

ERASMUS + European Universities

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MICRO-CREDENTIALS WITHIN 4EU+ ALLIANCE



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SUMMARY

Through our commitment to offering a variety of innovative academic activities, the 4EU+ Alliance strives to engage a broad range of learners and provide them with skills needed to respond to major challenges of the 21st century in Europe and globally. This concept paper explores the implementation and strategic importance of research-based micro-credentials within the framework of the Alliance, addressing efforts to ensure their quality and topical relevance as well as their connection with degree programmes, professional development, and the broader educational ecosystem.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The 4EU+ Alliance recognizes our responsibilities as individual institutions as well as a united Alliance of providing research-based education and lifelong learning opportunities to the benefit of individual learners and European society. This includes the students enrolled at our institutions, visiting students studying at our institutions, as well as working professionals who need professional up-skilling or re-skilling. Through our commitment to offering a variety of academic programmes, courses, seminars and knowledge-sharing activities, we strive to engage a broad range of learners and provide them with skills needed to respond to major challenges of the 21st century in Europe and globally.

The 4EU+ institutions provide excellent research and teaching. In the evolving landscape of global education, the 4EU+ Alliance recognizes the critical need to adapt and innovate in its educational offerings to respond faster to the need for sharing our latest research, better meet the demands of the individual learner, the modern labour market, and societal needs. This concept paper explores the implementation and strategic importance of research-based micro-credentials within the framework of the Alliance, addressing efforts to ensure their quality and topical relevance as well as their connection with degree programmes, professional development, and the broader educational ecosystem.

The concept paper has a particular focus on course offerings for working professionals as a mapping of activities and approaches within the respective institutions of the Alliance has shown that this area is handled quite differently and with different weights and resources available¹. Consequently, and to ensure a solid foundation for the development of the 4EU+ Professional Learning Academy, the Alliance in the form of task group 4.1² has seen the need for working strategically with shared approaches and models which can be used for the development of individual offerings as well as for the development of stackable micro-credentials for working professionals.

¹ Cf. mapping done under the 4EU+ EUP1 project

² Under the 4EU+ iCORE WP4 “4EU+ at the service of European society”, task 4.1 addresses the development of a 4EU+ Professional Learning Academy



The concept paper is a further development of the 4EU+ Position Paper on Micro-Credentials issued in November 2022 in which the Alliance outlined key considerations that were in alignment with guidance provided by the EU Commission in its publications on the topic. The Position Paper on Micro-Credentials is publicly available from the 4EU+ website.

1.1 4EU+ Professional learning academy

The 4EU+ Professional Learning Academy, currently under development, is envisioned as a virtual academy for continuous education, including the offering of micro-credentials for working professionals. It will be founded on a set of shared administrative 4EU+ models and approaches, as described in this document, which facilitate, impel and strengthen collaboration across the Alliance regarding continuous education. It will have a designated place on the 4EU+ website where potential learners and partners for collaboration can see and access the different learning options³. Hence the intention is to

- Make it easier for administrative and academic staff to engage in joint course development for professionals, e.g. development of micro-credentials
- Ensure clear agreements on quality assurance, distribution of tasks and resources in joint collaborations
- Have a shared branding platform which will make the lifelong learning offerings visible and accessible to potential partners and course participants

2. Understanding micro-credentials in 4EU+

2.1 Flexible components in degree programmes

While the fast-changing needs of the labour market and society in general call for a high level of flexibility and fast adaptability in skills and competencies of the workforce, 4EU+ remains committed to believing in the high value of providing our graduates with solid core knowledge and competencies within their academic fields. Hence, the Alliance affirms its commitment to the traditional structures of formal higher education that lead to full academic degrees. 4EU+ does not see micro-credentials as replacements for degrees but as enhancements of our degree

³ 4EU+ bachelor, master and Ph.D. students access their course offerings through the Student Portal



programmes. They are envisaged as flexible, credit-bearing learning components within our degree programmes to create cross-disciplinary pathways or provide complimentary or deepening, transferable skills that are both in demand by employers and beneficial for societal and personal development⁴.

Being small, concluded units of learning, micro-credentials are also seen by 4EU+ as possible “forerunners” for new learning which will subsequently be adopted into the curricula of our degree courses and recognized as part of the core competencies developed through the respective programmes. This integrational process, reflecting the natural development of core curricula over time, can lead to the unit no longer being offered as a micro-credential, giving room for the Alliance to develop new, “pioneering”, micro-credentials.

The offerings of credentials will thus develop over time to maintain a timely focus on skills and competencies that are directly relevant to evolving societal and industry needs. They will respond to the internal ambition of the Alliance of making our latest research-based knowledge available to learners, as well as to the external need of European society to benefit from the application of the latest skills and knowledge to solve pressing issues and challenges. For the individual learner, the approach not only enhances their employability but also meets the professional aspirations of students and professionals seeking to stand out in competitive job markets and to make significant contributions to society.

2.2 Time-sensitive, professional up-skilling and re-skilling

For working professionals, the 4EU+ micro-credentials are strategic instruments for continuous research-based learning, aimed at keeping skills relevant in a rapidly changing world.

The short, intensive learning components are designed to provide flexibility, enabling individuals to update their skills or acquire new ones without extended absences from their workplaces. This aspect of micro-credentials is essential for lifelong learning and career development. It also addresses employers’ challenge of keeping employees up to date while managing limited resources for extended leave.

⁴ As set out in the 4EU+ Position Paper on Micro-credentials published in November 2022, A 4EU+ micro-credential is characterized by being trans-disciplinary and fostering practical, transferrable skills



Furthermore, 4EU+ micro-credentials provide professionals with formal training and credentials from renowned institutions which can be shared with current and future employers, and which can possibly be combined with other courses to constitute a continuous, research-based, professional learning path. Recognizing that ECTS may not carry the same relevance outside of higher education and that national regulation may limit the awarding of additional ECTS beyond those required for completion of a degree program, it is within each institutions decision-making power whether to award ECTS for the completion of a micro-credential designed for working professionals.

Hence, in the view of 4EU+, the value of micro-credentials lies in the possibility to supplement and enhance the core competencies of our graduates attained through our established bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes through short, intensive volumes of credit-bearing learning, and provide formal, targeted, flexible and time-sensitive up-skilling and re-skilling for working professionals that match labour market needs. Micro-credentials can be used to supplement other tools in the development of core curricula and work as frontrunners in the dissemination and implementation of our latest research.

3. Strategic development of micro-credentials in 4EU+

3.1 Strategic and labour market alignment

Through our development of educational offerings, including micro-credentials, the Alliance wishes to foster and enhance joint graduate skills, competencies and values, which will correspond to the profile of a 4EU+ graduate⁵. These include:

1. Multi-lingualism
2. Critical thinking
3. Data literacy
4. Social engagement

⁵ Cf. [4EU+ Mission Statement, issued 2019](#)



5. Entrepreneurship

At the same time, the design and development of micro-credentials by the 4EU+ Alliance are closely aligned with labour market demands. This practical focus ensures that the educational offerings are not only relevant but also responsive to the specific skills sought by employers today. Priority is given to areas fostering transversal skills like data literacy or entrepreneurship, which are in demand and directly contribute to employability, but also aligned with the 4EU+ graduate profile.

3.2 Course development template

To ensure that the micro-credentials and other lifelong learning courses developed by 4EU+ are relevant, and target relevant segments of potential learners, the Alliance works from a template for course development. The template is primarily focused on courses for working professionals and used as a tool in the 4EU+ Professional Learning Academy but may also be adapted to be relevant in connection with the development of courses for students. The template takes the possibility of creating courses with fees for professional learners into consideration. This is important as charging fees for these types of courses is a legal requirement in some countries; e.g. Switzerland. It addresses the following themes⁶:

Each headline has a number of questions to be considered.

- Value Propositions
- Key Activities
- Formats
- Customer Segments
- Market Channels
- Revenue Streams
- Key resources / Partnerships
- Costs

Value Propositions

⁶ The model is a variation of the Business Model Canvas released under Creative Commons license. See more under Strategyzer.com



What problems do we seek to solve with the course?

What topics and skill upgrades will satisfy the learner's needs?

Are we delivering new skills or improving existing skills?

What are the key value aspects of the course offering?

Key Activities

What type of learning environment are we creating? Networking opportunities? Matchmaking? Software?

Do we provide platform opportunities? Are we on-site?

What type of services are needed?

Are we delivering new skills or improving existing skills?

Formats

Which format suits and supports the intended learning outcomes?

Would creating a micro-credential add value?

One course or more; if so, how do they relate to each other?

Customer Segments

For whom are we creating value? What are the topics most relevant to them?

What is the nature of the customer segments: Mass market (e.g. MOOCS), niche market, segmented (segments with slightly different needs), multi-sides (two or more segments with interdependent needs)?



Do customer needs require and justify a distinct course offer? Are customers willing to pay for the skills upgrade?

What is the segment's profitability?

Market Channels

How do we reach our customer segments? Through which channels: University websites, email campaigns, online marketing, word of mouth, partners, telemarketing etc.

What are the costs of recruiting course participants through each channel?

Do some channels lead to lower margins?

Revenue Streams

For what value are our learners willing to pay? What do they currently pay (competition)?

What are the revenue streams in relation to courses?

Key Resources/ Partnerships

Who are key suppliers/partners to a course idea? Is there willingness to participate? Is it possible to form partnerships with relevant resources outside the university?

Which key resources are we acquiring from partners?

Which key activities do partners perform?

How do we make sure partners/suppliers are committed to course implementation?

Costs

What are the costs related to market and implement a course idea?



Is the course based on cost-driven model or value-driven model? Cost-driven courses are focusing on minimizing costs when it is possible. Value-driven courses are focusing on creating value through custom courses, premium value.

While the option of charging fees can be included in the business model for professional learners, 4EU+ recognises that the development of micro-credentials for students will need to be integrated in the design of curricula to ensure the financial sustainability of the courses and costs associated with the courses. Still, questions from the template above are of relevance in developing micro-credentials for students to ensure their match with student interest, the 4EU+ graduate profile and labour market needs; that learning outcomes, key activities and course mode are aligned, and key stakeholders are engaged. The template can hence supplement other tools such as ABC LD @4EU+ tool for course development.⁷

The template is used for both individual courses and stackable micro-credentials. When designing a course, it is relevant to consider whether the content and learning objectives are suitable for developing a micro-credential – does this format add value? And if so, how are the learning modules inter-connected to serve the learning outcomes.

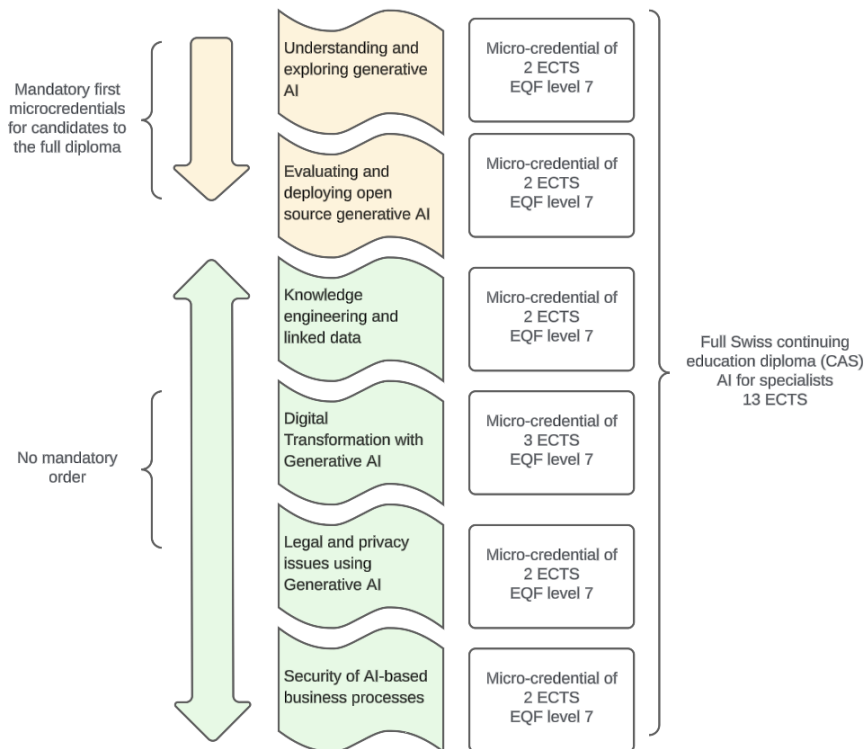
3.3 Modulization

In regard to stackability of micro-credentials, 4EU+ works with two overall approaches of vertical and horizontal stacking. The two ways provide different learning pathways. The models shown in the graphics below build on examples and experiences from the University of Geneva.

Vertical stacking involves progressing through a series of courses that build upon each other in an incremental way, leading to more advanced qualifications or comprehensive skills in a specific field.

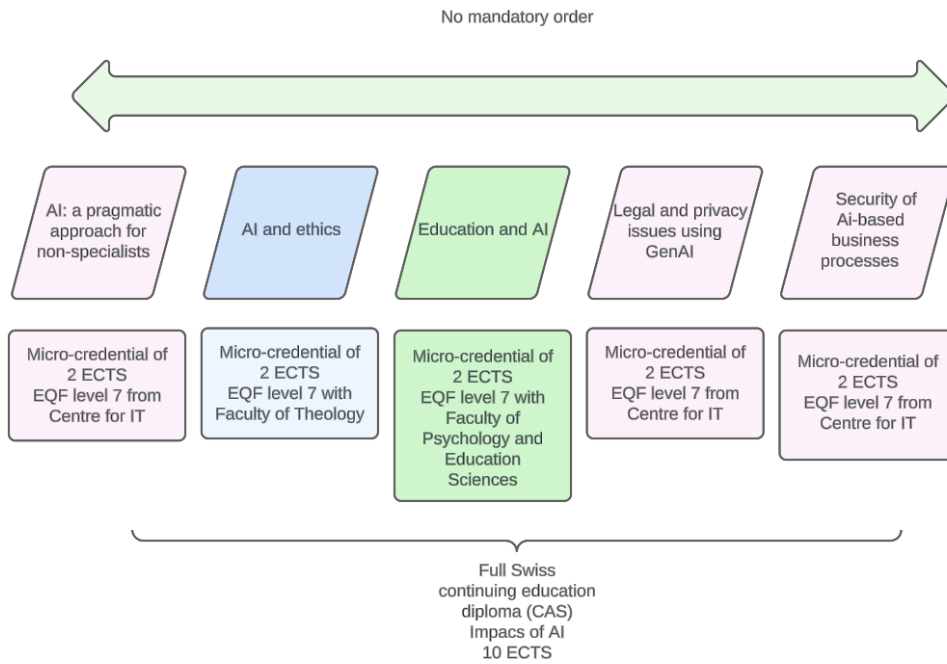
⁷ [ABC-LD @4EU+ workshop \(4euplus.eu\)](https://www.4euplus.eu/workshop-abc-ld@4eu/)





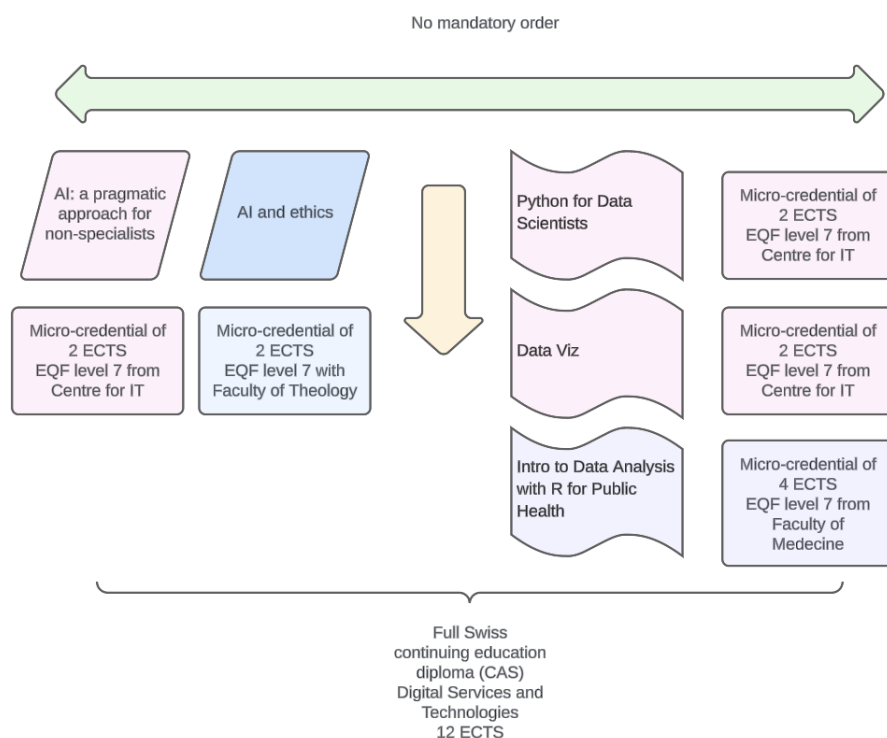
Horizontal stacking involves accumulating courses across different but interrelated disciplines or areas of expertise, allowing for a broader skill-set or interdisciplinary knowledge.





Finally, the Alliance may also work with a third approach which is a combination of the two: The learner accumulates courses across different or interrelated disciplines to get at broad set of skills, but they also “go vertical” in one or more of the disciplines to gain more specialized skills and competencies in that specific area.





Micro-credentials offer a unique opportunity to develop flexible learning pathways that can accommodate both vertical and horizontal learning stacks. This allows learners to build expertise in specific areas while also broadening their skill set across disciplines. For example, a student or professional might pursue vertical micro-credentials in a specialized area such as data analytics, while also engaging with horizontal credentials that promote critical thinking or sustainability, both of which are crucial to the modern workforce.

3.4 Portability

4EU+ recognises that micro-credentials are owned by the credential-holder (the learner). The Alliance will explore possibilities of supporting that micro-credentials are stored and shared easily by the credential-holder, including through secure digital wallets, in line with the General Data Protection Regulation. 4EU+ believes that the infrastructure for storing data should be based on open standards and data models to ensure interoperability, seamless exchange of data, and allow for easy verification of data authenticity.



4. Collaborative ecosystems

4.1 Stakeholder co-construction and ecosystems across segments

Recognizing the interconnected nature of education, employment, and policymaking, the 4EU+ Alliance advocates for a collaborative approach to the development of micro-credentials. By engaging a variety of stakeholders—including educational institutions, industry leaders, policymakers, and public institutions—the Alliance leverages diverse expertise to foster innovation and address complex challenges in society, education, and workforce development. This approach not only ensures relevance to current needs but also creates a dynamic and adaptive learning environment that is responsive to societal shifts.

To build sustainable ecosystems across segments and sectors, the 4EU+ Alliance emphasizes co-construction, involving stakeholders from different areas of society in the development process. This collaborative model strengthens the alignment of micro-credentials with labour market demands and societal needs, ensuring that programmes are demand-driven and developed in direct response to specific skills gaps identified by employers and policymakers. By working closely with labour market stakeholders, the 4EU+Alliance guarantees that these micro-credentials are not only theoretically sound but practically oriented, enhancing job readiness and employability for learners across various sectors.

The co-construction process is particularly effective in building ecosystems that cross multiple segments and sectors. Micro-credentials can serve as bridges between higher education, professional development, and lifelong learning, bringing together students, working professionals, and even non-traditional learners, such as those engaged through Open University or Open Education platforms. This inclusive approach supports learners of different backgrounds, ages, and professional qualifications, creating a learning ecosystem that is flexible and diverse while ensuring that the content remains research-based and of the highest quality.

4.2 Synergies across segments

The 4EU+ Alliance is committed to exploring synergies across different learner profiles, aiming to develop micro-credentials that cater to students, working professionals, and Open University learners simultaneously where this may be expedient. By focusing on the competencies and prerequisites of these varied groups, the Alliance can design micro-credentials that target



learners with similar educational needs, regardless of their segment. This approach encourages cross-pollination of ideas and skills between different learner groups and promotes interdisciplinary learning.

4.3 Widening participation

In particular, the Alliance's focus on widening participation is key to building an inclusive learning ecosystem. By developing micro-credentials that can be facilitated through MOOCs⁸ and other flexible platforms, the Alliance makes high-quality education accessible to a broader audience. This approach encourages learners from diverse backgrounds to engage in lifelong learning, improving societal inclusion and contributing to social mobility. Importantly, this broader access does not compromise the quality of education; the 4EU+ Alliance ensures that all micro-credentials are held to the same high standards of academic excellence.

4.4 Collaboration across sectors

By actively involving public institutions, private companies, and policymakers, the 4EU+ Alliance ensures that its micro-credentials are contextually relevant and meet the needs of both the public and private sectors. This cross-sector collaboration not only helps create learning experiences that are directly applicable to real-world challenges but also fosters innovation in educational practices. Stakeholders from different sectors can provide valuable insights into emerging industry trends, policy developments, and societal challenges, which in turn inform the design and delivery of micro-credentials.

By creating synergies across segments and sectors, the 4EU+ Alliance aims to build an ecosystem that supports lifelong learning, professional development, and academic excellence, while responding dynamically to societal and labour market needs. This collaborative and interdisciplinary approach ensures that learners are well-equipped with the skills and knowledge required to address the complex challenges of the modern world.

4.5 Innovative educational practices and national frameworks

The deployment of micro-credentials also reflects the Alliance's commitment to innovating within national educational frameworks and contributing to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). This approach is intended to not only strengthen individual national systems but

⁸ 4EU+ currently offers a MOOC on European Citizenship and one on Data Literacy



also enhance the collective capability of European higher education institutions to meet international standards and expectations.

4EU+ members hence nurture a regular dialogue with national authorities in charge of elaborating or revising national educational frameworks. They liaise with each other to ensure national developments does not prevent smooth collaboration among them. They relay to national authorities any specific need emerging from the collaboration within the Alliance. 4EU+ members also seek dialogue with vocational and professional education stakeholders to ensure the development of micro-credentials within those fields of education echo the ones in tertiary education.

5. Ensuring quality in micro-credentials

5.1 Quality assurance

4EU+ places a high priority on ensuring the highest quality of its educational activities. This commitment was formalised via the Mutual Agreement on Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement that was signed by its Rectors in Summer 2022. The agreement sets out the basic principles, the mission and vision of quality management in 4EU+.

These ambitions also affect micro-credentials as set out in the 4EU+ Position Paper on Micro-credentials issued in November 2022. The credentials shall meet high educational standards and deliver genuine value to participants.

Consequently, the Alliance responds to the need to conceptualize a QM approach for jointly offered micro-credentials, including lifelong learning courses within the Alliance. Said concept is still to be develop but will build on and include the following aspects:

It is in line with the basic principles, vision and mission of the above-mentioned Mutual Agreement on Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement. Among these principles are, inter alia

- mutual trust that each partner university is capable and competent in assuring quality of its own educational activities; and the recognition of each other's QA systems respectively,



- a commitment to and compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines on Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG),
- coordination and collaboration in quality assurance that is taken over by one responsible person appointed by each partner university (QM group)

It fits with the existing quality management system, 4EU+QUALITY, e.g. concerning quality criteria, instruments and procedures used. 4EU+QUALITY is a comprehensive PDCA-based QM system focusing both on quality assurance of a minimum standard of quality in education and quality enhancement according to the Alliance's strategic goals. As of now, single educational activities, for example, regular semester courses offered via 4EU+, summer schools, workshops etc. as well as Joint Programmes are covered by this system. Procedurally, it covers internal as well as external quality assurance. Importantly, it foresees that for all joint offers, one lead university is assigned for a course that is responsible for taking care of quality management for this course.

New evaluation formats for micro-credentials will thus be developed within 4EU+QUALITY: possible options are surveying participants and gathering feedback from external partners (for example, associated partners who are engaged in developing and delivering the micro-credentials). The future fit of micro-credentials to this system shall be ensured via close cooperation with the Alliance Referee for Quality Management.

It builds on existing groundwork already accomplished. This concerns an existing evaluation instrument for 4EU+ lifelong learning courses that was developed by task 4.1 with the support of the Alliance Referee for Quality Management and the QM Group. The following survey items may thus be used as a starting point to conceive of a related instrument for micro-credentials:

1. What is the nature of your organization/affiliation?

Please choose from: Public I Private I NGO I Other

2. I profit from the international composition of the class.

(5-point-scale: completely agree - do not agree at all, not specified)



3. What are the most important aspects of your experience in regard to the international composition of this class for you personally (e.g. concerning multicultural experiences, social cohesion, international spirit)?

(open question)

4. I would overall recommend taking this 4EU+ course.

(5-point-scale: completely agree - do not agree at all, not specified:

5. (If agreed or neutral in question 4)

Please give the main reason (s) why you would recommend this course?

(Open question)

(If not agreed or neutral in question 4)

Please give the main reason(s) why you would not recommend this course?

(Open question)

The questions aim to provide an insight into the learners' employment affiliation but also the benefits or possible challenges created from the international composition of the classroom. This is in recognition of fact that the international classroom does require didactical considerations that are different from those applied to a "national" classroom.

6. 4EU+ co-development and lead-institution model

The 4EU+ Professional Learning Academy has developed and adopted a model where courses are co-developed under the leadership of one or more institutions, pooling academic strengths and resources to maximize the benefits of synergy and complementarity.

In the previous project period, 4EU+ had project funds to support the development and implementation of joint lifelong learning courses. As funds in the current project period have decreased, and to make courses financially sustainable, the Alliance sees a need for having a joint



approach to collecting fees at participant level if needed and a joint agreement between partner universities on how the fees and tasks are divided when offering co-developed courses for professionals.

Task group 4.1. has debated and developed a model that outlines and distributes collected fees and tasks. The administrative framework is meant to function for lifelong learning courses, including micro-credentials, across online and physical course offerings and fit easily with existing lifelong learning structures at all partner universities in the Alliance.

6.1 4EU+ partner university model for collaboration on lifelong learning

The model for partner university collaboration is not mandatory to follow but meant as guiding principles and may, if strong reasons call for a different approach, be replaced by a different model.

It is agreed that when designing courses and setting fees, the Alliance will seek to cover costs through fees related to *basic* course expenses. Ambitions about course profit must not hinder participants from all parts of Europe signing up. In general, course fees must reflect an ambition to engage a wider European participant spectrum.

Administrative staff in supporting roles at the universities provide frameworks for and administration of local and international marketing, fee collecting, onboarding, service and support functions.

6.2 Two administrative roles

Academics from the Alliance wanting to offer a 4EU+ lifelong learning course, including micro-credentials, are encouraged to present an outline of the course idea to the 4.1 task group member at their local university. If the idea has merit and local support, it is then presented to all 4.1 task group members. This is to facilitate academic collaboration across the Alliance - particularly for academics who may not already have links to colleagues at the other institutions of the Alliance. The task group members then work to locate academic support at their university. To support and formalize the above-described workflow, the Alliance operates with two administrative roles:

- A lead-university role



- A partner-university role.

Before the administrative roles are given, it is important for the involved universities to agree on issues beyond academic content such as course scope, fee rates, duration, and whether the course is credit-bearing, stands alone or may have the potential to be offered as a micro-credential with more inter-connected courses. The task group recommends the Course Development Model or other learning development and business generating tools to illustrate and connect the different aspects of a potential course idea. When the partners involved have agreed upon the scope and framework for the course, the administrative roles are given.

6.2.1 Lead-university responsibilities

- Providing administrative and other support to academics willing to offer lifelong learning offerings
- Marketing of lifelong learning offerings
- Fees collecting
- Onboarding, service and catering to course participants
- Course assessment
- Issuing ECTS-points and credentials
- Quality Management
- Development of initial course budget and final financial report
- Payment to partner-university

6.2.2 Partner-university responsibilities:

- Administrative and other support to academics from the partner universities who participate in lifelong learning offerings
- Local marketing of lifelong learning offerings
- Distributing payments from the lead-university locally

6.3 Partner-model revenue split

6.3.1 If two universities partners work together

The task group recommends a revenue split between the lead-university and partner-university of 70/30. Mainly because it favours the universities that bring course ideas to the Alliance and take the lead on administrative tasks. This means that 70 percent of the revenues go to the lead-



university and the last 30 percent (up to 30 percent) of the revenues are allocated to the partner-university to cover educational and travel costs.

6.3.2 If three universities partners work together

The task group recommends a revenue split between the lead-university and the partner-universities of 50/25/25. This split also favours the universities that bring course ideas to the Alliance and take the lead on administrative tasks. 50 percent of the revenues go to the lead-university and the last 25x2 percent of the revenues are allocated to the partner-universities to cover educational and travel costs in relation to the lifelong learning offering. It seems important to link risk-taking with rewards so that universities in the Alliance are willing to take the risk of developing a course offering and carrying the burden of being lead-university.

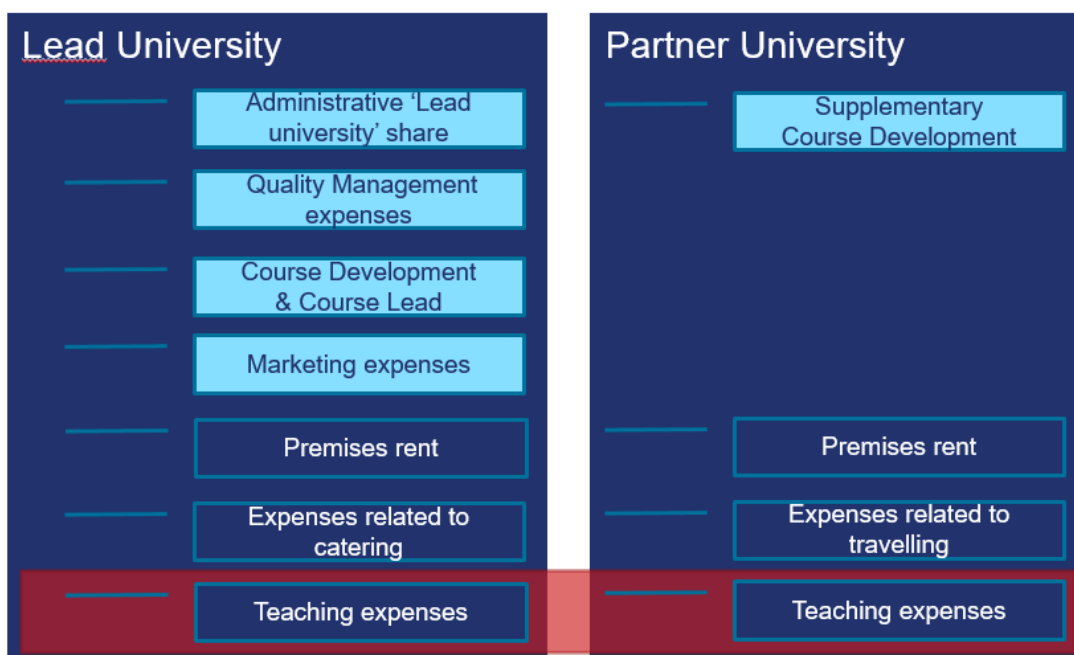
The fees are to be collected by the lead-university, and they are also in charge of marketing efforts, service, support functions in relation to onboarding, and service/catering. ECTS and credentials will also be issued by the lead-university. Payment to the partner-university, the development of a course budget and final financial report are also the responsibilities of the lead-university.

6.4 Expenditure

6.4.1 If two alliance universities are cooperating

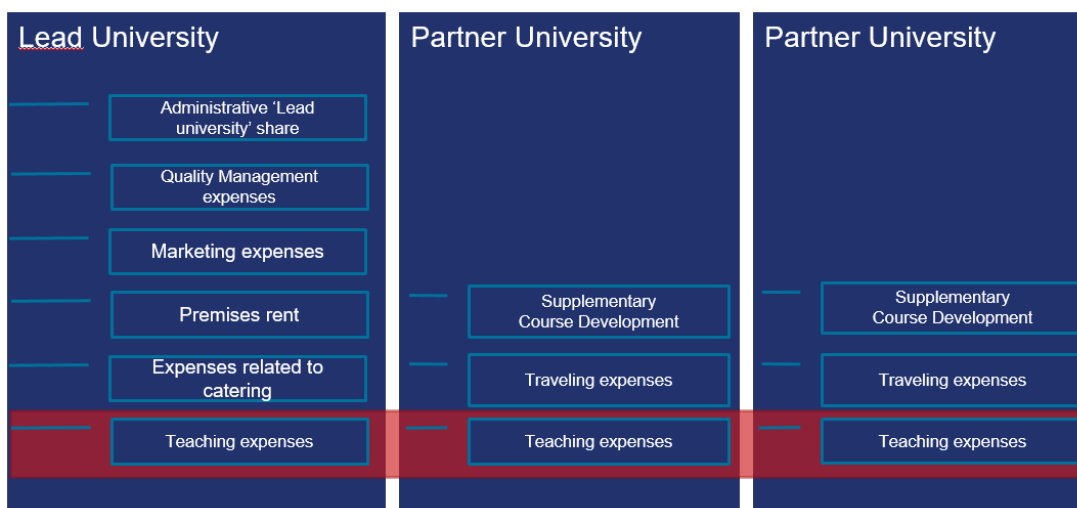
Below is outlined an overview of the potential items of expenditure related to developing and running lifelong learning course offerings including a mark-up for taking on the role as lead-university. As presented earlier, the lead-university receives 70 percent of the revenues and partner-university 30 percent. The costs related to 'Teaching expenses' are to be viewed as a joint post (see red box), as more teachers may be involved in the offering from the partner university.





6.4.2 If three alliance universities are cooperating

If three universities are cooperating, task group 4.1 proposes a 50/25/25 revenue split. The costs related to 'Teaching expenses' are also to be viewed as a shared post between all universities.



6.4.3 Example I, financial account: 70/30 split

The financial posts below are only illustrative examples of how fees could be presented with a 70/30 split. How the lead university/partner university eventually disposes of and administers the course funds is a local matter. The example illustrates a 2-day in-person course at the lead-university with one partner-university. In the example, one teacher from partner-university travels to lead-university. The course fee is 400 Euro, and the course has 30 participants.

Revenues (in euros)

	Participants	Fee	
Course fees	30	400	
Total revenues			12.000

Expenses (in euros)

		Costs	
Administrative 'Lead university' share		3000	
Marketing expenses		2000	
Premises rent, two days		400	
Expenses related to catering		1000	
Total teaching expenses		4000	
Suppl. Course Development (at partner-university)		600	
Traveling expenses (t/r from partner-university)		1000	
Total costs			12.000

Split

70 percent to lead university		30 percent to partner university	
Lead university		Partner university	
	8.400 Euro		3.600 Euro



6.4.3 Example II, financial account: 50/25/25 split

The posts below are only illustrative examples of how posts could be presented with a 70/25/25 split. Again, how the lead-university/partner-university eventually disposes of and administers the course funds is a local matter. The example covers a 3-day in-person course at the lead-university with two partner-universities. Two teachers from the partner-universities travel to the lead-university. The course fee is 500 Euro, and the course has 28 participants.

Revenues (in euros)

	Participants	Fee	
Course fees	28	500	
Total revenues			14.000

Expenses (in euros)

		Costs	
Administrative 'Lead university' share		750	
Marketing expenses		2000	
Premises rent, two days		750	
Expenses related to catering		1500	
Total teaching expenses (2000/2000/2000)		6000	
Total additional Course Development (500/500)		1000	
Total traveling expenses (1000 t/r from partner-uni.x2)		2000	
Total costs			14.000

Split:

50 percent to lead university	25 percent to partner	25 percent to partner
Lead university	Partner university	Partner university
7000 Euro	3.500 Euro	3500 Euro

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, 4EU+ views micro-credentials as a valuable tool for creating flexible learning pathways and enhancing the development of core curricula in degree programmes. They provide short, intensive, credit-bearing learning units to supplement the core competencies acquired in bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes. For professionals, micro-credentials offer continuous, research-based, time-sensitive learning to keep skills aligned with labour market demands in a fast-changing world.



Micro-credentials can support diverse learning objectives—whether advancing specialized skills or broadening knowledge within a field. The 4EU+ Alliance advocates for a collaborative approach to developing micro-credentials, engaging educational institutions, industry leaders, and policymakers to ensure they remain relevant and adaptable. This collaboration fosters innovation and addresses challenges in education, workforce development, and society.

Furthermore, micro-credentials have the potential to bridge higher education and professional development, accommodating students, professionals, and non-traditional learners through inclusive platforms like Open University. This approach fosters a flexible learning ecosystem, enhancing lifelong learning and professional growth. By building synergies across sectors, 4EU+ aims to equip learners with the skills needed to meet today's complex challenges while supporting academic excellence and dynamic responses to societal needs.

The Alliance will continue to ensure quality and collaboration through joint models which will be under continuous development to ensure that they provide the best possible framework for professional and high-quality learning experiences.



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OPEN FOR YOU ! SERIES (WORKPACKAGE 4, MILESTONE 13)

Open for you! is a webinar series hosted by the 4EU+ Alliance since 2021-2022⁹, exploring diverse aspects of open science. The third edition is underway in the first half of 2024, offering fresh perspectives and insights from speakers from the 4EU+ universities and other experts.

Coordinator: Sorbonne University

Participants:

- Charles University (Prague)
- University of Copenhagen
- University of Heidelberg
- University of Milan
- University of Warsaw

TRAINING SESSIONS

We have built a different program for each cycle. Certain topics that form the basis of the training have been retained from one year to the other (*Predatory publishers and identity fraud – how to identify dubious providers?*). New subjects, more practical (*Searching for open access works, Researcher ID and digital strategy: creating a real Orcid ID to be visible*) or more disciplinary (*FAIRData in HSS, FAIRData in science*), have been added to the training programme.

In order to make the webinars livelier, interviews of specialists and micro training with quiz were introduced for the second and third cycles. Interviewees for the training cycle included Johan Rooryck, Executive Director of cOAlition S, and researchers as ambassadors for open science

⁹ <https://4euplus.eu/4EU-770.html>



such as Paola Masuzzo (Data Scientist and Independent Researcher) and Pierre Poulain (Paris-Cité University, Institut Jacques Monod).



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2021-2022 programme

1. [What is Open Science?](#)
2. [Cycle of scientific publication: an overview](#)
3. [What are my funders requirements on Open Science? A focus on Plan S](#)
4. [Strategies for publishing in Open Access journals](#)
5. [Data Management Plans - one tool with many applications](#)
6. [Predatory publishers and identity fraud - how to identify dubious providers](#)
7. [Publication strategies for monographs in Humanities and Social Sciences](#)
8. [Research Data Management - Introduction to FAIR and Open Data](#)
9. [Open Research Software](#)
10. [Open science and the role of rights management](#)
11. [Humanities and FAIR data](#)
12. [Citizen Science: producing data with people for innovating research](#)
13. [Research Integrity and Open Science: Is sound science open science?](#)
14. [Research Impact & Bibliometrics: open science, society, innovation](#)

2023 training programme

1. [Introduction to Open Science and Research Integrity](#)
2. [Open Access and Open licences](#)
3. [Publishing with the rights retention strategy : is it for me?](#)
4. [Preprint and Open Peer Review](#)
5. [Predatory publishers and identity fraud – how to identify dubious providers](#)
6. [Searching for open access works](#)
7. [Managing FAIR Data in the Humanities: Approaches and Examples](#)
8. [The FAIR principles in science, technology and engineering – How to write a good Data Management Plan for FAIR research data](#)
9. [Researcher ID and digital strategy: creating a real Orcid ID to be visible](#)
10. [Open research software - how to disseminate it?](#)

2024 training programme

1. [Introduction to Open Science and Research Integrity](#)
2. [Preprints and Open Peer Review](#)
3. ["I'm signing a publishing agreement": intellectual property and publication \(in open access\)](#)
4. [Publishing in Diamond Open Access](#)
5. [Predatory publishers and identity fraud – how to identify dubious providers](#)
6. [Searching for open access works](#)
7. [Managing FAIR Data in the Humanities: Approaches and Examples](#)
8. [The FAIR principles in science, technology and engineering – How to write a good Data Management Plan for FAIR research data](#)
9. [Open research software - how to disseminate it?](#)



10. [Citizen Science](#)

11. [Open Science and Evaluation, how to reward open practices](#)



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ATTENDEES (STATISTICS)

The results show that PhD students are indeed our main target. These new formats have born fruit, with the number of participants increasing year on year, averaging 168 per session (min: 89, max: 254) in 2023, compared with an average of 88 last year.

The number of participants is unequal depending on the university. The University of Milan provides a large part of the participants. Then comes Sorbonne University. These are two universities where there are suitable communication channels and where participation in the cycle gives rise to follow-up certificates useful to PhD students to validate elements of their course.

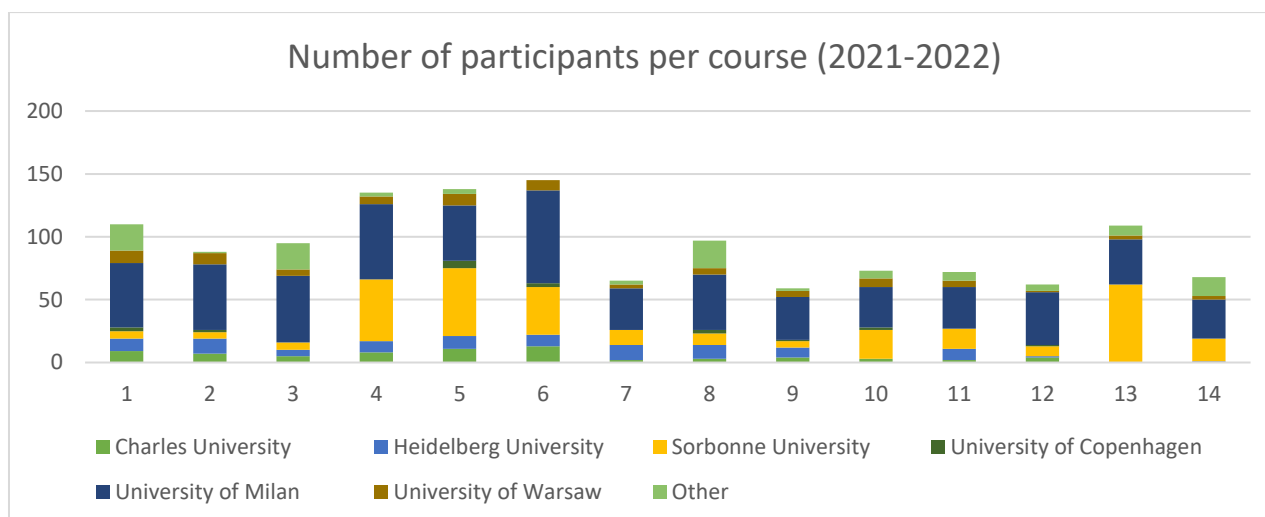
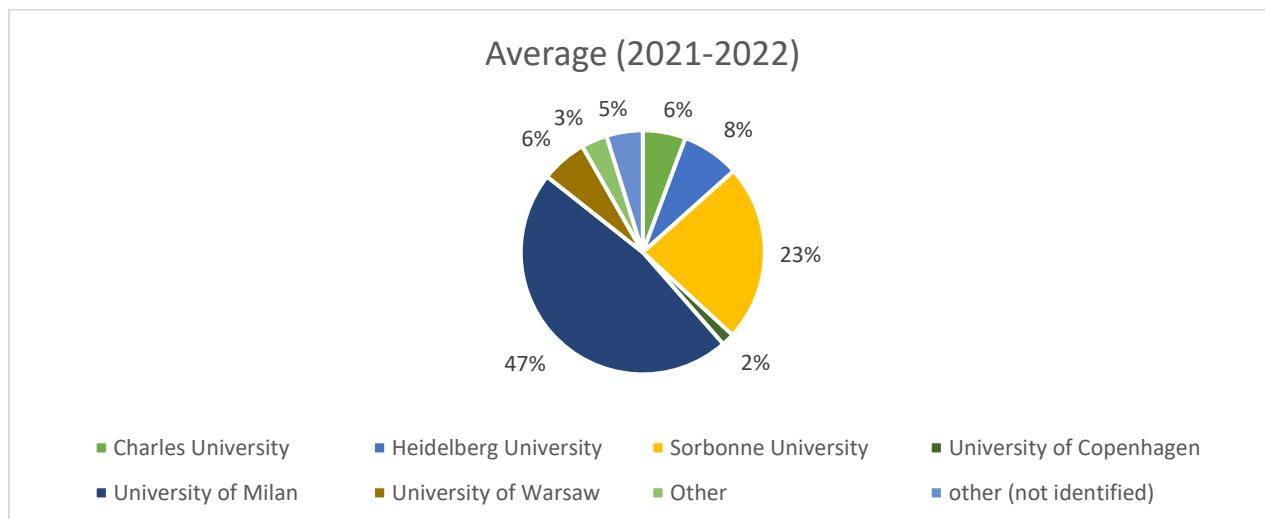
Our audience has grown steadily, and we are now reaching PhD students, academic staff and researchers from outside the alliance.

The statistics are detailed below.

2021-2022 statistics (number of attendees)

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average	Total
Charles University	9	7	5	8	11	13	2	3	4	3	2	4	0	0	5,46	71
Heidelberg University	10	12	5	9	10	9	12	11	8	0	9	1	0	1	7,38	97
Sorbonne University	6	5	6	49	54	38	12	9	5	23	16	8	62	18	22,53	311
University of Copenhagen	3	2	0	0	6	3	0	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	1,61	21
University of Milan	51	52	53	60	44	74	33	44	34	32	33	42	36	31	45,23	619
University of Warsaw	10	9	5	6	9	8	3	5	5	7	5	1	3	3	5,84	79
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	2	6	5	2	7	6	3,30	49
<i>other (not identified)</i>	21	1	21	3	4	0	3	1	0	0	2	3	1	9	4,61	69
Total	110	88	95	135	138	145	65	1	59	73	70	59	108	59	88,15	1205



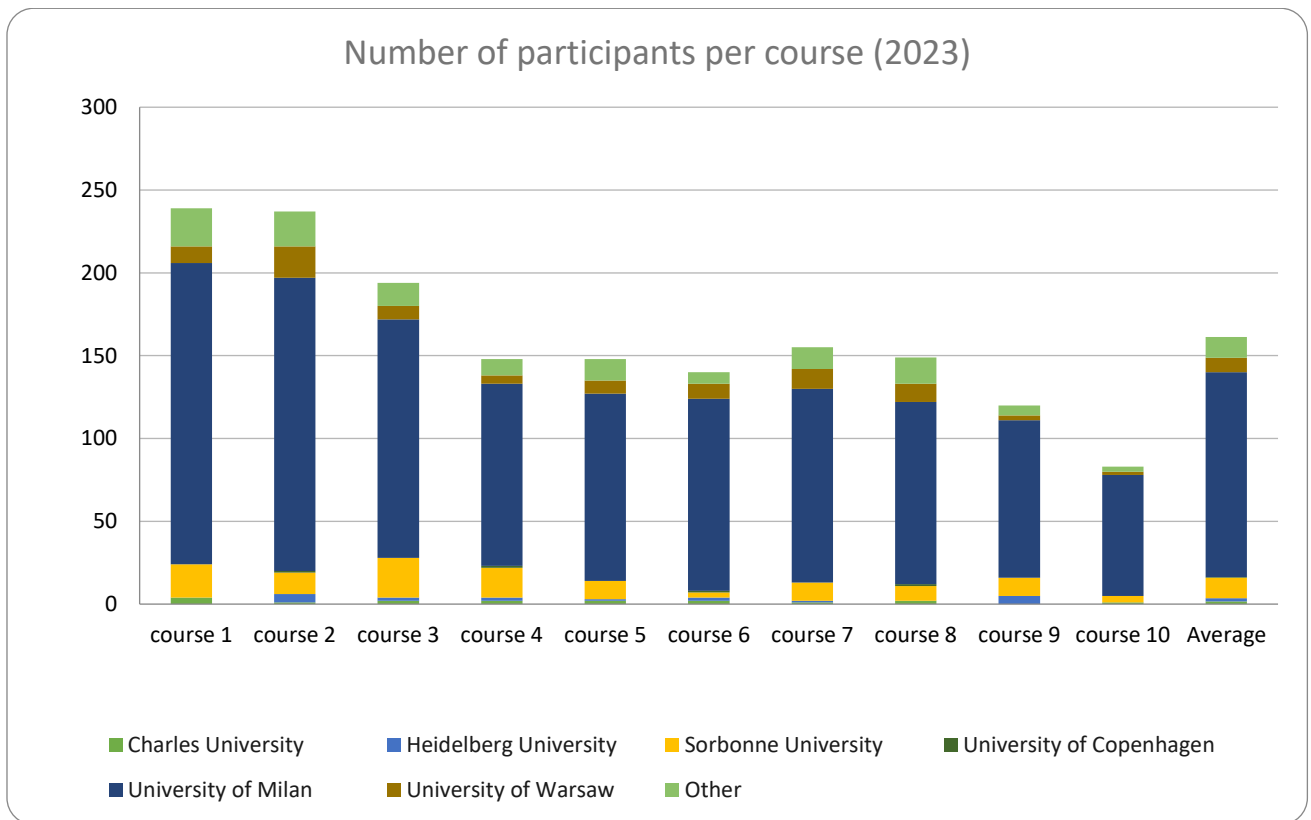
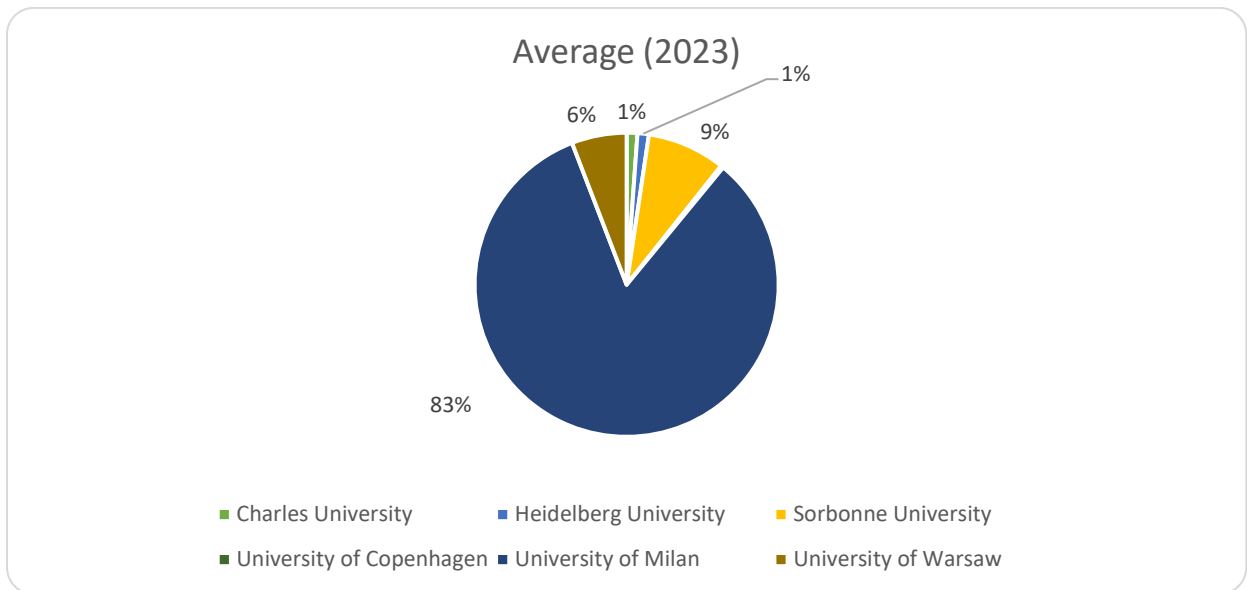


2023 statistics (number of attendees)

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average	Total
Charles University	4	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	1	1,7	17
Heidelberg University	0	5	2	2	1	2	1	0	5	0	1,8	18
Sorbonne University	20	13	24	18	11	3	11	9	11	4	12,4	124
University of Copenhagen	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0,4	4
University of Milan	182	177	144	110	113	116	117	110	95	73	123,7	1237
University of Warsaw	10	19	8	5	8	9	12	11	3	2	8,7	87
Other	23	21	14	10	13	7	13	16	6	3	12,6	126
<i>other (not identified)</i>	14	17	5	13	13	0	0	4	0	6	7,2	72

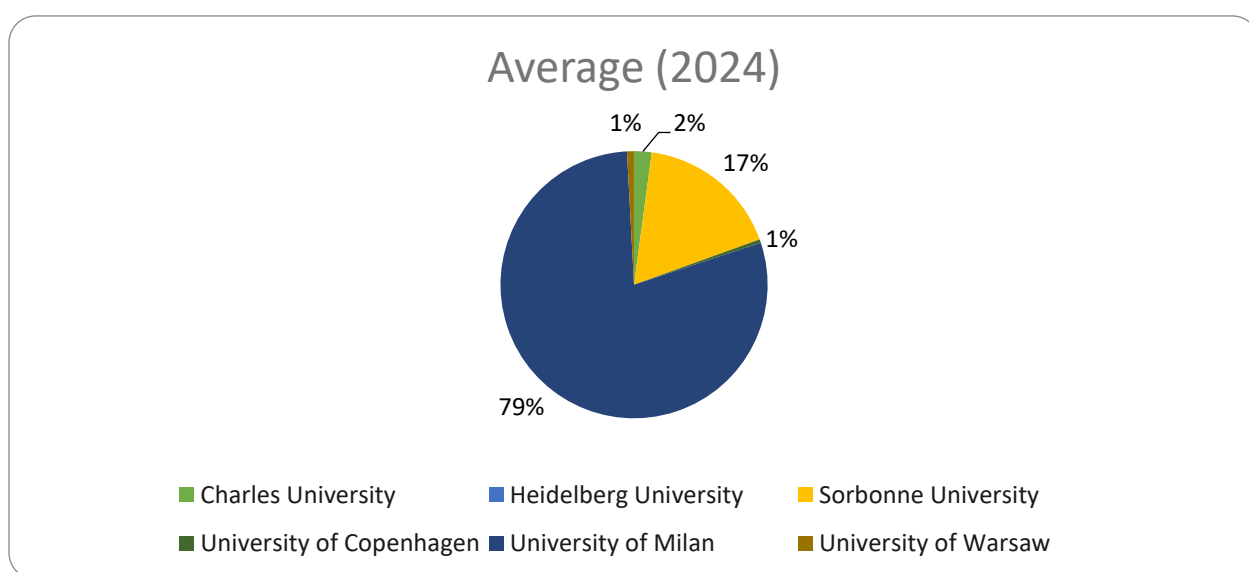


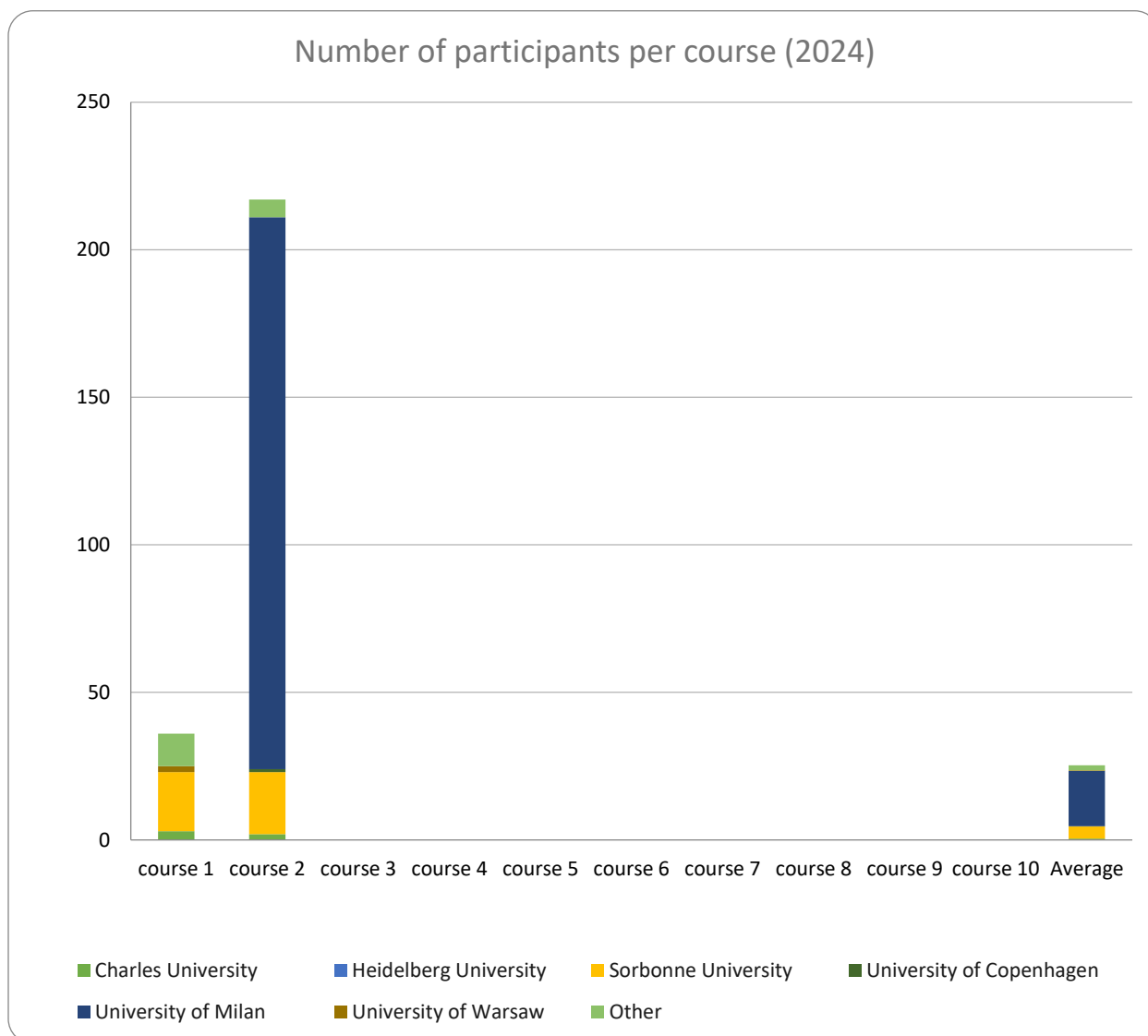
Total	253	254	199	161	161	140	155	153	120	89	168,5	1685
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2024 statistics (number of attendees) – Incomplete: training cycle underway

Number of participants	course 1	course 2	Average	Total
Charles University	3	2	0,5	5
Heidelberg University	0	0	0	0
Sorbonne University	20	21	4,1	41
University of Copenhagen	0	1	0,1	1
University of Milan	0	187	18,7	187
University of Warsaw	2	0	0,2	2
Other	11	6	1,7	17
<i>other (not identified)</i>			0	0
Total	36	217	25,3	253





FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS (2022)

In 2022, we organized a global feedback (79 responses): 32 think the programme was helpful and 25 very helpful. Some of them point out strong and weak points of the Open for you programm!

Strong point examples:

- “It addressed very relevant topics that often are not discussed in the courses and training of a PhD program.”



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- “Relevant topics for researchers. Many suggestions towards further reading and resources on the topic of open science.”
- “interdisciplinarity, quality of presentations. »

Weak point examples

- “May be not focused enough by disciplines”
- “maybe not very easy to share thoughts because of the Zoom format, but there were interesting discussions at the end of the presentations”
- “I would prefer if the presentations were shorter (around 20-30 min)”

This feedback was used to adjust the formats and programmes for the following year (2023).

