Our Vision
By 2025, Circle U. is an inclusive, research-intensive and interdisciplinary European university. Students, staff and partners from civil society, businesses and the public sector collaborate to jointly develop competencies and solutions for keeping Europe and our planet healthy, peaceful, democratic and prosperous.

Our Mission
Empowering our students and staff to mobilize knowledge for impact in order to make the world a better place.
The challenges (I)

Inclusion and social contacts

- Our students worry that virtual mobility becomes “second-rate mobility”
- Current COVID-19 experience
  - IT gap in terms of skills and equipment
  - Lack of social contacts

➔ How to develop a positive and socially rich virtual experience?
Integrating international virtual students

• Student support is key to the learning experience:
  • Academic & extra-academic events and calendar
  • IT support and access to learning environments
  • Codes for student-teacher relations
  • Assessment culture

➔ How to rethink student support for virtual international students?
Circle U.’s virtual exchange projects

- Circle U. virtual exchanges
  - Exchange of on-line courses for credits
  - Challenge-based virtual collaborations
Circle U.’s virtual exchange projects

Circle U. virtual exchanges

Exchange of on-line courses for credits

Challenge-based virtual collaborations

Inspired by...

Circle U.’s virtual exchange program

Circle U.’s version...
Exchange of on-line courses for credits

Aspects we will work on

Quality framework for virtual classrooms and digital learning:
- Choice of virtual courses
- Catalogue: centralised and detailed information
- Proactive student support
- IT system(s)

Lessons learned so far

Testing Online Inter-Institutional Collaboration across the Globe: The Virtual Exchange Program

Dr Anne S. Helsdingen, Ecole Polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
Gijs Elkhuizen, MSc, Wageningen University and Research, The Netherlands
François Docq, MEd, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

DAAD conference, 11 December 2019
“Virtual Exchange: Borderless Mobility between the European Higher Education Area and Regions Beyond”

Circle U.’s virtual exchange projects

Circle U. virtual exchanges

- Exchange of on-line courses for credits
- Challenge-based virtual collaborations

Inspired by...

Circle U.’s version...

Integrated in Circle U.’s Knowledge Hubs

https://vep-online.org/

https://evolve-erasmus.eu/
Challenged-based virtual collaborations

Students’ case competition: **Circle U. challenges**

**Aspects we will work on**

- How to establish a quality hybrid collaboration format (physical/virtual exchanges)?
- How to recognise the activity in the training?
- How to ensure diversity in participants?
What we keep in mind...

1. Not all students are equal with digital tools and hence dedicated inclusion measures must be conceived intrinsically to the virtual exchange program,

2. Both academic and extra-academic exchanges are important when adding an intercultural dimension to virtual learning experiences,

3. Student support initiatives have to evolve and adapt to anticipate and solve problems that “virtual students” face when entering a campus remotely and,

4. Virtual exchanges should complement, not replace physical mobility.