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PRESS RELEASE

INFORMAL MEETING OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

On 24 and 25 January 2022, the EU ministers responsible for higher education, research and innovation met in Paris, in the context of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

They met at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie at the invitation of the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Frédérique Vidal. The ministers discussed the future of universities for Europe, and the need in this regard to better combine European policies for higher education, research and innovation.

At a first discussion with professors from the Collège de France, the ministers reiterated the need for transformation in the sector of European higher education so as to respond to existing and future challenges, particularly the green and digital transitions. The ministers also affirmed their intention to support establishments in the process of transformation in order for them to contribute to the major priorities of the EU, such as the European Green Deal, digital decade and industrial strategy.

The ministers also underscored the international dimension of European policy regarding higher education, research and innovation and the importance of cooperating with third countries. With the aim of ensuring a safe and conducive environment for the work of students and international researchers, the ministers recognised the need to promote balanced and reciprocal collaboration with third countries based on shared principles and values.

Lastly, the ministers discussed strengthening inter-university cooperation in Europe, on the basis of the recent proposals made on 18 January 2022 by the European Commission: a European Strategy for Universities and a proposal for a Council Recommendation on building bridges for effective European cooperation in higher

**Ministry of Higher Education, Research and
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education. The ministers pledged full support to alliances such as European Universities and recognized the need to make further progress for the benefit of the entire European sector of higher education, in particular by working towards a unique legal statute to allow universities to deliver European degrees, jointly recruit the best researchers and students at international level and establish joint structures such as state-of-the-art laboratories.

In this respect, the ministers committed to begin work in the coming months to remove the barriers facing alliances such as European Universities, by providing them with a set of instruments and contributing towards securing their future by exploiting synergies between European, national and regional financing mechanisms.