

General agreement and minimum requirements of EU-CONEXUS PhD Co-tutelle in Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability

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EU CONEXUS
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Preamble

The European University for Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability (EU-CONEXUS) is a transnational European higher education and research institution that covers smart urban sustainable coastal development from a global point of view. EU-CONEXUS is composed of 9 European universities, which are located in France, Greece, Spain, Lithuania, Croatia, Romania, Ireland, Germany and Cyprus.

Universities and research institutions have a central role to play in promoting the ‘Blue Economy’ and ‘Blue Growth’ and to contribute to the skills and competences of the graduates who can work in a complex and challenging labour market. A new approach is needed with respect to the way in which we structure programmes of study and research. In response to this need, 9 universities have joined together to merge their strengths and know-how in interdisciplinary short-term and degree programmes, as well as to offer students the opportunity to study at an international inter-campus European University.

Article 1: Purpose

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish the general and minimum requirements for a EU-CONEXUS PhD Co-tutelle programme for topics related to Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability (SmUCS). This will be referred hereafter as “EU - CONEXUS General co-tutelle agreement”.

A co-tutelle is a PhD programme where a research candidate is jointly enrolled at two universities, in this case members of the EU-CONEXUS alliance and spends time at each university with the PhD/doctoral thesis only defended once. The candidate is jointly supervised by academic staff at each institution, and, upon successful completion of the PhD programme, the candidate is able to graduate with a PhD or equivalent title from each university.

This general agreement establishes only the general framework and the minimum requirements for a PhD Co-tutelle between members of EU-CONEXUS Alliance and shall be associated with a specific bi-lateral co-tutelle signed by the 2 parties, which will establish all required specific conditions for delivering the two PhD degrees and legal diplomas. This latest will referred hereafter as “Co-tutelle bilateral agreement”.

Article 2: Basis

This EU-CONEXUS General co-tutelle agreement has been prepared on the basis of:

- Programme Committee for PhD Study Programmes’s decisions.
- Academic Council and Research Council’s decisions approved by the Governing Board of EU-CONEXUS.
- The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) of the European Higher Education Area and principles of automatic mutual recognition. ECTS allows credits taken at one higher education institution to be counted towards a qualification studied for at another. ECTS credits represent the volume of learning based on defined learning outcomes and their associated workload. In case of non-application of ECTS for doctoral studies the equivalent number of hours is used (1 ECTS = 25 hours of work).

Article 3: Structure and Content of the EU-CONEXUS PhD Co-tutelle

The requirements of the EU-CONEXUS PhD Co-tutelle programme in Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability (hereafter SmUCS), that the doctoral candidates must fulfil are the following:

1. Research topic:

The research topic of the thesis should be under the umbrella of the Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability on one of the following areas:

- a. Life Sciences and Biotechnology
 - b. Environmental Sciences and Biodiversity
 - c. Coastal Engineering
 - d. Social, Culture and Human Sciences
2. **Supervisors:** the doctoral candidate will have at least two supervisors, one from each EU-CONEXUS partner involved in the co-tutelle.
 3. **Language:** The PhD thesis shall be written and submitted in English (preferably) or one of the other official languages in the EU. The language has to be defined in the bilateral cotutelle agreement.
 4. **Research stay:** part of the PhD shall be prepared at the EU-CONEXUS co-tutelle partner university (at least 6 months, consecutive or not).
 5. **Workload:** The PhD student shall have a part of the workload shared with the co-tutelle partner and/or with other partners within the EU-CONEXUS Alliance. The minimum requirement for a co-tutelle within the EU-CONEXUS alliance and for obtaining an EU-CONEXUS certificate is to obtain 10 ECTS or the equivalent in hours of work (250 hours) from shared activities, on the whole duration of the thesis, to be defined in the bilateral cotutelle agreement. Some examples of shared activities are: , shared courses, shared research activities, (research reports), participation at EU-CONEXUS Summer school etc.
 6. **Defence:** For the composition of the defence committee, it is recommended to have at least one member from a different EU-CONEXUS partner, specialized in the PhD thesis topic, different from the 2 supervisors involved in the co-tutelle.

All the other requirements not defined in this article will be established in the co-tutelle bilateral agreement.

Doctoral candidates, having successfully defended the thesis elaborated under co-tutelle, are entitled to two PhD degree diplomas, one delivered by each partner in the co-tutelle, as agreed by both institutions. The doctoral candidates having fulfilled the programme requirements detailed in this agreement will receive the certificate “EU-CONEXUS Co-tutelle programme in SmUCS” co-signed by all EU-CONEXUS partner universities.

Article 4: Mobility and Credit Recognition

Each EU-CONEXUS course given by a partner university is considered as learning mobility exchange (similar to Erasmus+), is subject to academic recognition and

transfer of credits, and can be included in the Diploma Supplement to prove an international curriculum. A student taking a course from a partner university is considered as a participant to academic mobility with all the rights and obligations (similar to Erasmus+), regardless of the type of mobility (virtual, blended or physical).

In case of doctoral studies in co-tutelle, recognition of ECTS or number of workload hours is regulated by the co-tutelle bilateral agreement.

The student can be on virtual or blended mobility at more than one university during the same semester.

Article 5: Legal Clauses

The present Agreement shall come into effect on the date the last party signs and will be valid until At the end of the agreed term, the parties agree to provide an assessment of their cooperation activities. Updates of the agreement can be proposed by any partner and have to be validated by the Academic and Research Council. A partner can decide to leave the agreement with prior notice of six months to the Academic and Research Council.