EDITORIAL
SPECIAL ISSUE ON "GOVERNANCE": INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FILM AND MEDIA ARTS

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In 2017, the Rome Declaration signaled the EU pledge to work towards a 'Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent.[1]' In that same year the Commission set out the vision of the European Education Area (EEA) as a genuine common space for quality education and lifelong learning across borders for all. Further acknowledgment of the key role higher education plays in the future of Europe occurred with the publication of the "Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)" in February 2021 (2021/C 66/01). In order to attain this European Education Area and the related European Space for Higher Education, many actions have since then been designed and implemented, of which one of the most important is the "European Strategy for Universities" that aims to support the higher education sector in adapting to changing conditions and strengthen cooperation across borders. One of the key initiatives of this European Strategy for Universities is the "European Universities" initiative. Since 2020, this initiative has been supporting 44 Alliances of European Higher Education institutions (HEIs) in which approximately 340 HEIs take part, in reaching higher levels of cooperation and integration.

Initially designed in a project-oriented manner with resort to E+ funding, the initiative evolved to a more programmatic approach once implementation moved on. With already three different cohorts of Alliances funded, it is clear this core initiative is now at the crossroads and there are many obstacles

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1   https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25/rome-declaration/pdf

in the way of the full deployment of these "European Universities". Issues such as funding or the legal status of these trans-European universities, all point to the key importance "governance", with its multiple conceptualizations and affordances, has for the understanding of what the final outcomes and impacts of this grand initiative will be.

FilmEU – The European University of Film and Media Arts is one of the several Alliances funded by the EU in 2020 in the context of the second call for the set-up of European Universities. FilmEU is a thematic Alliance in the sense that, differently from most of the Alliances in operations, it departs from an exclusive focus on the disciplines of Film and Media Arts to call upon the deep transformations the European Universities initiative implies. Another distinctive feature of FilmEU is its relatively small size with only four members at this moment in time, when most of the Alliances have 8 or more members. It's relatively small size is counterbalanced by the highly diversified nature of the alliance, that not only represents completely different cultural and geographical regions but also integrates HEIs that represent the full fledge of institutional profiles represented in HE in Europe, from comprehensive universities to more research intensive ones, from Polytechnique's/Universities of Applied Arts to smaller Art oriented colleges, from public centrally funded institutions to private non-for-profit ones, from institutions with a clear national profile and international edge to others with a more regional and even local orientation. This institutional diversity is obviously accompanied by very diverse governance models that sometimes imply a strong participation of academics while in other cases stipulate a strict separation between different management and academic boards.

FilmEU diversity poses some difficulties, but also opens up some new opportunities, namely when one is faced with the problem of how-to set-up a joint trans-european university. Nonetheless, the challenges FilmEU's diversity entails are nothing when compared with the level of uncertainty in relation with the future legal statute and regulatory framework of these "European Universities". This is currently one of the main challenges we and all other European Universities face, and it is the convergence of these two topics – how to set-up a European University made of an assemble of diversified HEIs and what should be the governance model of this future HEI considering a framework and statute that no one knows, at least at this moment in time, what it will look like – that put "governance at the centre of our agenda.

This issue of the International Journal of Film and Media Arts reflects both FilmEU and other European Alliances discussions on the topic of the future governance models of European Universities in particular and in general the future governance models of European Higher Education Institutions in view of several societal, legal, regulatory, technological and cultural transformations. This issue also signals the Journal ambition of increasing its ability to, not only focus on topics and outcomes of artistic research or other film related research outcomes, but also include in some of its special issues a focus on topics that are relevant either to the film and media arts educational sector or the film and media industry. The fact one of the European Universities currently being deployed has this differentiating focus on film and media arts and the European Universities initiative has the potential of being as disruptive to European Higher Education as the Bologna declaration was, makes this a very interesting topic for one of our special issues. The issue integrates several contributions that either take a more theoretical and critical stance at the topic or present exemplary cases studies for the comprehension of the state of the art and the benchmark of the situation in Europe against other geographies and in particular the USA. Work on this special issue directly stemmed from an international conference precisely on the topic of the Governance of Higher education institutions and European Universities in particular, FilmEU organized in 2022 with Brussels with the support and hosting of FilmEU full partner LUCA school of Arts.

In its opening text with some notes on governance, José Bragança de Miranda, currently the Rector of Universidade Lusófona, the leading institution in the FilmEU Alliance, echoes some of the theoretical tenets discussions on governance bring to the table. In the midst of his historical and theoretical reflections about the topic, José Miranda highlights the importance of good governance, not only for organizations but also for societies in general and relates some of the core assumptions of the past with the vision currently being implemented by FilmEU.

In their text entitled "The Path towards the European University in the Current EU Legal Framework: the EEIG as a Possible Tool for Cooperation", Barbara Gagliardi, Arnaud Lecourt, Irina Macsinga, Marcella Costa and Marco Giacobini deeply explore one of the potential instruments – the EEIG – currently being explored and tested in the context of recent calls targeting the piloting of innovative solutions for the future governance of European Universities. The text deeply explores all pro and cons of the solution on the table, highlighting how good cooperation tools can sometimes run useless when confronted with the complexity of local and national legal and regulatory frameworks.

In her text on "How to govern autonomous academic institutions: Switzerlands ETH-Domain as a case study " Barbara Haering introduces us to the complexities of the organization of the Higher Education sector in Switzerland and argues why some of the Swiss organizational models might be fit for the future governance of European Universities.

In the following article "Models of Higher Education Governance in Europe: from 'organised anarchy' to business-corporate organisations", António Magalhães and Amélia Veiga reflect on the current tensions in terms different higher education governance models in the European Higher Education landscape, and point out what key lessons must be taken from the evolution of different governance models in higher education across Europe and their relevance for the future governance of European Universities.

In the last paper, entitled "Governance in Higher Education Institutions: a glimpse from the US" Maria Taylor and Pedro Matias explore the dominant models of governance in the US and what these experiences tell us in terms of the future governance of European Universities.

Governance is undoubtably a complex topic. First of all, there is no clear agreement on exactly what we are talking about when we discuss "governance" with the consequential uncertainties about the affordances it entails and its impacts. What constitutes a "good" or a "bad" governance is sometimes a subjective question that depends on traits of leadership while in other cases it points to the adoption of models that are not fit for purpose. In this special issue we mostly focus on the second aspect and try to identify the geometries of the model that is best fit for the purpose of governing a trans-european University made up of campus scattered across Europe that all host and boost different national institutions each with their own profile and mission. Governance is a difficult topic!

Effective governance sustains the desired goals of the institution and involves the stakeholders in the processes of either informing or engaging in forming policies, procedures, and outcomes to build and maintain trust for the common good of the institution. Past research on European Universities governance focused on the governance of the Alliances' and found that these mostly depict governance models (Estermann, Pruvot and Stoyanova, 2012) that reflect the duality between the management of the ongoing projects E+ and H2020 projects that assure the funding of the Alliances, and the fluid future models, that the absence of a clear legal statute often converts into not much more than experiments. The governance of the project concerns the management and decision making of the Alliances during the funding period, while the governance of the European University deals with both the

legal entity supporting the universities – for which there still does not exist a clear statute at this moment in time – and the interactions between this and the participants in the Alliance. In this special issue we are particularly interested in the future governance models of the Universities in themselves and not of the Alliances about which relevant and interesting data is already available.

At this moment in time, two elements prevail that are central for our discussion: the lack of a clear definition of the legal statute of European Universities and associated legal model, and the parallel ongoing process of implementation of the universities and their enlargement. This duality poses a major challenge to these institutions and a number of critical risks are associated to them, that impel these Alliances to come up with provisional governance models while still designing and testing potential definitive ones. European Universities are something completely new and highly innovative that calls for the implementation of consensus governance spaces (Ranga and Etzkowitz, 2013) if these "European Universities" want to strive in such an uncertain context and proceed with the cross-fertilisation of differing perspectives around education, research, innovation and services to society that this initiative entails.

Future governance models must influence these Alliances' capacity to become regionally and internationally responsive and engaged in collaboration dynamics with other actors across their regional innovation eco-systems in order to increase their competitiveness but also their sustainability, while ensuring full and transparent participation of all stakeholders and their engagement.

The main contribution we expect this issue to bring about is a better comprehension and definition of the future governance model(s) of European Universities and their specificities. The governance of European Universites will have to be profoundly different from other governance arrangements that we know. Taking as a basis the UNESCO definition (2018), "Governance" should be understood as the 'structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation in Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive. The specificities of the European Universities, call for a deepening of this definition that highlights the key elements of "participation" (The HEI that are members; the stakeholders), "transparency" (the operation of the University and its procedures must be completely transparent to members and all stakeholders) and what we call "institutional dependency" with this referring the umbilical nature that exists between the European University and its members, but also the potential conflict between the national and the European dimensions.

In our view, European Universities will be more of a success and their objectives will only be fully attained, when the benefits they entail are fully understood by all members of each Alliance and clearly represent an added value to their own mission and that of its constituent members. Initial research conducted in FilmEU[2] highlighted the importance of a dynamic, agile and bottom-up governance model that ensures the above-mentioned participation, transparency and dependencies. This means, the transformative power European Universities have for all participating HEI will only be fully realized if constant institutional dependencies and interactions occur. The European University and its members must be like a unique human body with never ending mutually beneficial interactions and dependencies between its organs. Considering this, our approach to the governance of the Eu University emphasizes the executive nature of the different

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2   https://www.filmeu.eu/images/files/Report-on-best-practices-within-and-out-of-the-HE-sector.pdf

bodies at the level of the EuUni legal entity and the strategic and supervision power of each of the participating HEI. (UNESCO. (2018). The proposed governance model though includes a clear separation between the strategic and supervision role conducted by those bodies where the members of the Alliance are represented, and the executive role of the steering committee of the Alliance that acts as the key management and decision-making body at an operational level, also being responsible for constant and effective reporting towards the members. This governance model based on mutually beneficial interactions and dependencies builds on other existing governance models at EU level, such as the EIT KICs governance models[3] and the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC[4]) governance model, besides all the work and design efforts already conducted in earlier stages of FilmEU.

The future Governance models of European Universities should be based on accountability, sustainability and desirability. Accountability means the model must ensure all participants are accountable by their actions in a transparent and clear manner namely via clear procedures and guidelines; sustainable means the model must ensure transparency and agility in order to maximize its benefits; and desirability means the model must ensure the transformative power of the European University and the benefits it entails are fully attained and shared among all members in order to ensure participating in the University is a desire changed among all members and the communities that compose them. These models must be flexible and surpass the duality already mentioned between project level and the new programmatic dimension that will result in the actual setup of the university.

Discussions around governance cover both the strategic and supervision dimensions; the operational and management decision-making structures, and the additional core dimensions of quality assurance and external evaluation. The different papers in this issue reflect these different dimensions and their multiple implications.

All organizations, including institutions of higher education, must be accountable before their stakeholders in particular and to the society in general. Accountability pre-supposes a clearly defined mission, goals, initiatives, etc. and performance measurement indicators. Excellent institutions clearly state where and how they seek to excel and accomplish objectives.

Independently of external factors we do not control (i.e. the definition of a legal statute for European Universities), the governance of the Alliances and the future Universities, implies three interacting dimensions come together:

a) the **framework** in the form, first of the general legal statute for European Universities, later of each University specific legal statute, bylaws, and own regulations
b) the **system** level (optimization, improvement, renewal) in the form of the projects that in a systemic manner via their activities and outcomes actually build the University as a system,
c) the **actors** (cooperation between different stakeholders) in the form of the different bodies that integrate the governance models and can be used to establish and evaluate strategic and operational objectives.

One of the main contributions of this issue, is the identification of a number of layers of governance in the form of different dimensions (i.e. funding vs autonomy) with mutual dependencies that are shaping the governance models of European Universities.

These dimensions that frame a conceptual governance model for European Universities, are scattered across five domains

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3 https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EIT-Principles-financing-monitoring-evaluating-KIC-activities.pdf

4 https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/european-grouping-territorial-cooperation_en

of intervention: Politics, profession, organization, knowledge, and the public. The first of these five domains covers aspects as relevant as the mission of these HEIs; the institutional dependencies and governance (Internal and external management and decision making) they entails; the management and decision-making procedures and bodies in the institution and of the legal entity promoting the University.

The second one on human Resources deals with Recruitment and retention of talent (students; teachers; researchers) as a major factor in the success of European Universities. Funding and Financial sustainability concerns the management and allocation of Financial resources for the Universities to perform. Issues of budget allocation, auditing and revenue share among partners plays a critical role at this level. This dimension also entails defining and implementing funding models that increase the Universities autonomy. Quality assurance and Operations concerns the establishment of rules and structures to help management to guide operations. Innovation and entrepreneurial Potential point to the fact governance must increase the Universities ability to address the need to connect all elements of the knowledge square and promote an entrepreneurial university. Finally, impact concerns the ability these Universities depict to engage in regional development across all regionshey t operate in.

This special issue gathers contributions and presents, as already described, research outputs in relation with all these different dimensions. Good governance can be understood as a series of conditions to generate a space that "strives to preserve the integrity of the academic value system while at the same time positioning universities vis-à-vis their larger environment to make them receptive and answerable to external messages, demands and expectations" (Fried, 2006, p.81). Good governance should not hinder transformation and the ability A HEI must have of intervening across different ecosystems (Chatterton and Goddard, 2000; Goddard, 2009). This is the type of governance we look for in European Universities. As this issues highlights, governance must improve the management of the future Universities, by ensuring strategies and decision-making are the result of a collective and participated effort that reflects the ambitions and interests of all, but above all, Governance must be fit for the purpose of ensuring this challenging initiative is a success!

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