EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

ANGLISISING THE EUROPEAN STUDENT

with Annette de Groot, psycholinguist at the University of Amsterdam

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THE TOXIC UNIVERSITY
ZOMBIE LEADERSHIP, ACADEMIC ROCK STARS AND NEOLIBERAL IDEOLOGY WAR ON SCIENCE  by John Smyth

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Mrs de Groot, Mrs de Groot, you call this process of rolling out more and more English-taught degree programmes Anglicisation. Is this really such a problem?

It has been around for a long time, but it is accelerating. So much so that as I speak: 70% of master programmes are only in English, and about 20% of our bachelor programmes are in English. And the tendency is also to make the remaining Dutch bachelor programmes English taught as well. I really oppose that. And this process is accelerating, which is why it’s attracting so much attention from the general audience and also politicians.

And the problem is that if one programme in the Netherlands, at one university becomes English only, the way our education system is financed, forces other universities to also provide the course in English rather than Dutch. I think this is the main underlying reason why this process is accelerating.

This is part of Dutch higher education policy, and the internationalisation of the universities is pushed by the universities and politics alike. Is this transition to English teaching really wanted, or is it just a side effect?

It’s a side effect, and it’s a negative side effect, I think everybody acknowledges that it’s a negative side effect. No, it’s not wanted, and even if they do want to recruit students from abroad, the process by which that is happening is too fast as well.

We can’t accommodate them at all. There’s a strong misbalance between students going out of the Netherlands for full programmes and those coming in. Most of these are from European countries. The universities only get the college fees, not all the other expenses. The average student in Netherlands costs 8,000 euros a year. And the college fees comes to around 2,000, 2,300 or so, so there’s a big gap in the finance which is not compensated by students leaving.

And the end result is that gradually, per student there’s less and less money in higher education, and this process has been going on for 15 years, but right now due to the fact that there’s so many foreign students coming in, of course we should accept them, but they do bring problems. For example: the staff-to-student ratio is getting worse and worse every year.

continues on p. 3
What exactly happens when you teach or learn in a different language to your own? In your lecture, you talk about language loss...

I have three main arguments: The first is that there is this poor ability to express oneself in a language that is weaker. And for 80% of Dutch students, English is the weaker language. They have relatively good abilities in English compared to other countries, but it’s obviously of lower quality than the Dutch. And that shows in many areas: word recognition and work production are slower.

This is all based on solid psycholinguistic experimentation. The most dramatic consequence is that vocabulary in a 2nd language, is about 40% smaller than in the native language.

The second argument is that if you don’t use your language, it gets corroded. Language loss is a very common phenomenon, so if in these complete English programmes, Dutch isn’t used anymore, all these words that the students used to know in Dutch, they get gradually weaker and weaker with regards to memory. They get lost gradually.

And the third argument is that their bilingualism is weakening, whereas proper bilingualism is an asset, that we all should foster. But it’s not fostered this way, it’s jeopardised, because bilingualism is getting weaker in our students.

Latin was once the language of science, and limited only to a small academic elite, shutting out the general public - Is the same now becoming true for English as the new lingua franca?

The general public is really getting angry at universities, and for good reason. They are feeling excluded. So in addition to all these language effects of Anglicisation, there are all these other effects, which I find even more distressing. Universities are distancing themselves from the general public.

In the Netherlands we have these letters in the newspapers sent in by the general public, and they all express this concern, they all show their anger.

So what can be done about this? Can it be solved through policy?

I think the Dutch government should stop it, not forever, but just until we know the consequences are not only for education, but also for society.

So whenever there’s a request for Anglicisation of a particular programme, say no. I’m not against English masters, but stop right away the further Anglicisation of bachelor’s programmes. And then develop well informed general views on why you would want this particular programme to be English, French Dutch, because what are the consequences for all these other languages? It’s not even considered.

It’s also not at all in agreement with the European multilingual policy that I adhere to, so it’s also completely contrary to what Europe promotes.

If you weaken all the national languages, then Europe has no chance at all to survive. But what I think should happen right now, here in the Netherlands, is to stop this further Anglicisation of the bachelor programmes, until all the negative consequences are found out.
**MACRON URGES TO BUILD UNIVERSITY NETWORKS IN EUROPE**

PARIS, 21.11.2017 *(science business)* -- A memo outlining French president Emmanuel Macron's proposals was distributed last week to aides of the 27 other European Union leaders. The Élysée Palace wants EU research and education funding to support the, “emergence by 2024 of around 20 ‘European universities’ that will be based on networks of four to six institutions, in at least three member states” ...

**EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA BY 2025**

BRUSSELS, 15.11.2017 *(baltic course)* -- The European Commission has formulated its vision for the creation of a European Education Area by 2025. It is to include 49 countries, and will focus on student mobility, the mutual recognition of diplomas, and improving language learning ...

**EU UNIS DEMAND BREXIT PROGRESS**

LONDON, 26.10.2017 *(wn)* -- European National University organisations have warned that the UK’s continued ties with European programs after 2019 has already begun to cause problems. Higher education leaders from more than 20 countries have called for urgent clarification on the UK’s continued involvement in European research and study abroad programs ...

**THE 100 BILLION DOLLAR CLUB**

HELSINKI, 01.12.2017 *(verkkouutiset)* -- The university club LERU in Brussels has published a report on the economic impact of its member universities in Europe. The twenty-three associated universities claim to have produced a total of 99.8 billion euros and 1.3 million jobs across Europe in 2016 ...

**INTELLIGENT ACCOUNTING IN HUNGARY**

BUDAPEST, 20.11.2017 *(origo)* -- A debate has been sparked over Hungary’s university funding. Critics say it’s not right that EU money is considered part of the national university budget. Especially, as István Fábián, rector of Debrecen University recently said, since public expenditure for higher education in Hungary is still below that of 2008. The government responded that the level of university debt has decreased, and student grants have been raised ...

**SERBIAN FUNDING IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES**

BELGRADE, 26.11.2017 *(blic)* -- Public expenditure on education in Serbia came to 4.3 percent of GDP last year, comfortably in line with the rest of the EU. However, next to nothing was invested in the improvement of the teaching process itself. Nikola Gluhovic, professor of economics in the University of East Sarajevo says “some study programs do not have many practical components, which diminishes their competitiveness in the market” ...

**‘SORBONNE PROCESS’ — COUP DE GRÂCE OR STRAITJACKET FOR BOLOGNA?**

BRUSSELS, 21.11.2017 *(div)* -- A big surprise in the *EU Commission’s proposal* of a new ‘European Education Area’ is the establishment of a new ‘Sorbonne Process’. It focusses on cross-border recognition of school, higher education and further education diplomas. “It seems to us that the Commission has given up on the Bologna Process. They rightfully point out that the non-binding agreement has not reached its targets. Nonetheless, we have not heard any Bologna countries calling for legal tools like the one the EU now proposes,” says Helge Schwitters, President of the European Students’ Union (ESU). Also, it seems, the Commission proposes the creation of a European Network of Universities, which, as ESU reads it, leads to the establishment of new institutions, on a European level ...

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AIRPORTS DRIVE UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONALISATION

WARWICK, 26.10.2017 (british council) -- Universities looking to improve their international rankings position could be better off relocating near an international airport, the authors of a joint study by the University of Warwick and the Alan Turing Institute suggest ... read more

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE IN PARADISE
LONDON, 08.11.2017 (independent) -- The universities of Oxford and Cambridge invested millions of pounds in offshore funds, according to revelations contained in the Paradise Papers. Money was separated into two funds, one directly from the universities and the other from individual colleges. They are the only European higher education institutions known to have cheated the public in that way. No scientific organisation, neither universities minister Jo Johnson, nor any ranking agency or university association has called them to account so far ... read more

GERMAN UNIVERSITIES RESUME MILITARY RESEARCH
DÜSSELDORF, 15.11.17 (wz) -- Isabel Pfeifer-Poensgen, science minister of the German federal state North Rhine-Westphalia, has proposed to resume military research in the region’s universities. The practice has been banned in recent years by the ‘civil clause’. “Good research cannot be prescribed by the state” she said, “Universities are not militarists with nothing better to do than arms research” ... read more

A TOOL FOR TRACKING ‘BIG DEAL’ CANCELLATIONS
WASHINGTON, 29.11.17 (sparc) -- Once ‘big deals’ on bundles of academic journals are fast becoming unsustainably expensive for what they offer, forcing institutions to reinvest their limited collection funds elsewhere, SPARC, a global coalition for Open Access in academia, has launched a tool allowing users to monitor the growing trend of the cancellation of such ‘big deals’ ... read more

SPAIN: PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES ON THE RISE
MADRID, 28.11.2017 (rrhh) -- Private universities and business schools in Spain reached 2.06 billion euros in 2016, 8.1 percent more than the previous year. They enroll 16.6 percent of all students in Spain. The sector is highly concentrated with the ten largest providers accounting for nearly half of the students ... read more

THE EFFECTS OF DEFUNDING DUTCH UNIVERSITIES
ROTTERDAM, 09.11.2017 (advalvas) -- The Erasmus University Rotterdam has raised over 26 million euros in donations from its alumni, to the ends of financing research and scholarships. Their goal is 100 million euros by 2025. Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam professor René Bekkers has called the plan “ambitious”, but is not surprised: “It is the only way for Dutch universities to survive, as student numbers increase and government funds stagnate” ... read more
RUSSIA EXPELS POLISH SCIENTIST

MOSCOW, 28.11.2017 (eureactiv) -- Poland has protested against the Russian decision to expel a Polish historian from the country. The historian from Jagiellonian University, was first detained overnight, and then given a note demanding that he leave the country, giving no explanation. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has since clarified that this was in retaliation to the expulsion of a Russian scientist from Poland in October, and accuses Poland of stirring artificial tensions between the countries ... read more

DANISH IMMIGRATION TARGETS RESEARCHERS

COPENHAGEN, 04.12.2017 (jv) -- In a climate hostile to immigration, foreign researchers in Denmark are now feeling the heat. At least 14 foreign academics have been accused of violating their work permits and face fines and deportation ... read more

MORE FOREIGN STUDENTS AT DUTCH UNIVERSITIES

THE HAGUE, 14.11.2017 (nl times) -- The number of international higher education students in the Netherlands is rising steeply, with over 80,000 enrolled during the 2016-2017 academic year. About 25 percent of these students are likely to stay in the country for a lifetime ... read more

MAASTRICHT PULLS BELGANS OVER THE BORDER

MAASTRICHT, 31.10.2017 (rtbf) -- The small class sizes and English-taught degree programmes of the University of Maastricht, in The Netherlands, are attracting a growing number of Belgians across the border. 600 Belgian students enrolled there this year alone, twice the number of five years ago ... read more

HEROES TO STOP THE SERBIAN BRAIN DRAIN

BELGRADE, 05.12.2017 (pink) -- This week, during the industry-sponsored event 'Youth Heroes', Serbian education and science minister, Mladen Šarčević stressed the importance of systemic solutions for youth retention in Serbia and the return of those who have gone abroad. "Serbia’s population will decrease by one third before 2050, if no steps are taken,” he said ... read more

DANISH EMPLOYERS EXPLOIT FOREIGN STUDENTS

COPENHAGEN, 08.11.2017 (uwn) -- Students from Eastern Europe in Denmark receive public student aid while they are working in restaurants and cleaning floors for a pittance. According to a report, 31.3 percent of EU students in the survey who are engaged as migrant workers earn significantly below the minimum wage. The share of foreign students earning only 40 percent of the minimum wage is highest among Bulgarians, Lithuanians and Polish ... read more

HUNGARY’S UNUSUAL INTERNATIONALISATION

BUDAPEST, 16.10.2017 (444) -- Hungarian science and education minister László Palkovics, has announced plans to make the Hungarian higher education system “as international as possible” after his visit to Iran, where the two countries agreed to offer one another 100 places for international students. They are expected to be in the fields of artificial intelligence, laser physics, medicine, transport, and water use ... read more
THE TOXIC UNIVERSITY
ZOMBIE LEADERSHIP, ACADEMIC ROCK STARS
AND NEOLIBERAL IDÉOLOGY

Sadly the forces of neoliberalism would have us believe that universities ought to operate like profit-making businesses, says John Smyth who is currently visiting professor of education and social justice at the University of Huddersfield, in Britain. And that they have to be engaged in cutthroat competition, run as ruthless corporations, where the market is the arbiter and regulator of all things, has become the prevailing norm in Western countries. This lemming-like behavior seems to have little basis in evidence, but there is a singular lack of political will and courage to oppose it. The econometric model that has been imposed is an alien interloper that is totally destroying the relational basis of universities as cultures and organisations, according to Smyth. His book considers the damages incurred to the institution of the university, as a result of the withdrawal of state funding and the imposition of neoliberal market reforms on higher education. It argues that universities have lost their way, and are currently drowning in an impenetrable mush of economic babble, spurious spin-offs of zombie economics, management-speak and militaristic-corporate jargon.

John Smyth
Palgrave, July 2017
Order

ANTI-ACADEMISM

In troubled times, why add fuel to the enemy’s fire and deal with anti-science prejudice? Quite simply: because it’s easier to counter arguments, when you analyse them, order them historically, and look for recurring patterns. Cultural scientists at the Humboldt-University and the Goethe-University of Frankfurt, Hanna Engelmeier and Philipp Felsch hosted a conference on ‘anti-academism’ in Berlin in March earlier this year. The lectures are now available in the current edition of the journal "Mittelweg 36".

Hanna Engelmeier, Philipp Felsch (eds.)
HIS, October 2017, in German
Order

HIGHER EDUCATION IN AUSTERITY EUROPE

The financial crisis of 2007/2008 prompted governments across Europe to adopt austerity measures aimed at the reduction of their escalating budget deficits. Higher Education in Austerity Europe explores how the resulting cuts in public expenditure have impacted on higher education directly through the reduction of public sector provision and indirectly as a result of the social and political consequences of that reduction. Moreover, it explores how the effects of these economic policies have differed markedly across the national regions of Europe, with the result that inequality has increased significantly both within and between national regions, and this, in turn, has led to social and political dislocation within and across communities.

Jon Nixon (ed.)
Bloomsbury
September 2017
Order

HIGHER EDUCATION, PUBLIC GOOD AND MARKETS

This book demonstrates how in the context of liberalisation, globalisation and marketisation, the crisis in higher education has assumed different dimensions in all advanced and emerging societies. The author shows how the state tends to slowly withdraw from the responsibility of higher education, including in the arena of policy-making, or simply adopts a policy of non-involvement which helps in the rapid unbridled growth of private sector in higher education. The book argues for the need to resurrect the compelling nature of higher education as a public good along with its several implications for public policy and planning, while providing a broad portrayal of global developments, comparative perspectives and key lessons.

Jandhyala Tilak
Routledge
2018
Order
GLOBAL SCIENCE, NATIONAL RESEARCH, AND THE QUESTION OF UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

Science has always operated in a competitive environment, but the globalisation of knowledge and the rising popularity and use of global rankings have elevated this competition to a new level. The quality, performance and productivity of higher education and university-based research have become a national differentiator in the global knowledge economy.

This article examines the inter-relationship and tensions between the national and the global in the context of the influences between higher education and global university rankings. It starts with a discussion of the globalisation of knowledge and the rise of rankings. It then moves on to consider rankings in the context of wider discourse relating to quality and measuring scholarly activity, both within academia and by governments.

Ellen Hazelkorn, Andrew Gibson
Higher Education Policy Research Unit
November 2017
Download

REVIEW OF WORLD-WIDE UNIVERSITY SPIN-OFFS FOR 2017

Universities are constantly recognising the importance that academic spin-offs can have on the transfer of knowledge and economy stimulation. A new review shows that universities are working towards supporting more spin-offs this year. The third quarter has had more growth than previous quarters, and September shows significantly more capital raised by spin-offs than any other month. North America (principally the United States and Canada) and Europe lead the spin-off trend.

Thierry Heles
Global University Venturing
October 2017
Download

UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY IN EUROPE III – THE SCORECARD 2017

Monitoring, comparing, and measuring different elements of institutional autonomy in around 30 European higher education systems has been an ambitious undertaking from its beginning in 2007. “University Autonomy in Europe III” provides a timely update 10 years after the beginning of the first data collection. With the release of 29 country profiles, it offers more qualitative information which allows a description of developments that cannot be measured or scored. It also gives the opportunity to our collective members to reflect on the current challenges and future developments.

Enora Bennetot Pruvot, Thomas Estermann
EUA
June 2017
Download
NATIONAL STUDENT FEE AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS IN EUROPE

Beyond the question of what is a fee and where they exist, this report considers: Are they paid by all or by some students? What criteria determine which students pay? How much do they actually pay and how much support is provided? Which students or families are able to access public financial support like grants, loans, family allowances or tax relief?

NOT BY DEGREES
IMPROVING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH (UK)

Across the UK, there is a public narrative about a ‘crisis’ in students’ mental health with tragic reports of student suicides. On the other hand, young people today are often accused of being ‘snowflakes’ unable to cope with life. What is behind these narratives? Has this changed over time and why? Are universities meeting the challenge? And what more can be done? This report looks to provide answers.

HOUSERASMUS+
RESEARCH REPORT

The development of the housing situation for mobile students in Europe is alarming. This research has stretched for two years in order to gain a keen understanding of the student housing situation and be able to formulate recommendations to all stakeholders in the field.

The article looks at the involvement of the three main transnational student associations — the European Students’ Union (ESU), the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and the European Students’ Forum (AEGEE) — in European governance of higher education policies within the EU and the EHEA. It explores the mechanisms for interest intermediation that exist for students in both policy arenas.

Manja Klemenčič, Fernando Palomares
November 2017
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<td>Bonn, 17-18 January 2018</td>
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<td>11th EUA-CDE Workshop</td>
<td>Valletta, 18-19 January 2018</td>
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<td>Universities and Public Engagement</td>
<td>Barcelona, 19 January 2018</td>
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<td>1st European Education Summit</td>
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<td>EURASIA Higher Education Summit 2018 (EURIE)</td>
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<td>University-Business Forum</td>
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<td>EuroStudent VI: Final Conference</td>
<td>Berlin, 6-7 March 2018</td>
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<td>EUA: Engaged and Responsible Universities Shaping Europe</td>
<td>Zurich, 5-6 April 2018</td>
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<td>24th Annual EARMA Conference</td>
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<td>EURASHE: Partnerships for a Digital Future</td>
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<td>Scholars at Risk 2018 Global Congress</td>
<td>Berlin, 23-26 April 2018</td>
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<td>2nd Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) Conference</td>
<td>Vienna, 27 April 2018</td>
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<td>IUNC Eurasia 2018: Highered Internationalization as a Priority</td>
<td>Moscow, 14-16 May 2018</td>
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<td>3rd International Congress on VET</td>
<td>Winterthur, 6-8 June 2018</td>
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<td>World Congress on Education</td>
<td>Dublin, 15-18 June 2018</td>
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<td>#EDEN18: Navigating ... in the Digital Learning Landscape</td>
<td>Genova, 17-20 June 2018</td>
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<td>London, 20-22 June 2018</td>
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<td>8th The Future of Education</td>
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<td>40th EAIR Forum - Competition, Collaboration and Complementarity in Higher Education</td>
<td>Budapest, 26-29 August 2018</td>
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<td>30th Annual EAIE Conference and Exhibition</td>
<td>Geneva, 11-14 September 2018</td>
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<td>CIEE: College Study Abroad Annual Conference</td>
<td>Barcelona, 7-10 November 2018</td>
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<td>EQAF: 13th European Quality Assurance Forum</td>
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<td>UNESCO Global Conference: Quality Assurance in Higher Education</td>
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calls for proposals

**links**

**H2020-MSCA-ITN-2018**

**MARIE CURIE INNOVATIVE TRAINING NETWORKS**

The Innovative Training Networks (ITN) aim to train a new generation of early-stage researchers, able to convert ideas into products and services for economic and social benefit. The total budget is €542,000,000, deadline 17 January 2018.

**ERASMUS+ CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Objectives are: learning mobility, strategic partnerships, and meetings between young people and decision-makers. The total budget is €2,490 million, with 2,253 million allocated to Education and Training, 188 million to Youth programmes, 12 million to Jean Monnet, and 37 million to Sport. The deadline is 8 February 2018.

**H2020-MSCA-NIGHT-2018**

**MARIE CURIE EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS’ NIGHT**

The European Researchers’ Night aims to bring researchers closer to the general public and to increase awareness of their activities and their impact on citizens’ daily life, and encouraging young people to embark on research careers. The total budget is €12,000,000. Deadline 14 February 2018.

**ERC CONSOLIDATOR GRANT**

... are designed to support excellent Principal Investigators at the career stage at which they may still be consolidating their own independent research team or programme. Applications must demonstrate their ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility. Total budget over five years €2,000,000. Deadline 15 February 2018.

**MSCA-RISE-2018**

**MARIE CURIE RESEARCH+INNOVATION STAFF EXCHANGE**

The RISE scheme promotes international and cross-sector collaboration through exchanging research and innovation staff, and sharing knowledge and ideas from research to market (and vice-versa). The scheme rewards creativity and entrepreneurship. The total budget is €80,000,000. Deadline 21 March 2018.

**EUROPEAN POLICY EXPERIMENTATIONS**

This call is to promote the improvement of the effectiveness of education and training systems through the collection and evaluation of evidence on the systemic impact of innovative policy measures. This call requires the involvement of high-level public authorities of the eligible countries and the use of sound and widely recognised evaluation methods based on field trials. Total budget €10,000,000. Max. per project: €2,000,000. Deadlines: Pre-proposals: 10 April, full proposals: 25 September 2018.

**SCIENCE4REFUGEES**

The Science4Refugees initiative is directed towards researchers/scientists with refugee background, which will enable them to continue their educational path or enter the European research labour market. Under the header “Science4Refugees”, as part of the EURAXESS initiative, the integration into the European researchers’ community as part of the labour force shall be enhanced. The total budget is €1,000,000. Deadline 10 April 2018.

**FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS**

1) with a EU-wide network of relevant organisations to promote co-operation and the development and implementation in the field of key competences, including the improvement of basic skills. 2) to support a Europe-wide network of relevant organisations to promote co-operation and the development and implementation of policies with regard to teachers and school leaders. Deadline 11 May 2018.