strategy: Europe can only emerge from the crisis as a stronger economic player if we deploy our full innovation potential.

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities considers the upcoming months of European negotiations to be crucial for the future of a healthy European economy. We are at a turning point in policy making, where the moment has come to face the future together and live up to the expectations that we created with the Europe 2020 strategy. Not only the European society, but the whole world is looking at the decision makers in Europe to take this opportunity to rebuild trust in the European system by opening up the road to a true Innovation Union.

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities urges the European Union and Member State representatives to take the responsibilities laid down in the Europe 2020 strategy and at least maintain the proposed 100 billion euros investment in the core framework programmes for a strong knowledge economy: Horizon 2020 (80 billion euros) and Erasmus for All (19 billion euros). Both programmes are fundamental to generate the science & technology, human capital and innovation potential that will be at the basis of Europe's future.



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The European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU)

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities was founded in 1997. Its 14 member universities are united by a common profile, by shared beliefs and interests, and mutual trust. ECIU maintains the profile of a network of universities that are relatively young, entrepreneurial, and progressive and have close ties with industry and the region where they are situated. The ECIU universities all have academic strengths in engineering and social sciences; also life science and humanities are strongly represented within ECIU. The partners are very committed to developing and implementing new forms of teaching, training and research, to assuring an innovative culture within their walls, to experimenting with new forms of management and administration, and to supporting and nurturing internationally-minded staff. The ECIU member universities are strongly committed to the development of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area. They support the goals of the EU 2020 Agenda and wish to contribute to its success through their individual and joint activities.

