

## The Energy Challenge: Why Policymaking Needs Universities

The need for clean, sustainable and cheaper energy represents one of Europe's greatest challenges. It is an issue that touches every single life on the continent and raises complex social, political, economic and technical issues that must be addressed in unison. Universities are uniquely positioned to work with policy-makers and industry to do this, together ensuring a sustainable energy future for Europe.

The [European University Association](#) (EUA) and its [Energy and Environment Platform](#) (EUA-EPUE) are at the helm of an extensive Europe-wide effort to address the Energy Transition by focusing on the future of energy research, innovation and education. EUA, in partnership with [InnoEnergy](#), [mapped](#) and surveyed hundreds of European universities and companies in the field, created connections between them, through the [UNI-SET project](#), and recently launched an [Action Agenda](#) in energy education and research. As universities mobilise on a wide scale, EUA calls on policy-makers to harness their role and value in the addressing the energy challenge.

Here's how:

- Recognise and better use the knowledge produced by universities in the energy field; ask for their advice and work with them to shape a sustainable energy future.
- Invest in fundamental research that strikes a balance between urgent energy issues related to the environment and long-term energy targets.
- Couple social sciences and humanities with science and technology to make innovation flourish, potentially leading to widescale change in the way we produce and consume energy.
- Provide the conditions that enable university research to keep Europe up to speed with the Internet of Things and the 4th Industrial Revolution.
- Implement measures that support industry investment in cutting-edge knowledge and technology generated in collaboration with universities.
- Find new ways of establishing inter-university cooperation through research centres that tackle energy challenges through education and research.
- Promote Open Science as a means to accelerate global energy innovation and allow European knowledge to support the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

EUA also calls on policy-makers to keep sustainable energy at the top of the political agenda and adequately reflected in the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. Furthermore, they must ensure that Europe is a global leader in aligning efforts in energy research by coupling the Framework Programme with Mission Innovation.

## **The European University Association and Energy**

The [EUA Energy and Environment Platform \(EUA-EPUE\)](#) connects universities and stakeholders who are active in energy research, education and innovation and represents universities in EU energy policy, in particular the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan). It aims to facilitate the full participation of European universities in energy-related EU programmes and to achieve the creation of the Energy Union and a sustainable energy future for Europe. The EUA Energy [Action Agenda](#) was produced as part of the [UNI-SET project](#). It calls on policy makers, industry and society to share the responsibility in tackling the energy transition.

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