

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

CY Cergy Paris University Becomes a “Grand Établissement,” Marking a Key Milestone in Its Development

As of February 19, 2025, CY Cergy Paris University takes a decisive step forward in its development by transitioning from its status as an experimental public institution to officially becoming a “Grand Établissement.” This new, long-term legal status solidifies and validates the ambitious transformations undertaken since the university’s creation in 2020.

Recognition of excellence and strategic growth

According to the evaluation report by the expert committee of The High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCERES): *“The committee was highly impressed by the extensive and high-quality work carried out by the institution in collaboration with its partners, particularly in its successive structural developments since at least 2012. Over the past decade, the State and local authorities have supported the university’s integrative role, allowing it to follow a steady upward trajectory. CY has successfully engaged an increasing number of partners, with whom—through an innovative governance model that continues to evolve—it has developed and continues to develop collaborations in key areas such as education, research, and international relations.”*

This transition marks the successful consolidation of CY’s institutional and strategic structure, reinforcing its position as a key player in higher education and research in France while affirming its global ambitions.

“By moving beyond the experimental institution status, the French government acknowledges that our organizational model is sustainable and viable,” states Laurent Gatineau, President of CY Cergy Paris University.

A Milestone in a Long-Term Strategy

The transition to “Grand Établissement” status confirms the trajectory set by CY since 2020. With over €100 million in funding from excellence programs (PIA 2, France 2030), the university has demonstrated its ability to innovate while staying deeply connected to the needs of its region.

“This change in status is far more than just an administrative formality. It represents five years of institutional transformation, collective effort, and a clear vision for the future. It is a decisive turning point for CY, reinforcing its role as an ambitious and engaged university.”
— Laurent Gatineau, President of CY Cergy Paris University

Since obtaining the Initiative d’Excellence (I-SITE Paris Seine) label in February 2017, the COMUE University Paris Seine, the University of Cergy-Pontoise (UCP), ESSEC Business School, and EISTI have been engaged in a deep restructuring of the higher education and research landscape in western Île-de-France. Their goal? To establish a world-class university with a strong societal and economic foundation, committed to sustainable development. This vision took a significant step forward in 2020 with the creation of CY Cergy Paris University, born from the merger of EISTI and UCP. In 2022, CY Cergy Paris University and ESSEC Business School achieved a major milestone with the definitive attribution of the I-SITE label (Initiatives – Science – Innovation – Territories – Economy).



A Simplified Governance for Greater Efficiency

With this new status, CY simplifies its institutional structure and governance. Key decision-making moments—such as the election of the university president and budget votes—will now take place within a unified governing body created specifically for this purpose. This streamlining aims to enhance coordination, accelerate decision-making, and strengthen the university's autonomy in managing its projects.

"This modernized governance model is essential to support our development and provide our teams with the flexibility to respond quickly to academic and financial challenges," explains Gabriel Desgranges, Vice President for Site Policy at CY.

"Our governing body is unique in that it integrates all activities into a single decision-making entity. By combining resources, education, and research within the same structure, the university community gains a 360-degree vision, fostering richer discussions and strategic alignment. Our governance model is ahead of its time and anticipates future evolutions in higher education and research," adds Laurent Gatineau.

A Stable Framework to Strengthen Student Democracy

CY Cergy Paris University firmly believes that students play a vital role in shaping the world of tomorrow. In January 2024, the university launched its Student Parliament as part of its experimental governance model. This consultative body aims to increase student participation in university decision-making, reinforcing their role as active citizens within the university community.

The 38-member Student Parliament, divided into six colleges, also includes representatives from the 12 partner schools within the CY Alliance. This initiative enhances student life by fostering a multicultural, international, and inclusive environment, supporting the personal and academic growth of the 40,000 students within the alliance.

A Future-Oriented Roadmap

Becoming a "Grand Établissement" is not an end goal but rather a key milestone in CY Cergy Paris University's long-term development. The university is committed to expanding its impact, strengthening its national and international reputation, and deepening its regional engagement.

"This transformation is part of a broader restructuring of higher education and research. By adopting a more flexible governance model and unifying our decision-making processes, CY Cergy Paris University positions itself as a pioneer, anticipating the changes that will shape the future of academia." — Laurent Gatineau, President of CY Cergy Paris University

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