



The global alliance in management education

A learning history to create valuable futures



Jaap Boonstra, June 2022

Introduction

CEMS – The Global Alliance in Management Education, has existed already more than thirty years. The purpose of CEMS is clear: preparing future leaders to contribute to a sustainable world. The CEMS Master program in International Management is innovative and based on strong values such as empathy, cultural diversity, professional responsibility, and ethical conduct.

Can you image the richness of the history of CEMS as a value-based alliance and what we can learn from this history? This history can be an inspiration for CEMS students, faculty members, corporate and social partners. The history can be an inspiration for leaders and managers who are really interested in value-based alliances.

This learning history of CEMS has several aims.

- Learning from the valuable history and development of CEMS as a global value-based alliance contributing to a sustainable world.
- Inspiring managers and organizational professionals to understand and consider collaboration in value-based alliances to build a better world.
- Involving CEMS faculty, students, and staff in understanding the history of CEMS as an invitation to contribute to its future.

This learning history has four parts which reflect the development of CEMS as a value-based alliance. The first paragraph describes the origin of CEMS. The second paragraph explains how CEMS became an alliance of European business schools. The third paragraph highlights how CEMS developed into a truly global alliance. The fourth and final paragraph is visualizing the future of CEMS.

This case study and learning history originated during a Global Leadership class that focused on the dynamics of value-based alliances in a global world. CEMS was taken as an example in this course. Almost fifty students took a deep dive into discovering and uncovering the history of CEMS and developed exciting ideas to contribute to the future of CEMS.

This learning history is based on document study and more than twenty interviews with founders, professors, directors, administrators, alumni, and students. The text is written by Jaap Boonstra in co-creation with students and directors. This case study was only possible by the support of students in the CEMS Global Leadership class at Esade, Nicole de Fontaine and Rita Solzesz from the CEMS global office, Jean-Paul Larçon as one of the founding fathers, and all the members of CEMS who engaged in interviews and shared their experiences to unravel the valuable history of CEMS.

Let's learn from the past and co-create a valuable future together.

Barcelona, June 2022

Jaap Boonstra

Table of contents

Introduction	3
Forming the CEMS alliance	7
The dream	7
The beginning	8
The boader idea	8
Political support	11
Legally funding and expanding	13
CEMS values	15
Initial program	16
Governance structure	18
Corporate partners	19
Student body	20
The original idea of CEMS	21
Strategic issues and paradoxes	21
Building the CEMS alliance	25
European expansion	25
The Bologna agreement	27
Mission statement	28
Identity and values	28
New study program	29
Governance	30
Corporate partners	33
Social partners	35
Student board	35
Alumni network	35
Strategic issues and paradoxes	36

Developing the CEMS alliance	39
Alignment and collaboration	39
New ambition	41
New strategy	42
Master program International Management	44
Governance	46
Corporate and social partners	48
Student board	50
Alumni network	50
Strategic issues and paradoxes	51
Evolving the CEMS alliance	55
The dream revisited	55
Growing as global alliance	55
Aligning with global challenges	58
Innovative ways of learning	59
Intensifying collaborations	66
Impact and visibility	71
Governance	74
Strategic issues and paradoxes	76
Epilogue	79
Appendixes	83
Appendix 1: Conceptual foundation and methodological justification	83
Appendix 2: CEMS community 2022: schools, partners, students, and alumni	88

CEMS - Global Alliance in Management Education

CEMS

The Global Alliance in Management Education (CEMS) is a global alliance of academic institutions, corporate companies, social enterprises, and NGO's. The alliance is dedicated to educating and preparing future generations of global business leaders to work in a multilingual, multicultural, and interconnected business world. CEMS universities offer a masters study in international management for their students. The aim of CEMS is to prepare responsible leaders to contribute to a more open, sustainable, and inclusive world. The CEMS academic and corporate members work collectively to develop knowledge and provide education that is essential in the multilingual, multicultural, and interconnected business world. CEMS promotes global citizenship, with a particular emphasis on three values:

- The pursuit of excellence with high standards of performance and ethical conduct.
- Understanding and drawing upon cultural diversity with respect and empathy.
- Professional responsibility and accountability in relation to society as a whole.

The alliance was founded in 1988 and contains 34 schools across 5 continents with almost 17,000 alumni of more than 100 nationalities working in more than 75 countries. More than 70 corporates are involved in the alliance. This case study highlights four stages of creating and managing global alliances: forming, building, developing, and elaborating the CEMS alliance.

Forming the CEMS alliance (1988 – 1993)

The initiative to form an alliance in business education was taken in 1988 by two initiators from ESADE business school in Spain and HEC Business school in France. The initiators knew each other well and shared the same ambition in creating an international alliance in business education.

The dream

Orève – The Dream

Since the beginning of the 20th century, A small café in Montmartre in Paris with the name Orève has been serving hot chocolates and absinthe to night owls of all kinds. Young painters, students, and local stars, from Marcel Aymé to Jean Marais, all found inspiration between the walls of 89, rue Caulaincourt. At the turn end of the 1980s, *Orève* hosted one of the most important meetings between the founders preceding the birth of CEMS.

Informal discussions and gatherings of this sort were frequent in the early days and were facilitated by the friendship and respect that existed between the founders. Indeed, Jean-Paul

Larçon and Lluís Maria Pugès understood each other very well and shared the same ambition and desire to promote their students. The friendship they shared with Claudia Cevenini and Nicole de Fontaines ensured a personal dimension to this initiative and no limit to desire to promote it. “It was a dream” claims Jean-Paul Larçon.

The dream developed thanks to long conversations, but no details nor structures. The ambition was of creating a permanent bridge between universities to allow students to have in depth participation in the pedagogy of another one.

In the years following the meeting at *Orève*, personal relationships and friendships continued to play an important role in finding the first partner schools. Nothing was planned and the movement evolved spontaneously by the desire to do something together, something European.

The beginning

At the end of the 1980s, Jean-Paul Larçon from HEC in Paris and Lluís Maria Pugès from Esade in Spain started discussing the need to accelerate the internationalization of education and the need for collaboration between universities to contribute to the development of future leaders in Europe.

The initiative to create an alliance in business education started in 1988 from the idea to explore possibilities for collaboration between two universities: Esade Business School in Barcelona and HEC Business School in Paris. The idea behind it was to support each other to become world class business schools. The discussion started as an exploration without a clear agenda, but just as an exploration to collaborate more together. The two universities investigated how to create added value for themselves, students, and businesses. During one of the conversations the idea was born to start a discovery if there was a European model of Management Education to contribute to the Europeanisation of business education and enlarge opportunities for students. There were no relevant international alliances for business education at that time. In one day, the framework for a community of European business schools was created, including the idea to collaborate with corporate partners. During this exploration the initiators from Esade, Dean Lluís Maria Pugès and Claudia Ceverini from Esade, and Jean-Paul Larçon and Nicole de Fontaines from HEC, started to know each other very well, and built a trustful and open relationship based on mutual respect. The initiators became professional friends, creating something new to expand opportunities for students and stimulate students to learn and work across borders of European countries.

The broader idea

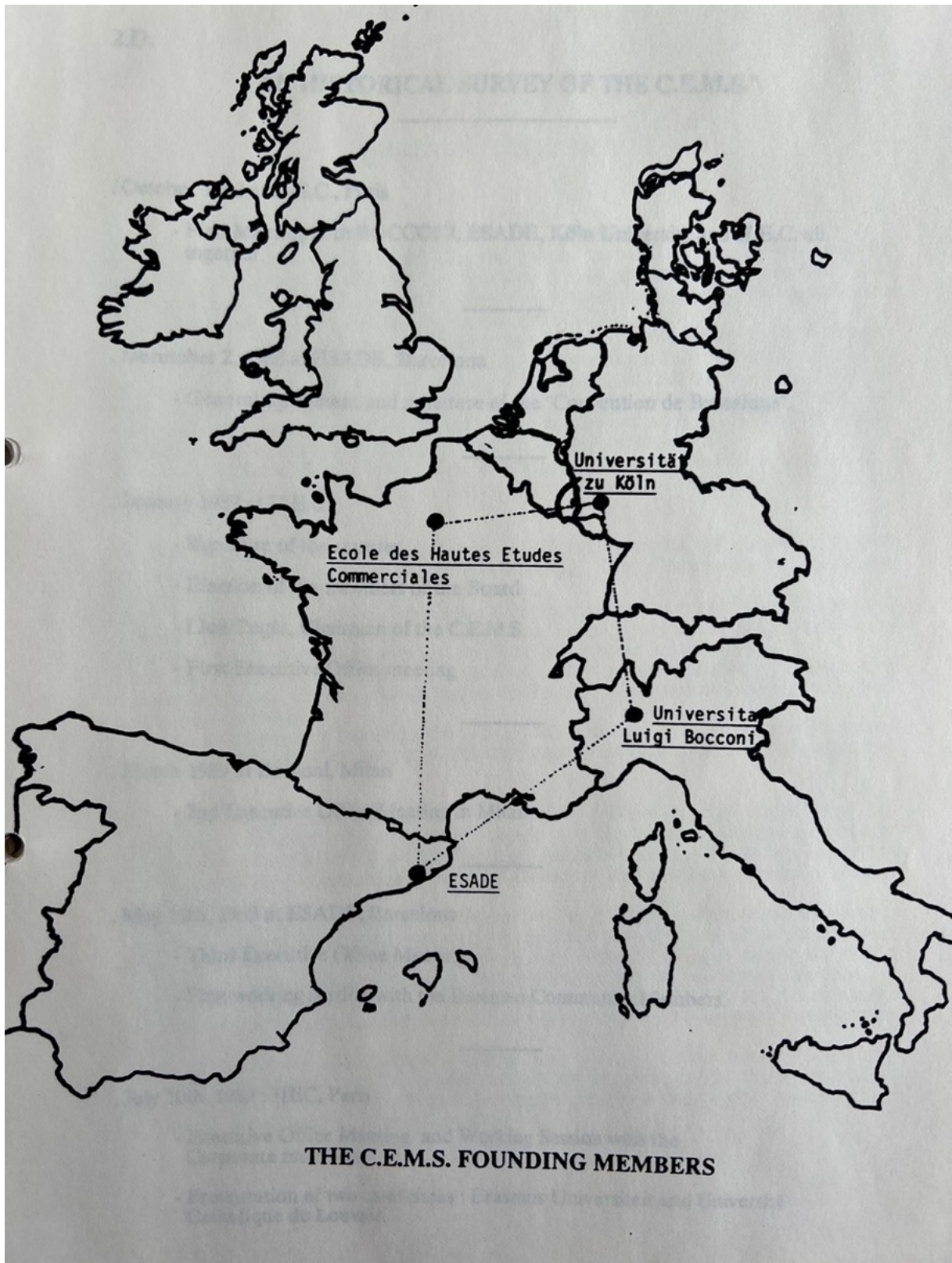
The idea became more elaborated with the aim to build a joint degree in management between universities in Europe. The initiators had strong ties with universities in the United States and forced themselves to think out-of-the-box in developing the idea of a European alliance of business schools. One decision was to set this alliance as a private initiative to create more

freedom in designing the alliance without government legislation and interference. Another decision was to expand the collaboration to other universities in Europe and invite only one business university with the highest reputation in a European country. It was decided to first approach Bocconi and the University of Cologne, knowing that it was important to invite another European Business School from the north.

The aim was to develop a European body of knowledge in Economics and Management and enable students to embrace pan-European careers. The initiators visited Carlo Secchi, a well-known colleague from Università Commercial Luigi Bocconi in Italy to talk about the first idea. They did the same with Günter Sieben from the University of Cologne in Germany. Both universities approved the idea immediately. They also contacted some universities in the United Kingdom and found out that the British academic landscape was rooted in bachelor programs and that these universities valued their independence and wanted to experiment on their own. The four initiators agreed together that they would invest time and energy to make this idea a success. This mutual agreement based on trust was confirmed by a handwritten statement signed by the four founders, some without formal approval from their governing bodies, fully convinced of the value of the initiative to join forces in offering a European program in international management.

han contribuido una asociación de escuelas Europeas con la intención
 de contribuir a la formación europea de los estudiantes de las escuelas
 de Management.
 Por EIUOE firmé el documento fundacional al decano de la escuela
 la Bocconi su mandato del Rettore si' stata rappresentata dal ^{Carlo Secchi} Presidente della
 commissione Relazioni Internazionali.
 spero di contribuire a questo passo in avanti nella costruzione europea!
 L'École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales de Paris a bien une des
 prestigieuses années académiques : Bocconi, Ecole de Cologne, avec la
 signature d'avis catégorique un règlement - l'école européenne mais aussi
 au profit de la communauté scientifique des écoles de management.
 Günter Sieben
 Die Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften der Fachbereichs der Universität
 zu Köln ist stolz, im Verbund der vier bevür-tugten Hochschulen einen
 Baustein für die Entwicklung einer europäischen Management-
 hochschule und Managementausbildung zu legen.
 Günter Sieben

Written informal agreement to collaborate and launch an European degree in Management Education by the four founders..



The CEMS founding partners in the first CEMS brochure for students with the study program¹

Political support

The idea for a European degree in Management Education was stimulated by Nicole Fontaine, a French politician who served as the vice president of the European Parliament during the foundation of CEMS and supported and endorsed the idea to create a Community of European Management Schools (CEMS) to establish a European degree in management education. She was born as a child of a doctor and grandchild of a teacher in a public school. Before being elected in the European parliament she was engaged in the relation between government and government subsidized private educational institutions and special education. She was a member of the Supreme Council of National Education in France from 1975 to 1981. Nicole became president of the parliament from 1999 till 2004 and supported freedom of education and the collaboration between European Universities.



First General Assembly with a talk of Nicole Fontaine, vice president of the European Parliament, 1989.

Jacques Delors, another French politician who served as the 8th president of the European Commission from 1985 to 1995 was one of the most visible and influential leaders in European affairs. He pled for policies that closely linked the member nations together and promoted the need for unity. He initiated the Erasmus Program ("EuROpean Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students". This student exchange program was established in 1987 within the European Union. The idea for a European degree was further stimulated by discussions between European ministers to align university programs in

Europe, but it took till 2005 before the governments agreed on a standard for university degrees.



Jacques Delors receives ‘le Diplôme d'Honneur CEMS’ in 1992 from Luis Pages, the CEMS president that time.”

The right program for a European Union under construction

Jacques Delors was one of many political figures that surrounded the formation of CEMS. Together with him, Nicole Fontaine – at that time president of the EU Parliament – and Dalia Grybauskaitė – at that time European Commissioner for Education – supported the development of the program. Indeed, CEMS promoted an ideology that was broad and focussed on internationalization and collaboration between universities in Europe to contribute to European collaboration. Professedly, the mission of CEMS was not to change the national academic systems, but to ensure higher compatibility between them. The latter objective was particularly high in the agenda of EU civil servants, thus guaranteeing CEMS significant political value. Therefore, the historical context sparked both academic enthusiasm and political needs. CEMS’ founders interpreted this mission considering the needs and ambitions of business schools, thus promoting higher qualified professionals. On the other hand, the stakes for politicians were higher as the timing and the value of CEMS configured it as a testing ground for shaping and championing the future of Europe and the mobility of students. Two aspects that could not be taken for granted at the end of 1980s as recalled one of the first CEMS professors: “when I started teaching at HEC, people in Paris knew nothing about Barcelona, they believed it was an exotic place.”

The initiators decided not to wait till European governmental decisions became formalized but chose to make CEMS a private initiative without legal recognition for a degree by ministries in different countries. Instead of governmental recognition, the initiators focused on market recognition based on the collaboration with the corporate partners. The now four initiators knew each other well from exchange programs and conferences and they appreciated and trusted each other. The basic idea in creating the alliance and offering the CEMS Masters was beneficial for all parties: students, professors, universities, and business partners. From the beginning, the idea included a close collaboration with businesses as partners in the alliance. During the initiative the initiators developed a deep friendship and common ground in building and offering a program in International Business.

During the start of CEMS all countries had different formats for university degrees. Some universities started with a propaedeutic year, followed by broad candidate phase of three years, and a specialization stage for another three years. Some universities offered a separate bachelor, followed by a master program. At other universities, students would study one subject for five years. Overcoming the incompatibility of national degree programs was a huge puzzle since national degrees looked like fortresses and it seemed impossible to combine them. At that time, each school taught in their local language. To overcome these differences, the CEMS Masters focused on market recognition and the program would take place during their final year of studies using English as the common language. Companies in Europe were going international, and it was meaningful to prepare graduates as future leaders for these companies. The value of this initiative was immediately recognized by these companies.



First logo of CEMS as Community of European Management Schools reflecting the four founding schools

Legally funding and expanding

The creation of CEMS as the *Community of European Management Schools* was sealed by the signing of the Foundation Act on 2nd december 1988. The four member schools were represented by Jean-Paul Larçon (Dean of HEC), Lluís Pagès (Dean of Esade), Carlo Secchi (Università Bocconi) and Günter Sieben (University of Cologne). CEMS is established as a non-profit association and the CEMS office is opened and led by Nicole de Fountaines as executive director and assisted by Marriette Lecroart.



Signing of the Illegal Foundation Act on 2nd December 1988 in Barcelona by the four founders

The inaugural General Assembly was held in September 1989 at Esade, where Lluís Pugés was elected as the first Chairman. Many universities in Europe were attracted to the idea of a community of European business schools and showed interest to become a member. One year later, the Rotterdam School of Management and the Louvain School of Management became CEMS member schools, followed by Copenhagen Business School, the University of St. Gallen and WU-Vienna University of Economics and Business. This growing interest for academic membership resulted in formulating criteria for potential member schools based on three pillars:²

- **Quality** of the academic program. This meant that each member must adjust to the CEMS requirements, adding new disciplines or courses to regular course offerings, Europeanising teaching methods with all the creation of new methods and disciplines that this implied, developing faculty exchange programs and creating a sense of belonging to a common extended European faculty.
The quality of the new academic members admitted to CEMS must always be absolutely beyond question. A shared degree is a commitment, obliging all the partners to maintain the highest standards in quality.

- **Quantity** of students. The CEMS members believe that a considerable number of students from each school should participate in the program and earn the CEMS degree if the Association is to have a true impact on the European market, accurately respond to corporate needs, and have a lasting influence on the faculty, curriculum, and general culture of each member school. The CEMS is expected to give a distinctive shape to the education provided by its members. Student acceptance of the CEMS concept will naturally go a long way towards encouraging this development.
- **Immediacy** is the third objective. A single Europe will soon be a reality and employers are already searching for graduates with a truly European background and education. Both, the academic and corporate members of the CEMS are fully committed to exercising the strictest controls in terms of quality and quantity to guarantee that the CEMS diploma will always be synonymous with the finest in European and international management education.

During this stage the number of schools expanded from the four initiating schools to eleven member schools. This created a dilemma in selecting high class business schools that embraced the ambition and values of CEMS. Therefore a quality review for the programs of new members was developed. In 1991 and 1992 The London School of Economics, the Stockholm School of Economics and The Norwegian School of Economics became CEMS members schools.

CEMS values

The CEMS initiative was value driven, mainly based on European values like cross-border collaboration, empathy, tolerance, and embracing cultural differences. The values evolved during the early years based on the profile of students, the needs of corporate partners, and the original idea to contribute to the economic and cultural development of Europe. Students in CEMS were curious, respectful to other cultures, open minded with an international orientation, and a willingness to contribute to a better future in Europe. The corporate partners had a need for young talent with an international orientation who could develop themselves into responsible leaders. The founders had a strong European orientation and the intention to contribute to the development of a peaceful and prosperous Europe. The CEMS values were distinctive from the values of business schools in the United States, with MBA programs being more focused on competitive advantage, economic results, and stakeholder value. The initiators decided not to develop another MBA program, but to offer a pre-experience master's program in International Management. The ambition was contributing to building Europe by educating students as European citizens and future European managers. International management became one of the key topics in the CEMS program with tolerance, respect, and ethical awareness as key values. New partners must comply to the CEMS values, and to the program design of the CEMS degree.

The initial program

Based on the original framework the four schools from France, Spain, Italy, and Germany started working on the detailed content of the program based on an agreed common body of knowledge as basis for a coherent curriculum. The first edition of the CEMS Master in International Management was launched at the four founding member schools in September 1989. This first edition attracted 90 students. In 1990 the first students were awarded the CEMS master's degree during the first CEMS Graduation ceremony.



Graduation of the first CEMS students from Bocconi in 1990 with Carlo Secci as Dean of Bocconi University

Andrea Castronovo was one of the first students and chose CEMS in the late-80s as it was the only truly European degree of its kind. He studied at Bocconi and HEC and believes that still now CEMS is the only truly global degree of its kind with an alumni network that spans the world. CEMS academic knowledge combined with work experience gained in various business fields creates the best manager and professionals. In 1990 he became the first CEMS Alumni Association President. He is very pleased to have been part of CEMS from the very beginning of the journey and to see what it has become today. From his perspective, one of the greatest strengths of CEMS has been its success in involving all members of the community in shaping its future. After his graduation he was many years an executive at BMW Italy and BMW Group. Now he is President Alphabet Italy.

The philosophy of the CEMS MIM program was based on the European model of Master programs based on five or six years of management education. The program is based on a common body of knowledge and four pillars:

- Undergraduate level: common body of knowledge on eighteen functional areas of management to ensure that all students share a common base, which will have been achieved during the first three years as undergraduates in their home schools.
- Graduate level: Nine courses dealing with European and international issues. These courses can be followed at home schools or another CEMS university abroad. Seven courses are compulsory and two electives should be chosen from seven other domains.
- Languages: CEMS students are required to demonstrate fluency in three languages, including the students' own native language, with two of the three languages European to be able to understand cultures and acquire an international frame of reference.
- International experience: CEMS students should spend a minimum of six months abroad, including three months at an academic institution and a three-month internship in a company, preferably a CEMS business partner.

The initial program was clearly defined.³ The member schools agreed on the common body of knowledge based on eighteen basic domains for the undergraduate level, with seven compulsory courses in the graduate level with an international perspective that every school should offer: International-economics, International Financial Markets, International marketing and logistics, European Business Environments and Strategy, European Community Economics and Politics European Community Law, and Comparative European Law.⁴

During this time, study programs, study duration, and degrees in universities in Europe were highly differentiated. The common body of knowledge made clear to member schools what was expected and opened the possibility to create an aligned CEMS study program based on existing university courses as building blocks for the first stage of the study based on the eighteen domains. In most universities, the CEMS Master of International Management was part of the existing university degree programs. The second stage of the study program consisted of six specialization courses. Students were expected to follow the basic courses in their own home university and the specialization courses in a member university in another

country. On top of the specializations, students had to do an international internship of twelve weeks, preferable in a business of the corporate partners in another country. The combination of a joint Master's degree from the home school and a Master's degree from CEMS created the first double degree in Europe, although this double degree was not official, it was appreciated by the market.

Figure 1: Outline of the first study programme

International experience and 12 weeks internship								
7 CEMS compulsory courses					2 Electives out of seven courses			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International economics - International financial markets - International marketing and logistics - European business strategy - European economics and politics - European Community Law - Comparative European law 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International law and organization - International contract negotiations - International accounting - International reporting and control - International taxation and tax planning - International human resources management - International advanced finance 			
Economic history	Financial institutions	Private law EC country	Public law EC country	Company law EC country	Business policy	Organizational behaviour	Production	Marketing
Macro economics	Micro economics	Business economics	Economic policy	Corporate finance	Public finance	Accounting	Mathematics	Statistics
Common body of knowledge: 18 basic domains and functional management areas offered by members schools								

Governance structure

CEMS started as a non-for-profit association under French law. The organization is governed by a General Assembly comprised of representatives from CEMS member schools and nine elected representatives of the corporate partners. Under the leadership of the CEMS Chair, the General Assembly convenes once a year. The main task of the general assembly is to decide about the annual plan, the budgets, and the acceptance of new members.⁵

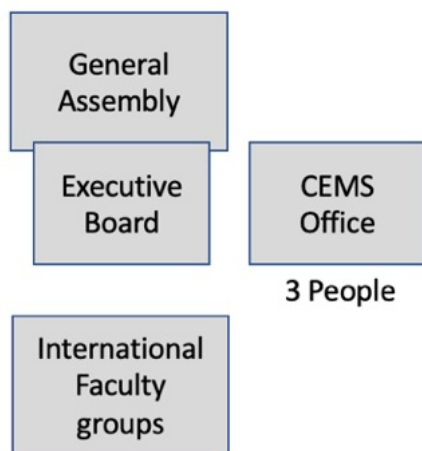
The CEMS chair, a vice-chair and two members with attention for treasury and public affairs form the executive body. The executive body meets at least twice a year and acts according to the mission of CEMS. The executive body defines the strategic direction of CEMS, executes the decision of the general assembly and undertakes action to guide the organization in execution. The executive body prepares the annual meeting of the general assembly in collaboration with the European CEMS office.

Offering a coherent and aligned program across universities that have different curricula was an enormous task. To support the development of this program and the administration, a secretariat in Paris was established. It was new that an office was working not only for one school but for all the schools in the alliance. This office started with three people. The idea of a supportive office was to keep professors responsible for the content of their program, to support mutual exchange and learning and to review the quality of the programs.

Groups of faculty members for each discipline from the schools formed a learning committee to agree on the content and align the programs, learn from each other and exchange best

practices. Most of the initiatives were conducted on a spontaneous basis and these faculty groups were an enormous stimulus in the exchange of knowledge and experience. Many of the members of these faculty groups became professional friends willing to support each other. Many of them collaborated in the programs they offered. Many faculty groups took initiatives to publish books and articles together and developed case studies, simulations, and other innovative didactical methodologies. Interfaculty groups met periodically under the coordination of the respective Chairmans. Once a date was set, members could propose to their respective universities a location to host the event.

Figure 2: governance during forming the alliance



The governance structure in the formation stage was simple and according to what is usually used by alliances that start as a foundation. In fact, the international faculty groups were the core during the start of the alliance, creating the study programs by bringing professors together. Some of these faculty groups worked very well and members became professional friends, collaborating in program design, sharing knowledge, exchange of best practices, and they were also publishing together, and organizing international conferences. Other faculty groups limited the collaboration to design and delivering one of CEMS' specializations. In the member universities, coordinators played an extremely important role in CEMS. They are the driving force of CEMS in their local institutions. They deal with the students on a day-to-day basis while acting as the vehicle for the implementation of the curriculum.

Corporate partners

From the start the founders decided that close collaboration between academia and corporates was essential in developing and offering a challenging program in International Management that contributes to the economic and cultural development of Europe. Every member school must bring in at least two corporate partners that were willing to collaborate in the design and execution of the study program, and to finance part of the activities. In return they could

influence the content of the study program, become visible in the CEMS curriculum, and had early access to the CEMS graduates as young talents.

At the time of the foundation, HEC and Esade had the strongest ties with corporates, followed by Bocconi and Cologne. As European companies prepared for their global expansion, it was important to form graduates with cross-cultural sensitivity and open-mindedness. Therefore, according to their degree of internationalization, companies valued the uniqueness of this program. Procter & Gamble had a diversified geographic presence and recognized the high potential of the CEMS program and became CEMS's first corporate partner, together with Siemens, and KPMG. During this forming stage the number of corporate partners expanded to twenty-four members.

Student body

The first students were attracted by the multi-cultural perspective of the study program and had the feeling that they were part of a new international and challenging adventure.

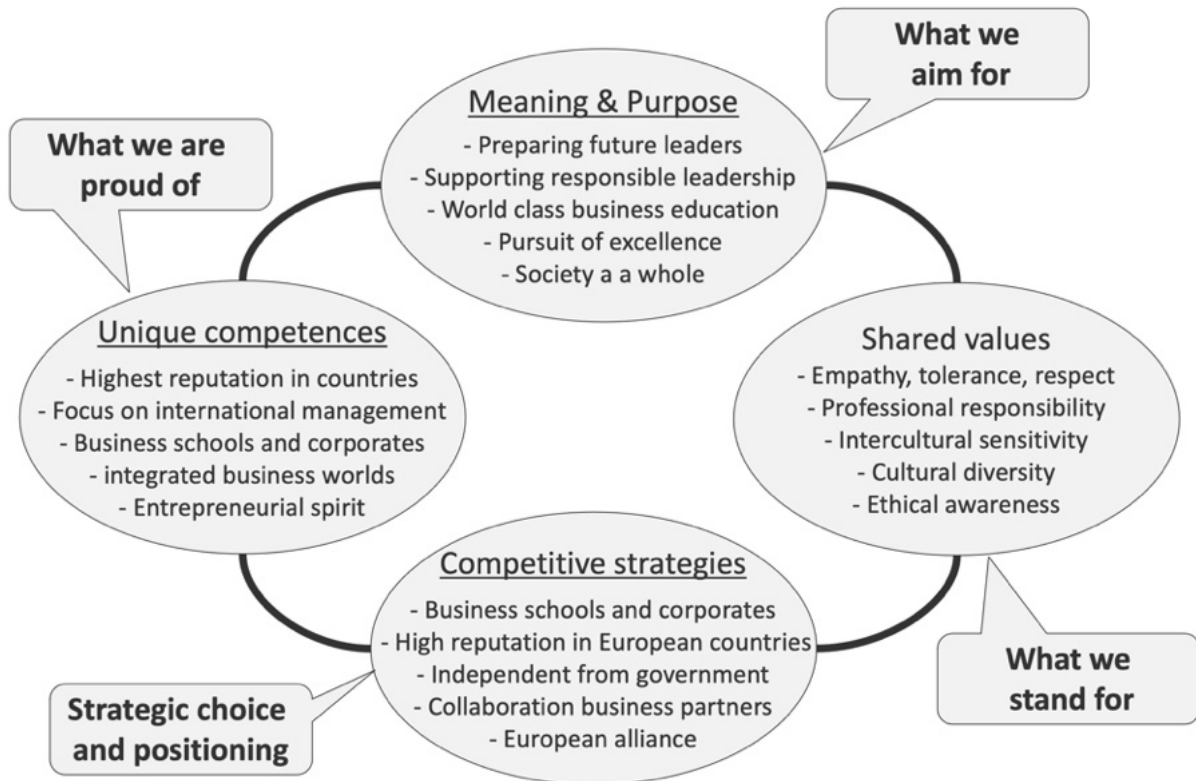
In the early nineties Lisa Hehenberger from the Stockholm school of Economics and Isa Moll from the University of St. Gallen joined the first CEMS program with twenty other students in their cohort. The idea to acquire international experience and access to corporate partners was attractive for them. They felt a strong bond with the CEMS students during their exchange program, although there was a feeling of isolation from the local students in their exchange schools. Every day they felt the unique pioneering atmosphere of CEMS, with engaged professors that lived the spirit of CEMS. The subjects were different and more international compared with the courses in their home schools. The learning climate was engaging since CEMS students were curious, eager to learn something that goes beyond what they have learned before, wanted to get stimulated intellectually, and wanted to learn about oneself. They experienced a disparity in the teaching methods as well. The class size was much smaller, the courses had a better balance between theory and practice, and the professors were more approachable and engaging with the students. They had to develop a fluent level in the local language of their exchange destination. Although this was a time-demanding task, they gained more competence and cultural tolerance in the global job market. Experiencing and understanding different educational systems and cultures helped Lisa and Isa to become more resilient and open-minded to other cultures. Both enjoyed the cross-cultural experience. They felt at home in CEMS and enjoyed the spirit of international collaboration. They are still good friends with some of the other students and recently had a reunion with twenty former Cemsies. Now they are both academic leaders in their field and professors teaching in the CEMS curriculum in social impact and xxx.

The first CEMS alumni met each other during the graduation and decided to continue seeing each other. This was the start of a student body as a network of students and alumni.

The original idea of CEMS

The original idea for the Community of European Management Schools started in 1988 is visualized in the figure below. Attention is given to the meaning and purpose of the alliance, the shared values, the uniqueness of the alliance and the strategic positioning.

Figure 3: Ambitions of CEMS during the formation of the alliance



Strategic issues and paradoxes in the forming stage

In this reflective paragraph some paradoxes are described that became visible in forming the CEMS alliance. Forming the CEMS alliance is mainly based on trust as a relational process between the initiators.

Feeling and confidence and accurate analyses

A paradox in forming value-based alliances is how much time is invested in the formation of an alliance or network by building trust, or by careful analysis of the reputation, position, contribution, and reliability of the partner. A definition of trust says: When we say that we trust someone or that someone can be trusted, we implicitly mean that the probability that an action by the other is beneficial to us or at least not harmful to us is great enough to consider

entering some form of cooperation with him. It is obvious that the start of CEMS is based on mutual trust between two founders who knew each other and trusted each other. They shared a similar perspective on the future. Of course, an accurate analysis helps to reduce risks and to value everyone's contribution. It contributes to the prevention of opportunistic behaviour by one of the partners. But continuing to analyse for too long raises the question whether the person performing the analysis trusts the other person and can be trusted himself. The emotional attraction is supplanted by the rational analysis. When inviting Bocconi and the University of Cologne, there was emotional attraction between the four initiators based on a shared vision. The emotional attraction was strong enough that the first agreement was signed without even the support of governing bodies. Spending time on trust and giving space to feeling, contributing to making personal motivations and individual involvement visible and getting to know each other's relational qualities. Paying only attention to feelings and the development of trust can lead to disillusionment if it later turns out that the partners have little to offer each other. Additional criteria were formulated for new member schools to enter the alliance. The new schools in the alliance shared the original vision on the internationalization of management education and agreed on the philosophy and common body of knowledge for the study program.

Trust in people and trust on systems

Another paradox is the distinction between trust in people and trust in systems. Trust in people is about trust in the other as a person and interpersonal trust. Attention to cooperation contributes to mutual trust. Based on this trust, it is possible to discuss business arrangements again if the reciprocity becomes unbalanced. Conversations with potential partner schools were based on personal relationships between people who knew each other. Reliance on systems is about the functioning of organizations, the governance structure and the control systems used. The collaboration of the schools was formalized in a legal agreement for the governance structure. Trust in performance refers to trust that promises and agreements will be kept, that an organization is verifiable and manageable. This was the reason to look for only one school in a country that has the highest reputation. Agreements on investments, cost allocation and revenues are necessary to prevent conflicts of interest from arising and cooperation being broken because there is insufficient reciprocity. Clear agreements can help to prevent distrust. One-sided attention to financial and legal agreements negates the chemistry needed to make a partnership work. It is obvious that in the first stage of CEMS the chemistry between the founders and initiators was the driving force for the alliance.

Investing in relations and investing in knowledge

Knowledge about the formation and functioning of partnerships is very helpful in making alliances and networks function successfully. Working together in alliances and networks is not easy and knowledge to do this well contributes to success. If knowledge is bundled, recorded in methodologies, and embedded in supporting structures, this helps to make choices

in the organization of alliances. If methodologies are applied without regard for the context in which the collaboration takes shape, the chance of failure increases. In addition to generic characteristics, each formation and shaping process also has specific properties. To cope with this paradox, the initial program was based on a common body of knowledge, with clearly defined domains that every school in the alliance should offer. The schools had individual freedom in the content of the courses for each domain and how to organize these courses in the curriculum based on existing courses. Next to the domains, six specialized CEMS courses were more defined. These courses made the CEMS program unique. Each collaboration has its own dynamics that are influenced by political-cultural context factors. That is why it remains necessary to invest in collaboration in mutual explorations of contexts and relationship patterns. Investing in relationships is investing in knowledge and sharing knowledge is investing in relationships. Existing knowledge can only be used and developed through relational action. This is visible in the collaboration of professors in faculty groups. Faculty groups for each discipline formed learning committees where professors exchanged knowledge, best practices, and ideas to co-create the core courses. These groups were a playing field for innovative course designs and in many faculty groups the professors became professional friends.

Building the CEMS alliance (1994 – 2007)

Eight years after the start of the alliance, CEMS expanded to universities in Eastern Europe. With three partners from Eastern Europe the alliance involved eighteen European universities and sixty-three corporate partners. The business idea of CEMS was a strong attractor for other business schools. In the same year CEMS welcomed its first business school from outside Europe. This international expansion ushered in a new era in the development of CEMS. In this same period the curriculum of CEMS schools was affected by the Bologna agreement for higher education with the aim of harmonizing the architecture of the European Higher Education system

European expansion

With the start of CEMS, the modern European union did not yet exist, the Berlin wall still stood, and most businesses were conducted at a national level. The pioneer program in management education contributed to the building of bridges across borders and boundaries in Europe. In 1989 a series of revolutions in nearby Eastern European countries—in Poland and Hungary in particular—caused a chain reaction in East Germany. In the summer of 1989, a peaceful movement started that resulted in the fall of the Berlin wall in November 1989, and finally the iron curtain between East and West Europe fell apart. Based on the ambitions of CEMS to contribute to a peaceful and prosperous Europe, the focus on intercultural collaboration, and CEMS values of diversity, tolerance, and respect, the CEMS alliance felt a moral duty and interest to collaborate with universities in these countries. In the early nineties, members of CEMS schools went to Budapest, Prague, and Warsaw to start an inquiry with business schools that might be interested in becoming a partner in the CEMS community. The first contacts were based on informal networks and established by personal relationships between members in the general assembly and academics who knew each other from international conferences. The universities were offered a candidate membership to develop programs aligned with the CEMS curriculum and the CEMS values. Members in the faculty groups were very supportive to colleagues of the candidate members in designing programs that could meet the CEMS criteria. The CEMS program was attractive for these universities because it did not follow the United States model of education, and becoming a member gave the potential member schools a wonderful competitive advantage above other universities in their countries. After some years the candidate members became full members. In the second half of the nineties the universities in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw became full members schools.

Xavier Mendoza and Alfons Sauquet, deans of Esade Business school from 2000 to 2016 and members of the CEMS Executive Board, emphasized the very particular context in supporting collaboration in Europe and constructing the European Union. Once Berlin wall fell, it opened a new space. The new free countries wanted to develop relationships with Western countries. Alfons Sauquet assessed that CEMS was one of the most strategic moves that had been made

in the education community in Europe. Educating the leaders of tomorrow shall be done by teaching them the importance of European values. Empathy, diversity, and respect were at stake, in a post-war world. The alliance enhanced community and integrity as its main values.



Faculty members and corporate partners at Warsaw School of Economics after becoming a member in 1996.

During the European expansion the CEMS mission was reconsidered and formulated:

CEMS is a strategic alliance of universities and corporate partners: faculty members and leading managers in close partnership with alumni and students. Its central focus is a unique European Master's degree in Management, grounded in academic excellence and cultural diversity, which prepares its graduates most successfully for a professional career in private and public organizations. By joining resources of leading universities and corporations, CEMS develops the European standard in management knowledge and education.

CEMS will be the European force in education and research for those who aspire to play a leading role in the development and direction of enterprise in a global context. These individuals will be outstanding in:

- *High academic standards and professional skills.*
- *Ability to perform effectively in a fast-changing environment.*
- *Empathy with different cultures, values, and behaviours.*
- *Willingness to take responsibility within society.*

The Bologna agreement

The political discussions about the alignment of university degrees in Europe started in 1988 in Bologna. It took till 2005 when a framework for university degrees was adopted by European ministers and defines the qualifications in terms of learning outcomes: statements of what students know and can do on completing their degrees. The basic framework for academic programs under the Bologna agreement is three cycles of higher-education qualifications. In describing the cycles, the framework uses the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS):

- First cycle: 180–240 ECTS credits (a minimum of 60 credits per academic year), usually awarding a bachelor's degree. The European Higher Education Area did not introduce the bachelor-with-honours program, which allows graduates to receive a "BA hon." degree (for example, in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada) which (in the UK, Australia and New Zealand) may enable graduates to begin doctoral studies without first obtaining a master's degree.
- Second cycle: 60–120 ECTS credits (a minimum of 60 ECTS per academic year), usually awarding a master's degree.
- Third cycle (doctoral degree): There is no concrete ECTS range, since the disciplines vary in length and comprehensiveness. However, some countries have minimum credit weight requirements on doctoral degrees of 120-420 ECTS credits.

In most cases, it would take three to four years to earn a bachelor's degree and another one or two years for a master's degree. This means that reaching a master's degree takes 5 to 6 years of study. Doctoral degrees usually require another two to four years of specialization, primarily individual research under a mentor.



The outcome of the Bologna process to align European Higher Education

The Bologna agreement affects CEMS in several ways. The major impact on CEMS is the distinction between the Bachelor and Master level. CEMS became an official Master's in International Management, independent from the distinctive partner schools. The independence and freedom from governmental regulations are no longer feasible and CEMS must adapt to align with the new framework for Bachelor and Master programs. Consequently, CEMS decided to offer a one year's standalone master program instead of being the addition of the Bachelor and Master levels.

The Bologna agreement supported the collaboration between European universities. The collaboration between CEMS universities in Europe became easier and the alignment in the CEMS program was strengthened. At the same time, more European universities started to collaborate in a diversity of studies, and the unique position of CEMS could have weakened.

Mission statement

The mission of CEMS in this new stage evolved with the growth in the diversity of members schools with a growing variety in national cultures and regulations. The CEMS mission statement had been accorded by the General Assembly in 2008:⁶

“CEMS is a global alliance of academic and corporate institutions dedicated to educating and preparing future generations of international business leaders.

The CEMS academic and corporate members work collectively to develop knowledge and provide education that is essential in the multilingual, multicultural and interconnected business world. The joint CEMS Master's in International Management is the main vehicle for achieving this goal.

Common to all activities is the aim of promoting global citizenship, with particular emphasis placed upon the following values:

- *The pursuit of excellence with high standards of performance and ethical conduct;*
- *Understanding and drawing upon cultural diversity with respect and empathy;*
- *Professional responsibility and accountability in relation to society as a whole.”*

Identity and values

The identity of CEMS changed during the process of globalization. CEMS was no longer a community of European business schools but a global alliance of academic institutions offering a master's program in international and global management. The identity was not clear in this process of globalization. The values of the alliance were changing as well. In the first period the values are in line with Europe in transformation. During the globalization there existed two sets of values. One set was related to the original set of values like empathy, diversity, and respect. The second set was more related to the global world with more focus on inter-cultural leadership, responsible leadership, and ethical conduct. These values resulted in a new mission statement in 2008. The new mission statement reflected CEMS' ethical and responsible approach to management education. It highlighted the dedication to educating and preparing future generations of international business leaders with a pursuit of excellence and

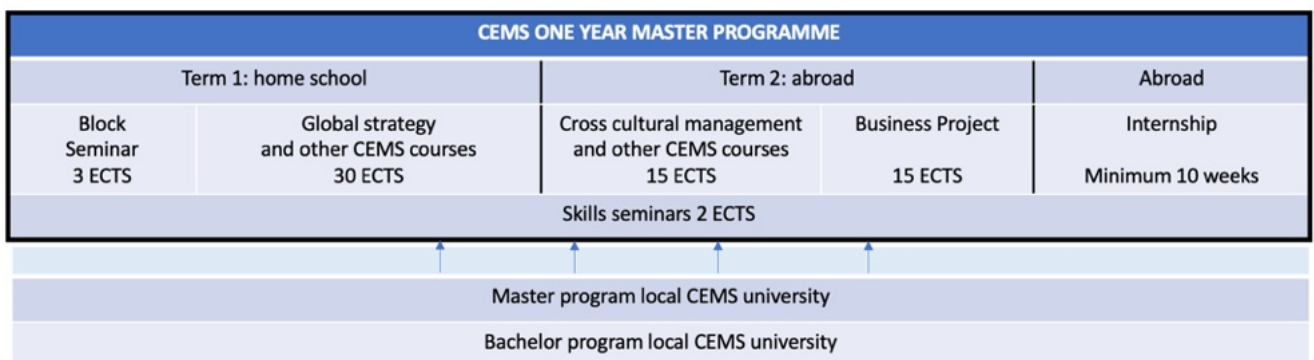
high standards of performance and ethical conduct. Values were cultural diversity, respect, and empathy with a focus on professional responsibility and accountability in relation to society as a whole. Global leadership became a focus in the master's program and inter-cultural management was part of this global leadership perspective.

New study program

Due to the Bologna agreement, CEMS started to offer a one year's Master in International Management.⁷ In universities outside Europe, pre-experienced masters are not common and there is a bigger focus on MBA programs. The newly designed CEMS Master in International Management consisted of three terms: two academic terms and one internship term. The two academic terms must be consecutive, while the internship term can take place at any time during the graduate period of studies. Students must spend at least two out of the three terms abroad. In addition to completing, one's home degree, graduation from CEMS also requires completion of a business project, skill seminars, an international internship, and two foreign language exams. In the CEMS curriculum, two courses are mandatory for every student: Cross Cultural Management and Business Strategy. To create time for skills seminars that are offered in collaboration with corporate partners, the time dedicated to an internship has decreased from a minimum of twelve weeks in the forming stage to a minimum of ten weeks in the growth stage. The newly developed curriculum had been adopted by existing member schools and new member schools had to adopt and offer the program as designed.

Each CEMS academic member has a limited number of places available. In many cases, schools have pre-requisites to be admitted into the selection process, including a high-grade average and proof of language skills. The selection process typically requires the student to already be enrolled or selected for a Master of Business degree with a member university prior to applying for the CEMS MIM. CEMS graduates receive a degree from their home institution as well as from CEMS.

Figure 4: CEMS study program growing stage



Governance

Given the growth and globalization, the governance structure of CEMS changed as well. It was decided that each school of the alliance should have the same voting weight in the general assembly and that a consensus should be reached in the event of adding a new academic partner. In the general assembly, representatives of the student board and the alumni association were invited as non-formal members. A strategic advisory committee was created with the deans of member universities to pay more attention to the strategy of CEMS and the contribution and position of CEMS in the future. This strategic board advised the General assembly and the executive board about strategic issues and prospective.

The CEMS Office is the permanent organizational body of CEMS, comprising 11 members of staff who are responsible for academic coordination of the program, coordinating the network, corporate finance, corporate relations, events and communications, alumni services, and working with student representatives on the student board. With the growth of the alliance academic coordination and quality assurance became more important. The quality of the study program was key in the reputation of CEMS and important for the quality and attractiveness of their students in the job market. Peer reviews are introduced as a way of assessing the quality of the CEMS program that are offered by member schools. The team of CEMS office liaises closely with the Chairman and the Committee chairs while supporting the implementation process of decisions taken by the Board.

A new committee was added to the original governance structure. The CEMS Academic Committee, which gathers the Academic Directors of all CEMS universities under the Chairmanship of a Board member, takes decisions linked to specific academic questions. To maintain a high standard of teaching the curriculum offered is subject to accreditation by the CEMS Academic Committee, which checks that the following elements have been provided:

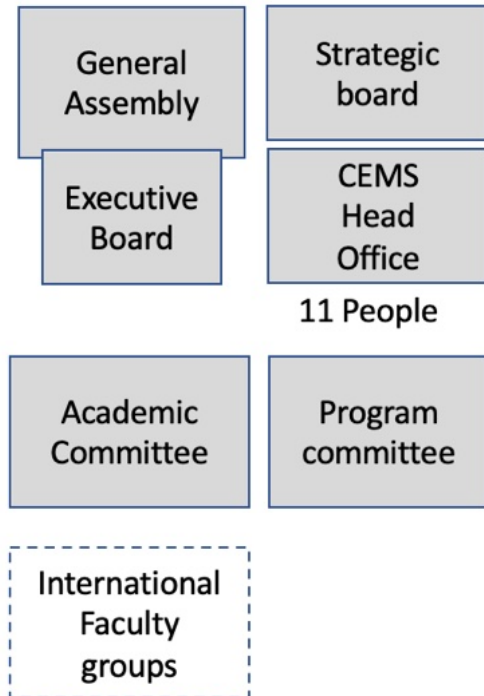
- Intellectual-analytical foundations.
- Interdisciplinary scope.
- Interaction with companies and involvement in joint projects.
- Interpersonal skills development.
- International program experience and cohort diversity.

The Academic Committee is supported by a Program Committee, which also acts as a Graduation Committee. To keep a high standard of teaching, CEMS constantly wants to develop the quality of its program offer. All curriculum elements must be developed in compliance with the CEMS criteria of interdisciplinarity, internationality, interactivity and close integration of academia and business. To this end, the new installed Program Committee works in a constant process of shaping and redesigning CEMS Courses, with the corporate relations coordinators on Business Projects and Skill Seminars and with international Faculty Cooperation Groups on the development of Blocked Seminars.

CEMS Coordinators in member schools play an important role in CEMS. Together with the academic director of their school, they are the driving force of CEMS in their local

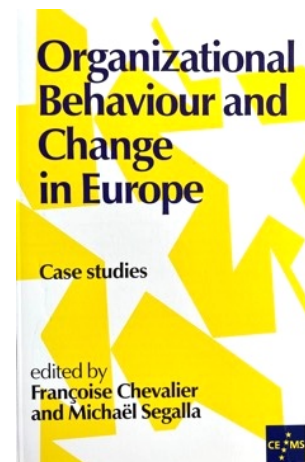
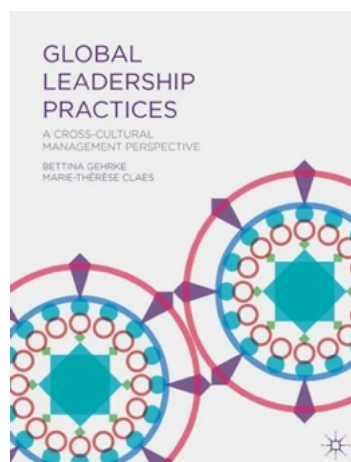
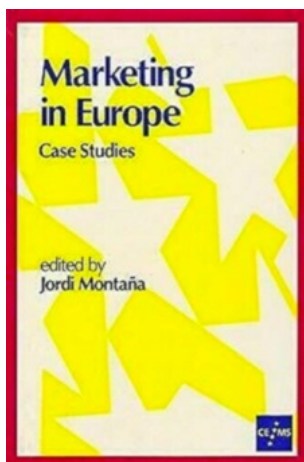
institutions. They deal with the students on a day-to-day basis while acting as the vehicle for the implementation of the curriculum.

Figure 5: Governance structure in the growing stage



During the start the faculty groups were important to ensure that the fundamentals in the courses were covered by each school and were unified, at least to a certain extent. During the stage of growth, the international faculty groups became less important. The CEMS study program changed to a master with a block course, two compulsory courses, the business project, and specialization courses. This new program structure gave member schools more freedom, and at the same time, the collaboration between professors was presumed to be less needed. In some faculty groups there was an open and inclusive climate, a willingness to share best practices with a high level of trust based on professional friendships. These groups contributed to innovation and the quality of the programs in the CEMS curriculum. They also publish books and articles together which were used in the curriculum. These publications helped to exchange knowledge and align and coordinate CEMS courses in a specific subject offered by the different schools. In other faculty groups, there were debates about the discipline and what was important to teach international students. Instead of the faculty groups, the academic board, consisting of the academic directors of the schools, took a role in designing the study programs and guaranteeing the quality of the programs. Exemplary efforts to elevate the standing of CEMS and strengthen the relationship between academic staff was made by the marketing faculty group and the global Leadership faculty group. They published a case study book under the name of the CEMS organization.

Jordi Montana was chair of the Marketing Faculty Group and Jaap Boonstra of the Global Leadership Faculty Group. Both have been involved in publishing a book with contributions from CEMS faculty members. “Publishing a book together as members of the leadership faculty group was an exciting journey and helped a lot in building common ground for the faculty group and our courses. Dialogues about the content and structure of the book were intense and probably the best bonding experience for the group ever, next to exchanging best practices and innovative learning models. Academics are always engaged in discussions about content, so content enabled the faculty group to outline what they stood for. A faculty book created by faculty members helped to develop a common body of knowledge and align courses across member schools when students were using the book in their courses. And of course, it contributes to the pride of the authors, and to the reputation of CEMS as an Academic institute. Working with the same concepts and literature is an easier way to align courses than strict guidelines about the content of the program, although general guiding principles may help in aligning courses across universities, especially for faculty members who are less connected to the CEMS and the faculty groups. Perhaps the combination of a co-created book together with global guiding principles developed by the faculty groups themselves works best”.



Book publications by CEMS faculty groups

Corporate partners

Nearly 70 corporate partners contribute financially on an annual basis and provide the program with human resources and input into the curriculum itself in each country they are based. They chart skills courses, give lectures, or invite CEMS students to company activities where students learn about corporate practices or solve cases. These connections are very useful to promote the company to the students, while the students gain insight into real-world problems and solution approaches. The corporate partners shaped the program, for example,

by offering skills seminars and helping to design the curriculum. The Corporate partners played a role not only on the demand side by approaching and recruiting CEMS students, but also on the supply side by organizing skill seminars. CEMS is unique as an alliance of highly regarded partner schools and companies and the deep relationships between them. The corporate partners are also important for the strategy of CEMS since the globalization was highly driven by the corporate partners. They pushed to significantly increase the number of students with different cultural backgrounds who are well educated and have excellent management skills, and soft skills related to cultural and social awareness and ethical conduct.

In general, corporate partners value the relationship with CEMS since CEMS provides quality interns and helps in recruiting well educated talents. They appreciate the business projects where students work on strategic issues of the company and offer out of the box ideas. Some launch entrepreneurial projects that are complicated to start within their own corporate culture. Engagement with CEMS gives the company employer brand benefits and visibility among young talents. Recruiting CEMS students helps companies to diversify their labour force and enforce heterogeneity in their workplaces. Some also see the relationship with CEMS and the interaction with students as an opportunity to increase their client base. Social partners see involvement in CEMS courses as an opportunity to expose themselves and their purpose and values to create a better world. The social partners are motivated to play a role in defining courses for students and expose their purpose. Both, corporate and social partners, are involved in career fairs, sponsoring business projects, company visits, providing business cases, offering internships, and giving guest lectures.

The corporate partners offer internships and job opportunities for CEMS students. The engagement of corporate partners means that CEMS relates to developments in the business environment of corporations. Corporate partners help in keeping the curriculum relevant for the business world. Corporate partners also contribute to the strategic vision of CEMS and are helpful in making strategic decisions for the future of CEMS.

Students are advised to be responsible and arrange by themselves an internship partner which will accept the student intern for at least ten consecutive weeks. There are student visa requirements that each student takes responsibility to abide to, and the regulation varies by each local government.

To create more added value for the corporate partners, CEMS started the Career Forum where corporate partners and students could meet and explore possibilities for internships and career opportunities. The Career Forum is the headline corporate recruitment event of the CEMS year. For companies it provides the ideal chance to contact and interview potential hires, raise awareness of their corporate brand and career opportunities and share their knowledge and ideas with students. For students and young graduates, it offers a rare opportunity to be able to get in contact with recruitment experts from multinational companies and maybe even take the first crucial step towards full employment by a CEMS Corporate Partner. The event is

available exclusively to CEMS Corporate Partners, CEMS MIM students and CEMS MIM graduates with between 0 and 5 years of professional experience. The separate two-day structure of the event has been in operation since 2009.



CEMS Career Forum where corporate partners and students meet for career opportunities

Social partners

The first CEMS social partners joined the organization in December 2010. *Care International* and *Fairtrade labelling organizations international* became the first social partners in a series of non-profits and NGOs that contributed to the alliance in a way identical to corporate partners (selection and admission of students, governance, curriculum delivery, business projects, proposal of internships). This new initiative was part of a major sustainability drive from within CEMS. In the same vein, CEMS also signed the PRME (Principles for Responsible Management Education) declaration. The involvement of social partners is well appreciated by the students since students became more conscious about problems in our global world and they wanted to learn more about these problems and become part of the solution.

Student board

Students constantly contribute to the CEMS history and share their personal experiences in this unique ecosystem.⁸ The Student Board is the voice of students within the CEMS global alliance. The Student Board consists of one elected representative from each of the member schools, and it manages its projects according to the following mission statement: The Student Board has been created to enhance the CEMS experience for the students by:

- gathering students' opinions about CEMS and the CEMS MIM and bringing recommendations to improve the CEMS MIM and CEMS community life.
- implementing and managing global projects which have a positive impact on all CEMS students, including projects aimed at fostering and developing social awareness and ethical conscience.
- providing support and a platform for communication to the CEMS Clubs to help them achieve their goals.
- In carrying out the above, in an ethical and socially responsible way, the Student Board acts as the official voice of CEMS students, representing their interests before the Academic, Corporate and Administrative stakeholders of the CEMS alliance.

The Student Board is organized around four key areas: CEMS Program Quality and learning experience related to all stakeholders, CEMS Student Relations and information sharing, CEMS clubs support and guidance to enhance the CEMS experience for students.

Alumni network

Founded in 1993, the CEMS Alumni Association is a strong social network but also an increasingly valuable professional platform. It enables CEMS graduates to continue to enjoy the international and multicultural experience that they will have experienced as CEMS students. It also organizes various professional events in the form of panel discussions, workshops, conferences, and seminars in which to share ideas and knowledge. Membership of the alumni association and attendance of alumni-run events, enable CEMS alumni to broaden their professional knowledge and their professional network. Since its creation, the alumni association has pursued three main goals:

- Creating and maintaining friendly, lasting contacts among CEMS Alumni.
- Providing a professional network and opportunities for its members.
- Promoting the CEMS MIM and the CEMS experience.

The CEMS Alumni Association is led by an Executive Committee and is present in each country through Local Committees driven by active CEMS Alumni. The Executive Committee comprises four members: the President, Vice-President, Secretary General and Treasurer. They are elected every two years during the CEMS Annual Events by the Local Committees. The Executive Committee represents alumni interests on the CEMS Executive Board and supports development of the CEMS MIM.



Gathering of CEMS alumni association

Strategic issues and paradoxes in the building stage

In the building stage, CEMS expanded from eleven to twenty-two member schools and almost fifty corporate partners. The first expansion were three universities from Eastern Europe that started as candidate members and became full members with the support of other schools. The first schools from outside Europe joined the alliance.

Globalization and identity

CEMS is a value driven alliance originally focused on cultural diversity and collaboration based on empathy, tolerance, and respect, with the aim of preparing future leaders with intercultural sensitivity and cultural awareness. During the first stage of globalization, discussions about CEMS' values arose of whether these mostly embodied a Western European perspective, and how to potentially adjust these to be representative of all CEMS schools. But as the world grew more global, economically, financially, politically, and culturally, it appeared that CEMS might have to go global. This decision was not an easy one, because with expansion always came risk of losing its core purpose, with extension also bringing the risk of loosening the tights among more and more stakeholders. The more CEMS integrates schools from all over the world, the narrative and identity may become alluded, and the study program may lose its efficiency when all the different curricula must be considered.

But CEMS chose to go global, promoting not only a European community but a global community, although the decision was not that evidently supported by all existing members. In the shared values, a higher focus was expressed on inter-cultural leadership, as well as responsible and ethical leadership. Accountability became part of the revisited values of CEMS. Another way to see it is to say that the idea of globalization was there at the very beginning. Going global was not a change in strategy but just the continuation of the mission of preparing future leaders in international management. The values of CEMS have been adapted, but in essence the values of CEMS are the same, they are just exposed in a different way and expressed in a more assertive way.

Diversity and inclusivity

The globalization of the alliance triggers the inclusivity paradox, that on one side CEMS values the diversity that each school brings to the table, and on the other side, the goal is to ensure the identity of a larger group and to create a joint curriculum with common competencies. The strategy is not about going further, with more and more partners, it is about building one community of values, united. Integrating new partner schools is a complicated process that takes years, not only from the ethical point of view, but also the cultural and the technical one, since every school has their own ways of doing things and had to comply with local governmental regulations. The cultures in Europe and other continents are different and not easy to bridge for faculty and students, although bridging cultures is in the core of the identity and the curriculum of CEMS. Integrating all members at the same pace is becoming more and more of a challenge for the CEMS community, with the sense that unity is an everyday construction.

This balance between a common curriculum and the need for each member to be autonomous is likewise a challenge for other international organizations as well. In addition, CEMS also is expected to consider the difference in students' backgrounds and their knowledge levels in specific sectors to avoid content repetition when it comes to curriculum design. CEMS' entire network benefits from the diversity of schools because it allows students to explore cultures that they have never explored before and learn in places that have a different system. Even differentiation in rankings stimulates the diversity, inclusivity, and equality that CEMS believes in and sharpens students' soft skills, teaching us to listen and embrace differences. Furthermore, rankings are not the main differentiator between CEMS and other business programs as the program seeks validation by corporations, students, and future employees.

Reputation and belongingness

Faculty groups lost some of their importance due to new structures being introduced within CEMS. However, it is impossible to dismiss their significant impact on building informal relationships between professors and promoting knowledge transfer. CEMS tried to initiate conventions for the academic staff to create a platform of exchange for them. Yet, while one

of the pillars of CEMS is interconnectedness, the project was dismissed quickly. A possible explanation for the abandonment of the project was the dismissal of the existing informal networks of each professor. As a result, the academic staff did not see any added value in the formal events. The faculty groups were a key driver in promoting these informal networks. Yet, the groups strengthened the networks of their members that could promote the creation of distinctive thought silos that have strong relationships within a discipline but fail to connect with other faculty groups. Since many achievements were realized through informal relationships and aligned values. In some schools, however, the pursuit of the CEMS program was championed by individual professors. These professors were champions in their area of research and shared the vision of the CEMS community which helped these schools to implement the program on a local level. Yet, a successful expansion needs more than informal relationships and local professors that are championing their research area as it requires frameworks that achieve a certain degree of equality in the integration of the program. Since the reputation of CEMS is crucial in the academic market, the alliance developed their own accreditation system based on collegial appraisal and assessment. Every five years a committee of professors visits the member schools to assess a self-evaluation of the curriculum, review the students' evaluation, check the coherence of the curriculum with the CEMS criteria of interdisciplinarity, internationality, interactivity, and close integration of academia and business. Next to these assessments, the visiting committee conducts interviews with students, professors, and representatives of corporate and social partners. The report is reviewed by the Academic director and Academic committee with ideas for improvements. Through this collegial assessment good practices and innovative ideas are shared among schools.

Developing the CEMS alliance (2008 – 2021)

In 2008, CEMS celebrated its 20th anniversary welcomed its first member school from outside Europe. In 2020 CEMS became present in all continents, with 34 academic members, including schools from the Far East, Asia, Australia, United States, Latin America, and Africa. The growth and international expansion of CEMS meant that the diversity of schools, university programs, education systems, cultural backgrounds and governance regulations was extending as well. CEMS was now a broader network with corporate partners, social partners, and alumni. The annual number of students raised to 1400 every year with students from many different cultural backgrounds. In this period CEMS changed their name from Community of European Management Schools to: CEMS – Global Alliance in Management Education.

Alignment and collaboration

The discussion to transform from a European to a global alliance of business schools started already in 1998, ten years after the start of CEMS, and shortly after the growth in Eastern Europe. It took ten years more to come to the decision to build CEMS as a global alliance of business schools. In these years some members in the alliance were afraid to lose the European identity, while others emphasised the intercultural values of the alliance that went beyond European borders. Finally, the main reason to go global were that corporate partners worked global and had expanded their business to China and Asia. Their need was to acquire students with more diverse cultural backgrounds and a solid education as future leaders with the CEMS values as core values in their behaviour. The second reason was the preference of students to experience more global cultures and expanding their horizon. To stay attractive for the best students from European business schools, globalization was seen as indispensable and as a challenge as well.⁹

The globalization of CEMS started with new member schools joining the alliance. In 2008 the Business School of Sao Paulo, the Business Schools of the University of St. Petersburg, the University of Sydney, and the University of Singapore joined the alliance, followed by Ivey Business School in Canada and Koc University in Turkey in 2009. In 2010 Keio University in Japan became a full member school, expanding CEMS to five continents. In the following years, CEMS expanded to the East and started to include business schools from Tsinghua University in Beijing, the Hong Kong University, and the Korea University. The Indian Institute of Management became a member as well.¹⁰ The next step in globalization included schools in Africa and Latin America. In the same period, a total number of corporate partners reached a new record of seventy-seven businesses working across the globe in all continents. The involvement of these new partners was complicated since some of these universities offered a pre-experience MBA and not a Master of Science in International Management, while others did not reach the international grading standards. Other universities were not used to English classes, while in CEMS classes in English is the common language. With the support of CEMS and existing member schools the new universities adapted their study program to international standards to become member of CEMS.



CEMS unveils plans for a truly global alliance and presents her Master of International Management degree.

With the growth and globalization of CEMS, the diversity in schools elaborated with respect to university programs, educational systems, degrees, cultural backgrounds, and governance regulations. More members needed to collaborate while the diversity increased. These members share a similar goal, but are more diverse, which may challenge trust between members. It is interesting that CEMS advocates for cultural diversity and an open and inclusive future as core values. Now CEMS was challenged to bring their values into practice and 'walk the talk'. CEMS and the new member schools were successful in this globalization process by agreeing on the purpose and values of CEMS, embracing cultural differences as a learning opportunity, and leaving room for local characteristics with a certain degree of global alignment. All member schools which became involved in CEMS, stayed engaged and continued their membership, except for one university in Mexico. After some years a new dean did not support the Master of Science approach of CEMS and made a choice for the American MBA system. This experience made it clear that the personal commitment of the Dean of a university is relevant to build sustainable involvement.



Actual CEMS logo as the global alliance in management education

The globalization of CEMS was not a goal in itself. The purpose of CEMS was to offer a global program in international management for students and corporate and social partners. The main purpose focusses now on developing responsible leaders for a more open, sustainable, and inclusive future.

The decision to move from a European alliance to a global alliance took several years. The formal decision to move from a European to a global alliance was taken in 2008 in a meeting of the General Assembly. Some deans of members schools advocated the strong European tightness and values and emphasized the success of CEMS as a European alliance. The unique focus of management education to develop a responsible future and the values could get lost. The risk of going global was the huge challenge to realize a common Science program in International Management with high standards. Another challenge was to accommodate exchange students who would study in another continent. A smaller network allows for deeper relations between schools. More schools would complicate the decision-making process and the governance structure needed to be adapted. On the other side, deans advocated that the world was moving fast towards globalization and digitalization and that CEMS should align with these developments to stay relevant. The final decision was heavily influenced by the corporate partners who had developed as global enterprises and expressed their need for more educated international managers with a global profile and a CEMS mindset. Also, students expressed their interest to have the possibility to acquire more international experiences and expand their horizons further than Europe. There were also bottom-up drivers towards globalization by professors who had international contacts with colleagues in other universities outside Europe. When the Strategic Board strongly advised to go global, the General Assembly followed this advice. With the expansion of the alliance the importance of a clear mission and vision and shared values increases to keep the alliance together in a common goal.

New ambition

Based on the globalizing of the alliance and the need to align with governmental regulations, the ambitions of the alliance have changed as well. From a European focus the scope becomes broader and more global. The values that arose from a European identity needed to be broadened. The cultural diversity that CEMS has always articulated now also affects CEMS itself. The values are adapted to include more cultural perspectives. The new values are broader and emphasize high standards of performance, ethical conduct, professional responsibility, accountability in relation to society, and understanding cultural diversity with respect and empathy. The pursuit of excellence and a global business spirit is more on the foreground, but the essence is still the same: preparing future leaders to become a global and responsible leader. In 2020 the vision for 2025 is formulated as:

“CEMS is recognized as a unique global community, comprising the world’s finest students, schools, alumni, corporate and social partners, delivering the leading international Master’s in Management (MiM) that prepares responsible leaders contributing to a more open, sustainable, and inclusive world.”¹¹

With the globalization and the new ambition, the values of the alliance were reconsidered as well. The original core values were still valid but broadened in comparison with the earlier values. More attention is given to the pursuit of excellence by emphasizing ‘world class business education, high global reputation, and high standards of performance’. With the globalization, the focus of CEMS on preparing future leaders in international management is more articulated. Responsible leadership, professional responsibility, and ethical conduct got more emphasized. The ‘entrepreneurial spirit’ has been changed in a global business spirit. The original shared values have been adapted to a more global mindset, although the essence is still the same. The core values ‘Empathy, tolerance and respect’ are revisited in an ‘Open and inclusive future’ and ‘contributing to a sustainable society’ is more pronounced.

Figure 6: Ambition of CEMS during the development of the alliance



New strategy

To become more connected and inclusive to all member schools and level the study program in international management, a new strategy was established to achieve the CEMS ambitions:

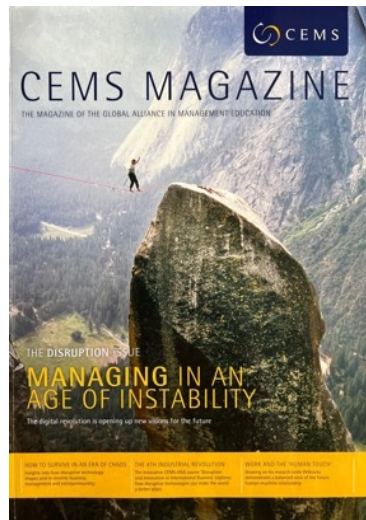
1. *An inspirational learning process for students. Providing an edge compared to other university degrees.*
 - Develop an innovative curriculum. With regards to academic strength, intercultural experience, and personal development.
 - Intensify faculty co-operation to develop joint seminars and virtual courses.
 - Enhance opportunities for intensified co-operation between students, faculty members and corporate partners to develop life skills and first-hand experience of the business world.
2. *A high level of CEMS awareness through a strong brand image.*
 - Increase the common ownership of the CEMS brand by all stakeholders: universities, faculty members, students, alumni, and corporate partners.
 - Communicate effectively and the CEMS brand “The global edge in International Business.”
 - Develop a strong alumni network.
3. *CEMS at the centre of each university’s strategy, and a high level of commitment to the CEMS objectives.*
 - Give CEMS and CEMS members priority in the internationalization strategy of each university.
 - Devote resources to CEMS activities.
 - Support sharing and pooling of resources between CEMS universities.
 - Integrate CEMS into the university’s communication policy.
4. *A strong and mutually beneficial partnership between corporate partners and CEMS universities.*
 - Increase the breath and scope of corporate partners’ involvement in CEMS governance.
 - Reinforce the participation of corporate partners in the learning process of CEMS students.
 - Pool resources and expertise of corporate partners and universities to advance management knowledge and practice.
 - Increase co-operation in the recruitment process.
5. *International recognition of CEMS through global partnerships.*
 - Establish meaningful co-operation with non-CEMS universities.
 - Attract overseas students into the CEMS program.

Activities to share common values and align the schools and corporate partners in this broader global alliance are global recruitment events, conferences in collaboration with corporate and social partners, the annual graduation of students, and the annual meetings of the General Assembly and academic directors. Some faculty groups still organize an annual meeting with faculty members.

To expose CEMS to the global world the CEMS Magazine was launched in 2009 as the living testimony of a unique community of business schools collaborating closely with companies, NGOs, and alumni to deliver the CEMS Master’s in International Management to students across the globe. Special issues were dedicated to ‘Culture’, ‘Disruption’, ‘Responsible leadership’, ‘Sustainable development’, and ‘Future of work’. Since 2021 the CEMS Magazine is available online on the CEMS website. The magazines express the purpose and values of CEMS.

Culture is not a static phenomenon, but one that is constant evolving. Sharing a common culture can create incredible strong bonds and beliefs that can lead to exceptional results. However, we must consistently strive to understand our own cultural biases when working with individuals whose belief system differs from ours and leverage these different points of view. In this capacity, we will be able to work together as a global community that contributes to a better world. – *From the Culture issue, 2016.*¹²

CEMS is a window onto the world and the biggest issues we face. Business programs have a duty to build awareness about the impact of business activities and to shine a light on the complex web of social, economic, and environmental challenges; and to create opportunities for graduates – the business leaders of tomorrow – to find and to deliver sustainable solutions for all segments of society. – *From the Sustainable Development issue, 2019.*¹³



Covers of three CEMS Magazines about Culture (2016), Disruption (2017) and Sustainability (2019)

CEMS Master program International Management

During the development stage, the CEMS program became more defined.¹⁴ All schools had the same core program but were free to offer their own electives. The main structure became

the same as during the growth stage, but some changes were implemented. The compulsory Cross-Cultural Management course evolved into a Global Leadership course since many schools offered already a course in cross cultural management. A focus on global leadership reflected the purpose and values of CEMS better as an alliance of schools to prepare future leaders in a global world. A Global Citizen course also added to the curriculum reflecting the focus on CEMS to develop global citizens as responsible leaders. The international internship was reduced to a minimum of eight weeks. To align course courses, the academic directors installed academic committees with academic directors to align the course courses by formulating learning objectives and an educational format. The diversity of electives was enormous with more courses offered by the member schools. Since the covid pandemic, the electives were expanded with global online electives. Skill seminars also focused on hard skills and soft skills.¹⁵

Figure 7: CEMS Study program development stage



In 2021 CEMS contains 34 CEMS member schools on every continent in the world, with 69 corporate partners and 8 social partners. That year 1.279 students of 72 nationalities started the MIM program with a 50/50 male/female ration. The alliance has 12.033 alumni from 85 nationalities in 75 countries. Based on these facts and figures, the global strategy has worked very well. Moreover, CEMS provides the resources and capabilities for the community to come together in a series of interational, worldwide events, ranging from the Annual Graduation Ceremony, Career Forum to support interaction between students and graduates and corporate and social partners, Corporate Beachmark Meetings, Faculty Group Meetings for core courses. The essence of the CEMS alliance is multicultural, multidisciplinary, and multi-stakeholder activities on a global basis to develop future busienss leaders. CEMS aspires to prepare future generations of business leaders to enter into a multilingual, multicultural and interconnected business world with a global view and social and sustainable responsibility.¹⁶



Graduation of CEMS students in 2017 at the University of Sydney Business School

Governance

Over the years the governance model changed. CEMS was first a unique and exclusive community. But the more schools joined the partnership, the small network started to grow and expand outside Europe. Hence, a new governance model had to be established with more adaptability and flexibility. Global governance is more complicated, as each country, and within it, each school, has its own rules and regulations that must be adhered to. To align academics, these differences need to be taken into consideration.

In the development stage the governance structure is expanding. Under the leadership of the CEMS Chair and Deputy Chair the General Assembly convenes once a year. The Strategic Advisory Committee becomes the Strategic Board with a role in analysing global and strategic challenges, threads, and opportunities. Members of this board are deans or vice deans of the business schools. The Executive Board becomes the Management Council and convenes continually throughout the year to set the strategic and operational framework of the organization. Members of the Management Council are deans or vice deans of the schools.. They chair the committees and collaborate closely with managers from the CEMS office. The General Assembly is supported in their responsibilities by a finance committee, a corporate partners committee and a quality assurance committee.¹⁷

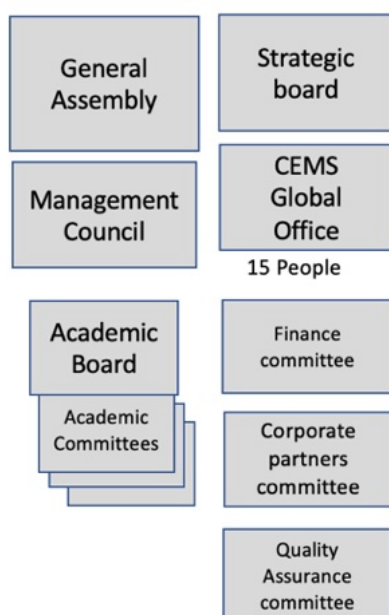
CEMS head office become the CEMS Global Office, led by the CEMS Executive Director. The CEMS Global Office is the permanent organizational body of CEMS, comprising members of staff who are responsible for managing the network, preparing strategic directions, and preparing the meeting of the governing bodies, and working with the elected

student representatives on the Student Board and the Alumni Association. Another important task is designing and programming the MIM curriculum across school, supporting accreditations, and academic quality management. Also, they work on corporate relations, contact to social partners, student relations, supporting the alumni network, and the organization of CEMS career fairs and events. Next to this the CEMS office takes care for press relations, public communication, and the budgeting and financing process of the alliance. The team liaises closely with the Chairs and the Committee chairs while supporting the implementation process of decisions taken by the Boards. The CEMS Global Office has now a headcount of fifteen people.

The CEMS Academic Committee and is formed now by the 33 local Academic Directors, the President of the Student Board, and a representative of the Managers. The Academic Board takes decisions on MIM curriculum-related questions with the aid of the Program committees. These committees formulate guidelines for courses to reduce differences in courses along the member schools and align the learning objectives and educational formats. The Graduation Committee organizes the annual graduation. The faculty groups are not supported and financed anymore, although there are two exceptions for the compulsory courses in strategic management and global leadership.

Academic Directors and local MIM Program and Corporate Relations Managers play an important role in the local member schools. The MIM Program and Corporate Relations Managers deal with students and companies on a day-to-day basis while the Academic Directors are responsible for the implementation of the curriculum at the member schools. Most schools additionally appoint a Language Representative to the Languages for Business Communication Group who is available to answer questions related to examinations and language requirements, and eventually supports personal development.

Figure 7: Governance structure during development stage



In the governance structure in the development stage the faculty groups lost a bit of centrality and became less influential. The academic directors are more in charge of the academic aspects of the program, to develop courses and assure the quality of education. The academic directors form several program committees to overlook the core programs and the specializations. The Management Council is the main executing body, and the Strategic Board is addressing strategic challenges. The General Assembly has mainly a formal role in accordance with the annual and financial report, and in the acceptance of new members and agreeing in strategic decisions proposed by the Strategic Board.

Corporate partners and social partners

Corporate partners have had a seat in all the governmental bodies since the very beginning. They play a key role in the growth of CEMS and the development in values. Since the growth of CEMS the decision-making process is more complicated. The corporate and social members are extremely helpful in making complicated decisions by bringing in a business and societal perspective. They also have decision-making practice and sometimes they push decisions from an outsider and at the same time insider perspective.

The Global Alliance of Banking on Values (GABV) is a CEMS social partner since 2018. The GABV operates as an independent network of banks using finance to deliver sustainable development for unserved people, communities, and their environment. The alliance was founded in 2009 with a shared mission to use finance to deliver sustainable economic, social, and environmental development. The alliance comprises more than 75 financial institutes operating across different countries in Asia, Africa, Australia, Latin-America, North America, and Europe, serving more than 50 million customers with 70.000 co-workers. The GABV became a partner by an initiative of a student elective in the board who was engaged in a Global Leadership class where the executive director of the GABV shared strategic challenges to be solved by students. The value for the GABV of this partnership is to share the mission and values of the GABV with young talents with a global mindset, responsible leadership and ethical conduct. Every year member banks of the GABV present strategic issues in Block courses and Global Leadership classes in several schools and invite students to come up with new ideas how to cope with these challenges. Business projects help the GABV to position itself as a value based alliance in the world of finance. The value for CEMS of this partnership is an involved social partner that offers another perspective in finance that is coherent with CEMS values to contribute to a better world. The GABV challenge students with strategic issues about managing and leading global alliances. CEMS and the GABV are able to learn from each other by exchanging strategies and experiences as value-based alliances in a global world. In 2022 a book about ‘Creating and managing global value-based alliances’ is published with CEMS and the GABV as leading examples and inspirations for the broader business world.¹⁸

 A.P. Møller - Maersk	 ABB	 ABInBev To a Future With More Cheers	 Accenture	 BNP Paribas	 Boston Consulting Group	 Capgemini Invent	 China CITIC Bank International
 AlphaSights Ltd	 Amplifon S.p.A.	 Arçelik	 AstraZeneca PLC	 CO2 Management	 Coca-Cola HBC	 Coloplast	 Credit Suisse
 Bain & Company	 Barilla	 Bayer	 Beiersdorf AG	 Daimler	 Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu	 DHL Consulting	 E.ON Inhouse Consulting
 EDP - Energias de Portugal, S.A.	 EF Education First	 Equinor ASA	 Gartner	 Jarline Matheson	 KEARNEY	 KONE	 Korea Company, Ltd
 Google	 Grube SEB	 GXO	 H&M	 L'Oréal	 LG Chem	 Lufthansa Group	 Luxottica
 Henkel AG & Co. KGaA	 Hilti	 Hyundai Motor Company	 Integration Consulting	 LVMH	 Mastercard	 McKinsey & Company	 MET
 Meta	 METRO	 MVM DZ	 Nokia	 Simon Kucher & Partners	 ŠKODA AUTO a.s.	 Société Générale	 Unibail-Rossard Westfield
 Novo Nordisk	 Österreichische Nationalbank	 Pilsen Brewery	 Procter & Gamble	 UniCredit	 United Overseas Bank	 Whirlpool	 Whiteshield Partners
 Richemont	 Salesforce	 Santander Bank Polska S.A.	 Siemens Healthineers	 Yara International ASA	 zeb	 Zurich Insurance Group	
 Care International	 Fairtrade International	 Global Alliance for Banking on Values	 Kiron Open Higher Education	 The European Space Agency (ESA)	 Transparency International	 United Nations Alliance of Civilizations	 WWF International

The seventy-one CEMS Corporate partners and eight social partners in 2022¹⁹

Student board

In carrying out their original tasks, the Student Board acts as the official voice of CEMS students, representing their interests before the Academic, corporate, and administrative stakeholders of the CEMS alliance.

In 2020, the Student Board worked in six subject teams:

1. The *MIM Affairs team* seeks to improve the CEMS MIM program quality and learning experience by providing a link between students and other stakeholders.
2. The *Marketing & Communication team* implements and supervises projects which have an impact across the CEMS alliance in relation to awareness and information sharing.
3. The *CEMS Club Support team* provides support and guidance to CEMS Clubs and facilitates best practice sharing in order to enhance the CEMS experience for students.
4. The *Responsible Leadership team* brings students closer to society by creating a sense of responsibility about the world's environmental, cultural, economic, and social challenges that they will face as future global business leaders.
5. The *Alumni Relations team* works in close collaboration with the CEMS Alumni Association to ensure a stronger network of and assistance in projects related to all CEMS stakeholders and alumni.
6. The *Corporate Relations team* enhances the interaction between students and CEMS Corporate Partners through organizing events and developing collaboration spaces on and off-line.

CEMS students enjoy a very active student life at each school. CEMS Clubs organize a variety of events on and around campuses. The Clubs are there to support the students CEMS experience as a whole and to ensure that the program also provides a social and cultural learning experience for them.

Alumni network

The CEMS Alumni Association (CAA) is becoming an important international network of CEMS graduates throughout the world. In 2020, there were nearly 16,000 CEMS alumni. The Graduation Ceremony takes place each year during the CEMS Annual Events (usually at the end of November) which is hosted by one of the CEMS member schools.²⁰

The alumni association is led in this period by an alumni board and is present in many countries through local committees of CEMS alumni. The local committees are responsible for keeping in contact with CEMS alumni and organizing professional and social activities. They meet on a regular basis to discuss the activities and development of the association. The alumni board comprises the CAA President, the CEMS Executive Director, a representative of the CEMS Student Board, three local committee representatives, two senior alumni and two junior alumni. It proposes and develops initiatives to foster career and personal

development opportunities of its alumni members and represents alumni interests on the CEMS Executive Board.

While students stay at the partner universities, there are supporting groups called CEMS clubs through which CEMS students share identity. The extended network of CEMS students spans schools across the world. Local Committees all over the world are responsible for keeping in contact with CEMS alumni and organizing professional and social activities. They meet on a regular basis to discuss the activities and development of the CEMS Alumni Association, and jointly elect the Executive Committee every two years.



Recent launched mobile CEMS alumni app for CEMS alumni around the globe

Strategic issues and paradoxes

In the development stage new strategic issues and paradoxes arose. The most prominent strategic issue was the choice to become a more closed alliance based on the existing members or to continue as an alliance open for new members from other countries and cultures. Related to this issue is the attention and support of member schools for their own students and for exchange students. With more schools entering the alliance the governance became more complicated since more schools were included in the governing bodies.

Consolidation and globalization

In the past years, CEMS expanded its network across the globe and now has 34 member schools. In the developing stage the alliance was keen on consolidating and strengthening its shared values within the community. One reason was to give new members time and support to incorporate the program into their curriculum. Another one is that each time a new school joined CEMS, the old program and structure of courses had to be readjusted to ensure that it fits the new school's academic agenda while remaining compliant to existing member schools' current curriculum. Additionally, the coordination and management of 34 schools brings technical challenges of their own. With only four members, the organization was very agile and had a short decision process. However, when CEMS started expanding it needed to grow its governance structures and management frameworks. The evolving phase also gives CEMS time to analyse its organizational structure and adapt it to be more suitable for further expansions. The dilemma between consolidating and expanding is becoming more tense every day, with a constantly evolving world, where growth and size is the main paradigm. Will CEMS have to follow the global trend toward global expansion, risk losing its core values, and will CEMS choose to restrain the number of partners, risking closing in on itself? And at the heart of this reflection is this question: what are the expectations of students and the corporate and social partners about expanding? The world is at globalization, but how far are the students and partners ready to go? Are they awaiting further globalization? Or are they ready to build a strong alliance with more opportunities within the existing members? Another issue is whether CEMS should have multiple Academic Partners in certain countries, for CEMS to be more representative of global diversity, and thus questioning their habit to invite only one school in a country? One school per country was very logical when CEMS only had members in Europe. With such huge countries as India and China with different national cultures the question is how CEMS cope with these different cultures will, given that CEMS includes 19 European business schools and only one school in multicultural countries such as China, India, and United States. Expansion is always challenging because the schools need to be the best in their country, need to be accredited, have a sponsor school to be introduced., have high quality faculty and education methods, and a good geopolitical situation in the country. And perhaps the most challenging issue: how to keep the identity clear and the guiding values vivid and meaningful for all members and partners.

Home students and exchange students

With the growth of the number of students from more developing countries and with different cultural backgrounds, the importance increases of accommodating exchange students and offering them good jobs. More students want to work abroad for corporate and social partners and not specifically in their home country. Member schools feel a primary responsibility to support their own students with career services and job searches. Exchange students are supposed to finish their study at their home university, but especially students from developing countries would like to work abroad and feel limited in their choices by financial

resources and visa regulations. They expect support from CEMS to find a job in another country then their home country.

Governance and governing

With the growth of the alliance the relations between schools and faculty members became less deep and governance became more complicated. Formally the General Assembly is responsible for all final decisions. With only one Assembly meeting a year, the decision making process is rather slow, while dynamics in the environment ask for for agility. It could be an option to delegate more decision making power to the Management council and to give CEMS Global office more executive power within certain boundaries.

African and Latin American countries experience challenging environments. At the same time these countries are very promising to build a better world, which is one of the ambitions of CEMS. In the governance, CEMS needed to adapt to the growth of the alliance to give voice to all perspectives and realize a fluent decision-making process. The essence of CEMS is collaboration and then a good governance structure is not enough. Governing based on formal and informal relations is needed as well. There is a need to bring in the African perspective in the study program and to offer a real global program with respect to global cultures and attention to global trends. This is almost impossible to arrange from formal governance structures although these structures may help to create possibilities for collaborative relations between schools, informal exchanges of faculty, and mutual learning processes for schools, faculty, and students. One way of supporting collaboration is the exchange of professors across schools. Another example to support collaboration and innovation is the introduction of the Phillippe Louvet Innovation award in 2020. The CEMS Philippe Louvet Innovation Award aims at encouraging innovation within the CEMS alliance that will bring value to the community and its stakeholders. Projects to be submitted should contribute to improving, strengthening, or expanding the learning process of CEMS MIM students. To encourage innovation as a collaborative effort and support collaboration between schools and partners with a minimum of two schools or two types of stakeholders is required. The award is granted to the implementation of new innovations and its dissemination for the benefit of all CEMS stakeholders and the CEMS community.

Evolving the CEMS alliance (2022 – Future)

CEMS has become one of the most relevant and sustainable global alliances in management education fundamentally due to its strong spirit and forward-thinking values as well as its active role in sustainability and diversity. CEMS strategically combined the different values of faculty, corporate and social partners, students, and alumni. However, the development of CEMS did not come easy and it still faces continuous deviances every day. The ideas presented in this part of the learning history are based on interviews with academic directors, faculty members, deans from member universities, executives from corporate partners, CEMS students, and co-workers in CEMS global office.

During the first decade of the 21st century humanity faces fundamental challenges in globalization, digitalization, climate change, populism in politics and polarization in societies. There is an unequal division of food and water in our global world, and we are confronted with pandemics and sincere health issues. International relations are under pressure. Experts like the Intergovernmental panel on climate change do not get tired of emphasizing the growing need of international collaboration and mutual understanding. CEMS adapts to these developments and is emphasizing its commitment to develop responsible leaders for a more open, sustainable, and inclusive future.

The dream revisited

Many faculty members, students, alumni, and academic and executive directors of CEMS share the same dream: preparing future leaders that will have a positive impact in our global world, supporting responsible leadership with ethical conduct by ensuring that every student is exposed to a variety of cultures and understand the dynamics of business on a global scale from multiple perspectives. The shared aim is to educate students to have the ambition and capability to become a leader in the world with a global mindset and a sincere sense of social responsibility. A new ambition that evolves is democratizing knowledge across the globe to contribute to a better world. Global elective, social impact projects, and open courses may contribute to this aim to share knowledge and experiences to contribute to a more open, sustainable, and inclusive world.

Growing as a global alliance

CEMS started as the Community of European Management Schools and most members are still European schools. CEMS moved from a European mindset to a global one. The first expansion to Asia was pushed by corporate partners that worked globally, and students that wanted to broaden their horizon. The expansion to Asia was a challenge. European schools share the same values, same ideas, and after the Bologna agreement the same structure for bachelor's and Master's programs. Asian schools have different values and ideas, and different educational systems and program structures. The involvement of Asian schools worked very well with respect to different cultural values and educational systems. CEMS

developed a more open program structure, and the Asian Schools were very eager to adapt to the quality standards of CEMS schools. Later, CEMS involved schools from Latin America and supported these schools to integrate their courses in the CEMS curriculum. It became more complicated to attract students from the new non-European schools, since they have other options to offer studies abroad. This may lead to a disbalance between CEMS schools in the amount of exchange students. To make exchanges between universities easier, it was important to attract more schools in Latin America so students could go on an exchange closer to home on their own continent.

When starting as a European alliance the founders agreed on the principle to inviting one business school with the highest reputation in one country. For the European alliance this makes sense since a CEMS membership offers the member school a unique international position in the market for business education. Now CEMS has become a global alliance, the question could be raised if this principle is still valid for huge countries with different cultures and markets like China, India, and the United States.

The process of identifying the best school in a country and convincing them to join the alliance is challenging because each time a new school enters CEMS, the existing program and structure of courses must be cleared from point zero and ensure that the CEMS program fits the academic agenda of the new schools, while remaining compliant to the current curriculum and the program of existing member schools. Offering a coherent and same Master's program at all member universities is a huge challenge when diversity increases, and schools have different priorities.



Map with CEMS academic members present on all continent

Some new schools did not have an international office before joining CEMS, did not offer classes in English, and their rankings might be behind the university rankings in Europe and United States. For CEMS, the reputation and rigor of the study program is more important than rankings. Ranking systems have different criteria, and these may differ in every region, so rankings are difficult to compare. Innovative and entrepreneurial programs will never show up in the common rankings. It is impossible to lead a business school only based on rankings. Most rankings do not measure quality and innovative power because they are based on a set of predefined variables, for example the number of publications in specific journals, career opportunities, or growth in salaries of graduated MBA students. CEMS schools are excellent, all have a high reputation in their country or region, and all are recognized as outstanding by corporate partners and other businesses. The quality assurance system of CEMS based on peer reviews assessing the quality of the program offered by each school every five years is an important tool to assure the quality and reputation of the CEMS program, next to the standard student evaluations after every course. This information is used to assess, improve, and renew programs offered by member schools.

It is essential for existing member schools to share knowledge and help new schools adapt to internationalization, despite of the different rankings systems. CEMS is not a truly global alliance if the alliance fails to include institutions from all geographic regions. While it is unavoidable that some member schools are ranked better than others, it is part of the mission of CEMS to share good practices and support schools to be internationally accredited. In the end, the entire CEMS network benefits from this discrepancy in rankings and accreditations, because it allows students and faculty members to explore cultures that they have never explored before and learn in places that have a different culture and educational system. Required from a candidate school is to have enough knowledge base to deliver programs at the same level of other schools in the alliance. Becoming a full CEMS member school requires a strong commitment and effort on the side of the school to guarantee academic quality with an international or even a global perspective. For candidate schools it can be useful to work with a supportive buddy system based on in-between school collaboration to reach academic excellence and a rigorous study program. When two or three full member schools are willing to adopt and support a candidate school the process to become a full member school becomes easier, although it can take some time.

Further globalization and growth of the alliance may weaken the identity, the shared vision and the deep embedded values and guiding principles of CEMS. On the other hand, involving schools with high reputation in developing countries and upcoming markets contributes to the mission of CEMS to become a truly global alliance educating future leaders that have a positive impact in our global world. The reputation of CEMS relies on the reputation of the schools and the corporate and social partners, therefore a serious selection and approval process for new schools and partners is essential to guarantee the reputation and that schools and partners act according to the CEMS values and stay attractive for young talents and international students.

With the evolution of CEMS as a global alliance and involving new member schools with different cultural backgrounds and diverse educational systems, selecting the school with the highest reputation is not enough. When the variety in cultural background of member schools increases, the values of CEMS become more important as the core of the alliance. CEMS is a purpose driven and value-based alliance and the purpose and shared values keep the alliance together. Next to reputation and a rigorous study program, the alignment on values should be considered when inviting new schools to become a member of the alliance. A scorecard for assessing cultural fit could help in the conversation about new memberships. The scorecard could include hard criteria as reputation and accreditation, academic capabilities, quality of international faculty, international course experience, school career services, number of international students, student diversity, international exchange opportunities, independence from governments in the content of programs, and relations with corporate and social partners. With the international growth of the alliance, soft criteria and cultural fit related to the CEMS purpose and values became more important. Soft criteria are responsibility to society and the environment, cultural diversity, open and inclusive future, ethical conduct, global business spirit, global and responsible leadership. Also, organizational criteria are important to consider, like international office, quality of academic leadership, and intrinsic support from the dean or leader of the business school.

Aligning with global challenges

CEMS' vision statement outlines that it is a *“unique global community, comprising the world's finest students, schools, alumni, and social partners... that prepares responsible leaders contributing to a more open, sustainable, and inclusive world.”* Consequently, for CEMS to achieve this vision and enhance the alliance's impact on society, it is imperative that a greater effort is placed on mobilizing the global community to contribute to tackling the world's greatest issues. Through its one-of-a-kind network, CEMS is uniquely placed to be at the forefront in sparking collaboration between talented students, leading multi-nationals, and business schools. Whilst the world continues to face a myriad of complex challenges which span across industries and geographies. More than ever before, our planet faces significant challenges in finance and economics, climate change, geo-political tensions, polarization in communities, digital innovation and disruption, health issues, unequal distribution of food and water, and access to education for all.

It is no secret that climate change is the number one challenge facing our planet this century and our reaction to solving it in the coming years will define the future of our world. Not only this, but climate change is interlinked, and affects nature, the economy and society simultaneously. Young people are passionate and extremely driven to contribute to solving this problem and increased opportunities for them to be able to contribute will always be popular amongst students. Tackling our global healthcare challenges. Consequently, achieving health equity has gained greater coverage in recent times and will continue to be a critical focus for the coming decade in both the public and private sectors.

Providing CEMS students with solid academic knowledge of global issues is crucial and one of the main purposes of CEMS. Most CEMS courses mainly focused on the business side, intending to cultivate talents in the global business field. However, as the global issues are becoming increasingly important these days, more people and businesses have started to consider the issues and incorporate them when doing business. For example, due to the pandemic, people see how vulnerabilities in health systems can have profound implications for health, trust in governments, and social cohesion, and these topics are waiting for CEMS students to answer. Therefore, it is time to reconsider the CEMS curriculum by including more issues in economy & finance, climate, social impact, and healthcare. CEMS students like opportunities to further apply their understanding of global issues with their business mindset.

The proposed ideas below are based on the interviews and developed by students with the aim to shape impactful changemakers. The ideas contribute to this objective by giving students the keys to solving challenges, designing a more flexible program to enable them to diversify their knowledge on such topics, developing experience and career opportunities in social-focused projects, and eventually letting students practice and lead the change.

Innovative ways of learning

CEMS aims to educate responsible leaders contributing to a more open, sustainable, and inclusive world. In this regard, the alliance's goal is to prepare leaders to address the current changing challenges. However, doing so requires a versatile approach. On the one hand, students need to learn about the existing business challenges and how to tackle them effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, students also need to learn how to identify emerging global and societal challenges and addressing them equally well.

Global online electives

Changing ways of working and learning, open new opportunities for CEMS to broaden its courses and content, its academic body and allies, its network and impact. Whereas a couple of years ago, studying remotely was as seldom as remote work, both have found their way into common practice. For an innovative program, this creates a huge chance to be at the forefront of universities. Presential, remote, and hybrid models go hand in hand in a comprehensive and global program such as CEMS.

The Global Online Electives (GOE) were launched in the fall 2020 semester due to the pandemic and the inherently uncertain scheduling of CEMS electives courses. The goal was to present a hybrid opportunity for CEMS students, which were offered across different CEMS universities. In terms of content, the offer was very diverse and additionally served as a supplement to missing thematic aspects at respective home universities. To teach hybrid ways of working to the future workforce, it could be an option to have at least one mandatory

online course during the CEMS year, to strengthen the skills and sensitivity required for this. This offers a possibility for collaboration across schools.

In the CEMS curriculum there are already nice examples of online electives where faculty and students work in cross cultural teams, like the about Social Development Goals online elective offered by a collaboration of six CEMS schools. The way the online course works could be a best practice, by just having to attend at the introductory and final course dates. In between, all course content must be studied online at one's own pace and in one's own time. The Sustainable Business Models course at NHH is also a very good example of how students had the opportunity to review the lecture in a simple way, regardless of when it was taught.

The Global Online Elective: 'Managing the SDGs' is a blended course developed by faculty at seven universities of the CEMS Alliance. The course combines online and in-class sessions. Students must complete virtual modules prepared by instructors from each of the participating universities. In addition, they work in virtual cross-national, cross-institutional teams to develop a best-practice case study on SDG achievement in a selected company or organization. Bringing together interdisciplinary expertise and viewpoints on societal challenges of our time united in an innovative course design creates a unique learning experience. With the combination of a virtual module-based course with a contribution of each institution, a case-based, cross-university group assignment, and a reflective individual work assignment, students benefit from diversified learning experiences and modern teaching methods of international higher education by 'Internationalization at Home'.

Closely oriented to the requirements of the global world of work, students work on a self-chosen example of sustainable or digital corporate practice, applying their knowledge acquired in the online content whereby coached by an expert teaching at one of the partner institutions. Through this cooperation and the diversity of disciplinary backgrounds of the people involved, students acquire specific knowledge and skills to face the economic and social challenges of the future that are highly relevant to the economic and entrepreneurial environment and expand their digital and intercultural skills through cooperation with students from all over the world.

A CEMS student expressed his experience as follows: *"I gained a lot of insights into a highly relevant topic of sustainability and a foretaste of the virtually networked working world. Taking the opportunity to work in teams with students from other universities on a challenging task and benefit from lectures of experts in different disciplines teaching at the six partner universities was just outrageous - It was a stimulating and enriching learning experience."* (Weza Bombo Joao, HSG and Esade).

Global Online Electives could serve as an additional opportunity for the faculty groups to combine interdisciplinary knowledge and to further collaborate in the field of research, which

could ultimately serve as a new platform for new course designs. Global Online Electives could serve the demand of many aspects, such as unlocking cross-university knowledge, connecting professors on a global scale, and providing for more flexible and customizable options for all CEMS students. Supporting students in virtual teamwork contributes to the success of these online electives and prepare students for future jobs. Supporting professors, teaching assistants, academic directors, and program managers in online practice is essential to not just provide different options, but to stand out.

Social impact projects

Students propose to go beyond theory and enable motivated students to apply their know-how and engage in a social impact project in the field for a minimum of eight weeks, helping local populations to resolve some of the issues they are facing. These programs could be given the same status as the mandatory internship abroad to give students an incentive to participate in these Social Impact Projects (SIP). There are two main objectives for this idea. On the one hand, students are enabled to go through a unique transformative experience while having a concrete positive impact and being able to practically apply their knowledge. On the other hand, CEMS is positioned as a force for positive change and strengthen the global impact of the alliance. When all member schools manage to send at least five students every year to work on local projects, CEMS could have an enormous positive impact throughout the world and become a source of inspiration for other educational institutions.

In the Social Impact Project, students could team up and start working on the issue they have decided to resolve. They will be assigned a mentor who will guide them throughout their journey, and they will also have the possibility to work with experts on issues they are facing. The students engaged in Social Impact Projects will be given additional preparation to be ready to work on their project in an unknown context. During the eight weeks of the project, students will work with local populations to elaborate their solution and resolve the issue with local people and probably team up with students from schools in the country. They will also have the possibility to be in contact with their school mentor for support and a local mentor or sponsor for further guidance. At the end of their journey, the students share their learning experiences with the local community. Next to this meeting of minds, the team submit a reflection outlining the process and the effectiveness of the proposed solutions. Individual team members write a personal reflection paper with their experiences and learning outcomes that help them in their future career.



Students working on a social impact project

Courses related to sustainable and community development

The world as we know it is endangered and the future of the next generations will be compromised if we do not act now to face the global challenges of our times, in particular climate change. It is an opportunity for CEMS to educate students as changemakers that will contribute to solving these issues. An idea is that every CEMS school offers an elective linked to at least one of the Sustainable Development Goals framed by the United Nations.

Another idea is to collaborate more with social partners in courses that relate to finance, economy, sustainability, and health issues. The Global Alliance for Banking on Values could bring in another perspective on finance courses based on their strategy and values to contribute to the vitality of local communities by financing change and investing only in the real economy. The World Wildlife Fund could offer a Global Online Elective for all schools about climate change. Care international, Fair Trade International, and local members of the Global Alliance for Banking on Values could support Social Impact Projects. The Social Impact Project could also be supported by business angels powered by corporate partners. Inviting the social and business partners to be part of these innovations could contribute to deepening the relations between CEMS and their partners.

Entrepreneurial practice

In many CEMS schools professors have knowledge and experiences in entrepreneurship, start-ups, and social investments. While students might have a million ideas of business plans, the implementation part might require skills and knowledge that they are lacking. The creation of a 'CEMS start-up lab', may bring stakeholders of the alliance together to foster open innovation, involving students that will be able to share their ideas, alumni that share their experiences, masterclasses by professors to share knowledge, and corporate partners to prove the business ideas. The goal of the lab is to foster business plans of students, strengthen

relations with corporate partners with projects that have a real impact, and provide students and alumni with life-long learning.

Bringing entrepreneurial experience together could create, a “CEMS Start-up incubator” that offers advice, funding, and resources for entrepreneurial ventures, allowing current CEMS innovators to yield real change could be an interesting angle for CEMS to foster a stronger reputation. The CEMS Start-up Incubator would enable young visionaries to courageously deal with the challenges of our present and future, making a transformational change in the ways of doing business and having a positive impact on society by encouraging and actively financing entrepreneurship. This adds an additional career path to the many opportunities CEMS can provide to students and graduates. By engaging successful alumni for mentoring and funding, this could be a unique program to truly set CEMS apart from other MIM programs.

Dynamics in global alliances

Many organizations, whether private or public, are embedded in networks of partner organizations. In our global world, we see more cooperation in networks and alliances to cope with turbulence in the environment in which organizations operate. For organizations in a dynamic environment that want to contribute to a positive world based on a fair economy, building alliances for the common good is an interesting path. This path entails that there are people building alliances and working together in economic and societal change. CEMS itself is a value-based and global alliance. In the courses ‘Global Leadership’ or ‘Strategic Management’, CEMS itself could be used as an inspirational case study to invite students to learn from the valuable history and development of CEMS as a global value-based alliance contributing to a sustainable world. Students can be involved in creating the future of CEMS with their reflections and ideas.

It is a Monday morning and forty-nine CEMS students with twenty-five different cultural backgrounds enter the classroom. They are seated in seven teams of seven students with funny names as Leaves, Bananas, Stars, Hearts. A small bag with coloured pencils, post-its and other materials indicate the seating of the groups. This class is about Global Leadership and the professor explains that CEMS as a global alliance will be the leading case study for the class. All seven groups have a challenge to contribute to the future of CEMS. We all will learn from the rich history and the dynamics in the development of the CEMS alliance, which is an attractive and valuable perspective since many global organizations are part of an alliance. The challenge for the team has three pillars:

1. Discovering and uncovering a phase in the development of CEMS by interviews and document study.
2. Exploring the culture of an upcoming market, analysing the educational system in this country and propose a business school that could be a new CEMS partner.

3. Contributing to the development of CEMS as a global alliance by exploring a strategic challenge and presenting ideas to prepare CEMS for the future.

After the introduction of the course and exchanging learning aims posted by students, Rita Soltesz from CEMS global office and Jean-Paul Larçon as one of the founders of CEMS talk about the development of CEMS and present seven strategic challenges. There is excitement in class about the idea to contribute to the future of CEMS. The teams start to work supported by the professor who shares useful concepts and practical stories about dynamics in global alliances, strategy development and effective teamwork. After ten weeks with three seminars the students present their ideas and findings in front of Nicole de Fontaine, the executive director and Rita Soltezs, the academic director of CEMS global office. Three weeks later students are invited to present their ideas in the annual meeting of the academic directors of all CEMS schools.

In their personal learning reflections the students express their enthusiasm to work with CEMS as real case in the Global leadership class:

“It was surprising to learn how little we know about our own CEMS values and history”..

“It was very exciting to work on a real case devoted to the development of CEMS alliance to which you belong and have personal attachment and commitment”.

“I truly enjoyed the course contents and the CEMS project, because I could feel how I could not only learn a lot for myself, but also how I could contribute to a great future for CEMS”.

“Throughout the course, I realized and continued to be astonished by the community that CEMS has created and is creating. I have learnt that the CEMS community is strong and unique because from the student level where everyone brings in a different set of skillsets that complement each other to corporate partners where seeds turn into trees and flourish”.

“Understanding CEMS better has been a gift. I have realized that CEMS is a big, warm family that knows no boundaries. It is a safe place where you can receive but also give so much. It is truly the greatest good fortune that has happened to me in these years”.

(Reflections students Global Leadership Class Esade, 2022)



CEMS Global Leadership Class 2022 at Esade and first time CEMS was studied as a case of an alliance

It turns out that students appreciate understanding the history and values of CEMS and feeling part of the CEMS community by contributing to its future. Additionally, for future leaders it is important to learn about dynamics in creating and managing global alliances. Using CEMS as a case study in courses is a unique way to contribute to the reputation of CEMS, to work with a case study that relates to the learning environment of students, and to learn about sustainable global alliances.

Career path orientation

During their CEMS year, many students are still unsure of which field and type of company they would like to start their careers in. Traditionally, after completing their degree, most CEMS students started working in consulting, financial services, consumer goods or technology. This is reflected through the corporate partners, who mainly operate in these fields, and who sometimes offer industry and company presentations to the students. However, due to the growing complexities of the world and the emerging importance of the global challenges we are facing, most students no longer want to follow one of the more traditional career paths offered to them. Some students want to have direct responsibilities by working for a start-up, some want to make a positive impact by working for a societal organization, and some want to reorient to another field such as engineering or political science. Due to their background and high level of education, CEMS students know that there are many opportunities for them and that they can pursue almost any career they wish for.



CEMS Career forum in 2022 in Barcelona

However, many CEMS students have little information about other career paths than the traditional ones in businesses and consulting, consequently limiting the scope of their search and action. With an alumni network of more than 18,000 diverse and open-minded professionals, CEMS alumni are working in almost any imaginable field, country, industry, and profession. We believe that this extremely wide diversity of career paths is highly valuable but not exploited enough. One initiative might be to offer online panel discussions

with multiple alumni working in the same field, with a different industry focus every time. This will surely broaden the minds and scope of CEMS students in terms of the opportunities they have and the different career paths they can follow. Another idea is to link students with an alumnus as coach in career orientation and guidance. Personal stories of alumni as role models, career builders and career switchers may help students in their career orientation. The development of a CEMS community app may support this networking and learning process.

Social awareness and self-awareness

CEMS students are not only incredibly diverse in terms of their cultural heritage, but also in terms of their individual characteristics. Individual differences create diversity of thought beyond what is already achieved through diverse cultures and businesses. Curiosity is at the heart of organizational innovation and professional development. Curiosity is part of the CEMS program and stimulated by visiting and studying in other countries, entering relationships with other people, and experimenting with new ideas. Being curious means daring to ask questions without hesitation and willingness to leave comfort zones. Three kinds of curiosity are important for global leaders. First, curiosity about the world around you. Second, curiosity about others, which is related to social awareness. Third, curiosity about your personality, your motives, your fears and where you are coming from, which is related to self-awareness. Curiosity about who you are in relation to others and the world around you is essential for professional growth.

Successful global leaders ask feedback from colleagues; understand their underlying values and norms, and they are interested in what motivates people. This allows them to connect with the emotional world and the ambitions of fellows and co-workers. Future leaders know how to build trust and direct the energy of people towards the future. They bring people together and organize interaction that makes innovation possible. Future leaders who have an impact on change, know themselves, realize what has shaped them, and know which values are important for them. Self-awareness implies that people know what their motives and preferences are. They are aware of their own biography and professional career and the influence of significant events on their experiences. They know what energizes them and what their fascinations and sources of inspiration are.

Hence, for global leaders it is just as essential to promote the importance of self-identity as that of cultural heritage. To promote individual diversity and self-identity, CEMS could include exercises on personal and professional development in the block seminar and core courses and offer more skill-seminars and workshops with a focus on social awareness and self-awareness.

Intensifying collaborations

CEMS is an alliance of business schools collaborating with corporate and social partners. The involvement of corporate and social partners is a unique asset of the CEMS community. The

involvement of corporate partners could be intensified. The scope of collaboration with partners could be diversified to align with the interest and the needs of students, to have a positive impact in society, and to prepare future leaders in a global world.

Collaboration between academics

Finding answers to the global challenges needs an inter-disciplinary approach and collaboration between academics from different disciplines. The earlier mentioned Global Online Electives is one way to foster academic collaboration. The Social Impact Project is another opportunity to stimulate collaboration between academics. Action learning in which students work together in a team to develop ideas and find solutions for global issues may include knowledge and expertise from different disciplines. One option is to ask groups of students to propose a theme or issue they want to explore from a multi-disciplinary perspective and give these groups the opportunity to engage and connect professors from the CEMS network around the issue they study.

An interesting way of fostering innovation across schools is the introduction of the Phillippe Louvet innovation award. This award is brilliant in its simplicity and effectivity. The idea is to encourage innovation within the CEMS alliance that will bring value to the community and its stakeholders. To apply for the innovation award, collaboration between schools and partners is required and the proposal should include the diffusion and adoption of the innovation across schools.

Corporate partners and social partners

Corporate and social partners are involved in various activities such as workshops, networking events, career days, and business projects as part of the CEMS curriculum. Corporate and social partners could offer the opportunity to create courses that tackle current issues in their respective industries. These courses can create a collaborative learning environment as students will get insights into real-life problems while corporate partners can gain different perspectives from a diverse and bright cohort.

To offer more added value for corporate partners, CEMS can provide executive education for its partners through intensive leadership programs, short intensive courses, or offer free access to the Global Online Electives. As a result, the partners will not only see CEMS as a premier place to recruit talent but also as an educational space for its management. In this way CEMS can establish itself as a thought leader among business schools while being able to deepen the bond between its corporate and social partners towards a more collaborative relationship.

Among all the current 70 partners CEMS is collaborating with, a limited number of social partners are included in the list. Most of the corporate partners are well-known large corporations, which narrowed down the topics Business Projects could incorporate, as well as the future career path for CEMS students in the long term. Most of the corporate partners are profit-driven instead of purpose-driven, so the business project topics are mostly related to

driving profitable growth for each company through product development, market expansion or improving customer relationships. However, few topics related to global health, climate change or social impact are included due to the limitations of the large corporations' business models. Therefore, inviting social start-ups and societal organizations is crucial for CEMS to strengthen the alliance's involvement in global issues.

CEMS sets a high standard when recruiting corporate and social partners, and it is important to maintain the overall high standard. However, considering that many social start-ups and potential social partners might not fulfil all the requirements. However, the purpose behind the company, their contribution to society, and the global issues these companies would address could be more considered in the selection process.



Students at Erasmus university collaborating with ESA as social partner of CEMS in a business project

Start-ups

The CEMS curriculum places an emphasis on collaborating with corporate partners, many of whom are from the private sector. Technology is a driver of the future, which has been demonstrated by many companies and start-ups. Studies on recent graduates show that many students have a growing interest in technology companies and more graduates want to start their career in a start-up. CEMS has already worked with many technological oriented companies such as Meta, Siemens, and Google. However, the CEMS network currently lacks agile and emerging companies and start-ups. A stronger focus on local, emerging tech start-ups would therefore be of great benefit in satisfying the interest of existing CEMS students, offering them the direct contact to their potential future employer in the start-up world. Moreover, following the needs and trends, the new partnerships with tech start-ups could

attract new CEMS applicants, who are interested in a diverse CEMS corporate partner portfolio. The partnership and collaboration with start-ups could be embedded into skill seminars, offering students an entrepreneurial seminar based on the start-up's development and knowhow. A closer collaboration with start-ups could be realized through business projects, where every local CEMS school together with the selected start-up, defines a challenge which can be tackled within the period of a semester.

Some local start-ups greatly drive systemic change to build an inclusive, equitable and regenerative economy for all people and the planet. By building partnerships with local social partners, CEMS could collaborate with these start-ups through different means, including working on group projects and business projects, holding skill seminars, and collaborating with the local CEMS clubs to hold volunteering events. To realize the support and partnership with start-up's, it is possible to contact and collaborate with each local university's entrepreneurial hub or technology centres. Local schools may already have important contacts in the start-up world and can speed up the process. Overall, this results in an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in a disruptive and perhaps future work environment, and for the start-ups, the collaboration serves as an aid to their development.

External faculties

The CEMS Master in International Management offers a powerful combination of acquiring theoretical knowledge in the field of international management and experiential learning within the field. Comprehensive leadership courses help students to prepare for the highly competitive international labour market. Students from several fields of studies can apply to the CEMS Master program without any outer limits. Graduates successfully receive official admission from fields of engineering, law, international studies, and social sciences. However, this academic diversification slightly fades away during the study program, as students predominantly complete courses in close connection to management education. Faculties of Member Schools are overarching several fields of studies, not explicitly management education. Several professors are members of institutions with diverse scientific disciplines. It could be considered to create collaboration between faculties to initiate an even broader learning experience, which would benefit both parties, CEMS and the partnering faculty. This collaboration may be useful to explore global and societal issues and develop innovative ideas for solutions.

Collaboration with external faculties and disciplines and teaming up with students from other disciplines in electives could potentially highlight new career prospects for students while encouraging them to deep dive and acquire previously unknown knowledge and experience in the fields of engineering, law, psychology, sociology, philosophy, political science, industrial design, and the conceptual arts. This would lead to a learning experience for both groups of students from an academic perspective to broaden their scope and acquire valuable knowledge. Hard skill knowledge and soft skills can be gained, as students from differing academic backgrounds work in groups using diverse dynamics and methods.

By collaboratively working together, mastering unfamiliar approaches with confidence is another positive outcome. This will not only enable students to conveniently adapt to unusual work dynamics but also to gain expertise from them in contrast to their peers. A similar approach can be followed to open new fields, by example law and justice, education and schools, pedagogy and youth care, medicine and health care, government and governance, international relations, and politics.

Alumni

Since its founding in 1993, the CEMS Alumni Association (CAA) has been a crucial pillar of the CEMS community, enabling CEMS graduates to continue enjoying the multicultural involvement they experienced as students. With more than 18,000 professionals from 108 nationalities, speaking over 60 languages and working in more than 75 countries the CEMS alumni network is, to say the least, very diverse, rich, and valuable. The proposition to leverage the enormous potential of the CEMS alumni network, to strengthen the out-of-class learning experience has enormous potential.

One very effective method is to invite alumni to events organized by the current CEMS cohort. Although this effort is already utilized, it could be done more frequently. In that, alumni are often only invited to a limited number of official networking events. CEMS alumni, however, are often still young professionals seeking to connect beyond official events. Essentially, it would be beneficial for alumni to transmit their knowledge and expertise by offering skills development seminars to current students, but also alumni, for them to continue developing their capabilities even after the end of their studies to learn new skills and capabilities, contributing to the personal development of the CEMS community. Alumni could be invited to offer a two-hours online skills development seminar open to anyone from the CEMS community.



Request from Alumni Association to donate for activities and subsidized scholarships.

Life-long learning

In a fast-moving world, leaders and professionals need to develop their competences. Jobs require knowledge that were not covered during the years of studying. Professional development and self-reflection are a crucial step in the learning process of executives, along with academic knowledge and networking skills. Alumni and executives of corporate and social partners of CEMS could be invited to educational programs for professionals not only focused on sharing new scientific knowledge with the professional field, but also for learning from practitioners. The expertise and the challenges of alumni are a valuable input for our research and education. CEMS could start to offer a limited number of courses, with the ambition to considerably expand these courses over the coming years. Both the content of our course offering and the way we make them accessible must fit within the busy lives of alumni, which could be arranged by blended learning with a mix of studying in one's own time, online interaction, and on-campus education. As already practiced with the Global Online Electives, technology allows organizing distance learning, enabling schools and alumni to share their knowledge without being physically close. Technology also gives the chance to build social-network-like alumni platforms. Through continuing education CEMS can bring science and practice closer together and students, alumni and executives can all benefit from this continuous learning platform.

Impact and visibility

CEMS has a good reputation but is not well known in many countries or within universities and businesses. The visibility of CEMS could be enhanced and the impact could be strengthened by a stronger presence in global institutions and networks.

Research

Pairing theoretical approaches with experience-based learning have been of utmost importance for CEMS. It provides students with an outstanding double-edged sword, by gaining a powerful theoretical background in various fields of studies and being able to put that into practice through case studies, the business project, the CEMS internship and the proposed Social Impact Project. Obtaining practical experience portrays an eminent part of a master's degree to gather real-life-based knowledge which can directly be used in the workplace.

However, not all students follow the multinational career path familiar to many. Pursuing a professional course in academic research is less likely for CEMS graduates, although it does not receive as many highlights as many potentials it contains. Promoting research projects have considerable benefits for students and the CEMS program as well. Enabling students to immerse themselves in various research projects opens previously unknown gates to acquiring theoretical knowledge and exposure to continuing with post-graduate studies. Better positioning of research activity within the program would act as an increasing driver in the

amount of academic research conducted within the boundaries of CEMS, by which greater academic recognition could be achieved. In addition, the possibility of a dedicated research semester after finishing studies could also appear as a driving force of encouragement between students. An opportunity to aim for higher involvement could come from valuing students' research activities with scholarships, this way it could count as CEMS Internship.

Publishing

Being visible in research papers and publications may contribute to the reputation and attractiveness of CEMS. Promoting academic research papers, articles, and case studies under the CEMS brand contributes to the uniqueness of CEMS on topics such as global management, sustainability and climate change, equality and diversity, value-based innovation, and community development.

Publishing CEMS books by faculty members support collaboration and help in creating common ground and aligning courses offered in the CEMS curriculum. These books can be published in close collaboration with a publisher in a specific CEMS series. Corporate and academic partners could conduct research together and publish research papers relevant to international management, organizational development, and global leadership. Professors, scholars, and alumni could publish their own research on the CEMS website. Making interesting and recent publications available on the CEMS website offers more value for stakeholders to visit the website. CEMS includes recognized professors from all around the world and they are publishing anyway. The idea could be to invite professors to publish their article as open source on the CEMS website and make it available in the curriculum. It could be considered to set up a CEMS publication board engaged in publishing CEMS books or an online academic journal. If successful, the publishing organization would increase CEMS's reputation as an academic institution.

Democratizing knowledge

CEMS could consider democratizing knowledge and expanding their visibility and impact by doing so. Pledging that CEMS is always looking for the best and most professional academic schools with its distinct course content, it is almost a pity to leave all the valuable knowledge locally to individual universities. Offering free Global Online Electives is a potential opportunity to expand the recruitment of global students by gaining access to potential universities in emerging markets and the expansion of inclusive diversity into untouched regions of the world. For candidate partners, Global Online Electives could be an opportunity to connect and engage with the alliance in an early phase of the official CEMS university alliance. By sharing research papers and publications on the CEMS website, knowledge could be made available for a broader public.



CEMS students value a good work-life balance, career progression, and impact at an early stage

Visibility

To increase the reputation and visibility of CEMS, more resources should be invested in the social media presence on emerging channels. There are different audiences with different needs and behaviours on social media that need to be addressed with different strategies. For example, the current CEMS strategy on LinkedIn seems to be appropriate for current students, corporate and social partners, and alumni. However, to improve the reputation and visibility of CEMS among the younger generation and attract new applicants, it would be recommended to create a CEMS account on the short-video app TikTok. TikTok is currently the fastest growing social platform, and more than 60% of its users belong to Generation Z, born between 1996 and 2015. Since Gen Z will be an increasingly important target group for CEMS, it makes sense to develop a strong presence on TikTok now. The platform already has a robust career-oriented section where creators upload videos with resume and career tips. This is also a promising way for CEMS to reach potential students who want a more realistic look at universities. There is no need to invest resources to shoot long and expensive videos with professional camera teams, since most short videos show real life situations without much editing. It is easy to engage current students as content creators for TikTok as they are already using TikTok and can contribute to the visibility with their experience. First, students could present all aspects of their CEMS life at the various partner universities in the form of short videos with campus tours, telling the story of their home university beyond the branded admissions pages. Second, different students could provide insights into their internships abroad, showing for which company and in which country they worked, and what their key takeaways from the experience were. Third, entertaining interviews with CEMS professors could be appealing content. Finally, there could be videos posted about the excitement during the graduation ceremony.

Presence in global networks

To become more visible in the global world, CEMS could take part in global summits and conferences to get more involved in global discussions. By doing so, CEMS could increase its presence around the world, not only limited to the business world but also function as an essential role that contributes to the whole of society. For example, CEMS could participate in the World Economic Forum so that students would have a chance to meet with leaders in the economics and finance field, understand recent advancements in this field, and, most importantly, develop strategies together with leaders to tackle the most disruptive changes global citizens are facing these days. During self-organized summits, CEMS students can discover, exchange, and develop new insights, which in turn, not only contribute to each of the CEMS students but also could enrich the diversity of CEMS since each student could bring new ideas into the classroom to advance the discussion. In specific summits or conferences CEMS could collaborate with several key stakeholders, including their social and corporate partners and additional partners like the UN Climate Change Conference, European Union, and the World Health Organization, so that leaders and students can collaborate to address different global issues.

Governance

For an organization to keep up with its environment, agile and streamlined governance structures and decision-making processes need to be in place and running. Decisions within the CEMS network are eventually made by the CEMS general assembly. The council, therefore, needs to be structured in a way that supports both efficient decision-making and sufficient discussion among the various members of the school. The existing governance bodies are functioning and could stay in place, although regional chapters might be considered when more schools from Africa and Latin America may join the alliance. Perhaps this offers nice possibilities to come together and exchange experiences across academic disciplines since global issues are seldom related to a single discipline. Decisions made need to find their way into practice in a timely manner. A certain level of execution power within the CEMS global office is to be guaranteed to reach an appropriate conversion rate and period putting ideas into practice.

CEMS may consider the use of Communities of Practice (CoP) to foster innovation, share knowledge, and combine best practices. Since the faculty-groups has lost importance, the introduction of CoP could help in bringing faculty together to share experiences, develop new ideas and courses, and consider publications. The CoP could replace existing faculty groups for core courses with a brother membership than only the specific professors. Many societal and global issues can only be solved by a multi-disciplinary approach. CoP's could be useful bringing diverse disciplines together related to global issues like climate change, health issues and poverty. The introduction of Communities of Practice may contribute to a stronger feeling of belongingness among faculty members with CEMS.

Communities of practice or knowledge communities, are specific learning environments in which people with related professions develop their professional expertise, share knowledge, and give meaning to and derive it from their work practices. Knowledge communities contribute to cultural development through the exchange and sharing of knowledge. This interaction supports the exchange of professional knowledge in extensive networks.

Communities of practice involve:

- A community of people who look for each other because they have and share a common ambition or field of expertise that they stand by and go for.
- People who give meaning to being a member of their community of practice and give identity to it and derive identity from it.
- A community of professionals who want to develop further and in which the members themselves undertake activities to organize this.
- People who are aware of the meaning they have and who realize they can realize their commitment better by sharing knowledge.

Communities of practice may cross organizational boundaries and can take widely varying forms. They thus stimulate the diffusion of innovations. Inter-disciplinary CoP's can be regarded as a mix of consultation and intervision between people from different organizations and disciplines. The aim is to take over innovations from each other by sharing insights and helping each other if there are barriers. It is essential that sharing and adapting parties take responsibility for their own innovation process. Without a willingness for mutual efforts CoP's could quickly turn into meetings without obligation that do not offer a future. To prevent this lack of commitment, it can help to make clear agreements in advance about the aims and length of existence of the CoP, the task for the CoP and the support that will be offered.

Activities for Communities of Practice are:

- Make innovations widely known through as many channels and networks as possible and bring potential adopters together in a small setting.
- Make clear that innovations are only semi-finished products and that it is necessary to apply innovations in one's own situation.
- Besides attention to the actual innovation, also pay attention to the process of innovation and the introduction of the innovation.
- Work on trust between the people in the learning circle and the willingness of the innovator to share knowledge and experience unselfishly.
- Address the adaptive capabilities of the people who are open to the innovation and their willingness to tailor the innovation to their own work practice.
- Emphasize new insights and skills that can lead to different behaviour and that can result in a different view of reality.
- Take risks to bring the innovation into practice and the willingness, with the help of the innovator, to remove obstacles that hold the innovation back.

Whereas CEMS currently maintains its competitive edge in a comprehensive network of well-established companies and social partners, future change-makers might demand closer connections to CEMS's both current and yet-to-be-established social partners, supranational organizations, knowledge institutes, artists, governmental bodies, and non-governmental organizations. A whole ecosystem of change could be created built by all these players, not just by companies.

Strategic issues and paradoxes

This reflective paragraph highlights three paradoxes that emerge in the evolving stage of CEMS as an alliance. One of the most mentioned paradoxes by people interviewed is the need for consolidating the existing alliance and the need to evolve the alliance in expanding to upcoming markets, relating to global issues and the use of innovative learning practices.

Consolidating and evolving

CEMS aims to educate responsible leaders contributing to a more open, sustainable, and inclusive world. In this regard, the alliance's goal is to prepare leaders to address the current changing challenges. CEMS, as an alliance, is well positioned to evolve and live up to its goals: CEMS students are eager to learn about international management theories and many are interested and engaged in tackling global issues. Students come from culturally and geographically diverse backgrounds. Therefore, they can contribute to global business and societal issues on an international level, collaborating across borders and cultures.

Consolidating and evolving go hand in hand in achieving the mission of the alliance and to stay relevant in a fast-moving world.

Involving more member schools is also a dilemma of consolidating and evolving.

Consolidating the existing network helps in protecting the identity and values of the alliance and helps in alignment and quality assurance of the program. Evolving means inviting new partners in developing countries, which is according to the aims and values of the alliance. To balance between a closed and open network, it is possible to look for innovative schools with a high reputation, although there might be differences in pedagogical models of teaching and learning. Looking at high reputation and quality is only one perspective. Another perspective is alignment in aims and cultural values. Of course, a school should be standing out as one of the best schools in their country or region based on accreditations, but also ready to embrace the aims and values of the alliance. Therefore, a value-based assessment could be part of the acceptance process. Other helpful actions could be candidate programs to support potential members schools with exchanges of faculty, and a buddy system of two or three sponsor schools that are interested in developing the relationship.

Top-down and bottom-up

CEMS is an established alliance offering a competitive program in International Management that is distinguished from the usual MBA programs. The bond of the alliance of schools and the collaboration with corporate and social partners contributes to the uniqueness and reputation of the alliance. This means that the quality of the program and its innovative power are key elements to keep the alliance together. Coordination, quality assurance and accreditation of the study program is so important that it needs to be organized from a central body like the global office. When a member school does not fulfil the program requirements or doesn't deliver on what the quality schools agreed upon, the management council needs to act and start a sincere conversation with the school about the contribution to the alliance and question their membership. The general assembly may decide to exclude the school from the alliance to keep the quality of the program. The quality is also based on innovative ideas and concepts. Innovation is difficult to organize top-down. Usually innovation starts bottom-up with an idea of an individual or a small group, by example to start collaborative research, to offer a CEMS executive program for corporate partners, to publish a book for a CEMS program, to develop an interactive video case-study. CEMS is a huge network of professors and students with innovative and sometimes disruptive ideas. This network is an amazing innovative and transformational power. Usually, the innovation started already and develops step-by-step through the engagement of the people involved. But on a certain moment, innovative ideas must be brought to the board to find support in diffusion, acceptance, and adoption of the innovation by member schools, because only then the whole alliance can win strength by innovation.

Order and disorder

CEMS contributes to a good labour force for companies and CEMS students are prepared to fulfil the needs of the job market. The question raises if CEMS should also be a source of refreshing and transforming organizations rather than creating a good labour force for existing corporates. Given the huge global challenges like climate change, autocratic regimes, polarization in society, geopolitical tensions, health issues, poverty and food crisis, students must not only contribute to business as usual in existing organizations and organizational networks, but also act as a source of disorder and transformation. When CEMS wants to have a positive impact in a global world and stay relevant, it needs to engage and prepare students in these global issues and offer perspectives that future leaders may contribute to a better society. CEMS is excellent in preparing future leaders for businesses, but is it as good a source for inspiration, disruption, and transformation? Students are eager to learn new concepts and are motivated to be engaged in innovation and the transformation of enterprises, business sectors, and society. This perspective of future leaders as change-makers goes beyond the status quo of international management and could mean that CEMS must reconsider its academic program. An attractive and unique program is based on a pure purpose and a clear path that inspires students to develop their own way of thinking and engage students in finding their own professional and personal way of working, acting, and living, and being ready to challenge existing business practices to contribute to a better world.

Epilogue

CEMS started in 1988 and after almost 35 years still exists as a global alliance in management education. What makes CEMS sustainable and relevant as an alliance? The purpose and values of CEMS were clear from the beginning, and although adapted to global changes and developments, they were never really changed. CEMS is a value-based alliance that kept her identity in a moving world. CEMS has experienced many dilemmas and coped with dynamics, emotions and complexities in finding meaning and purpose for all members: academic partners, corporate and social partners, students and alumni. From the start CEMS was a community-based alliance on a shared dream, a common purpose, and based on trust.

Nowadays CEMS faces new challenges. Globalization, digitalization, market forces, system changes in finance, climate and health issues, government measures, and supervisory systems all contribute to dynamics hitherto unknown. This has led to many challenges and a need for a more sustainable society with an economy that serve people. For academic institutions and businesses in a dynamic environment, that want to contribute to a positive world based on a fair economy and justice, building alliances for the common good is an interesting path. This path entails that there are people building alliances and working together in economic and societal change. They envisage the future, try to find their way in an uncertain world and make an effort to shape their future. In this way building a value-based alliance like CEMS, provides a positive outlook on changing and innovating organizations as a collective process. Building and managing sustainable alliances is not simple as there are contradicting demands from the environment, tensions between stakeholders within and around organizations, and complexities within alliances in governance, organizational culture, and leadership. This learning history of CEMS has revealed which dynamics people experience when involved in building alliances for the common good, and how they can shape their alliance without losing themselves in those dynamics.

In this CEMS learning history four stages are distinguished in the development of CEMS: forming, building, developing, and evolving the alliance. The forming stage is the phase of getting to know each other and exploring possibilities to reinforce each other. It is mainly about developing trust and investing in relationships. Individual motivations and involvement play a role in this, as do relational qualities. Working together on innovation benefits from the power of difference. In the forming phase, an exploration of the mission of the newborn alliance is key and, though getting an initial common understanding amongst the founding members, the mission will be further developed in the coming phases. That's the main reason why this phase is so important because it is about 'who is in' and 'who is out'. Choosing the right founding members, the ones who will initially inspire the group, show the way to other members, and will eventually forever play a traction role in the alliance and help the accomplishment of a mission that will be perfected over time, is of a paramount importance.

During the building stage dilemmas arise about the appropriate forms of cooperation and arrangements in which the position and specific contribution of the partners is regulated. Form and content create clarity about power relations and decision-making procedures. In forming the partnership, the art is to contribute to the whole from one's own identity. Central to this is the question of a common identity and the search process to shape this identity in a business arrangement. Building alliances also involves organizational choices when the alliance is expanding and growing. It is a skill to map out relationship networks and relationship patterns and to work on mutual trust. Moreover, it is about bringing people from different worlds together and looking for a common identity and meaning. This is the phase in which, beyond members, key persons appear. You do not only need to have the right members but also the right persons, either representing the members in the governance bodies, or being part of an independent secretariat as CEMS office. Individuals who are trusted and put the effort in the accomplishment of the mission of the alliance on top of everything while keeping the balance with an open and active engagement with members, so that all sensitivities are represented, and any potential conflicts are prevented.

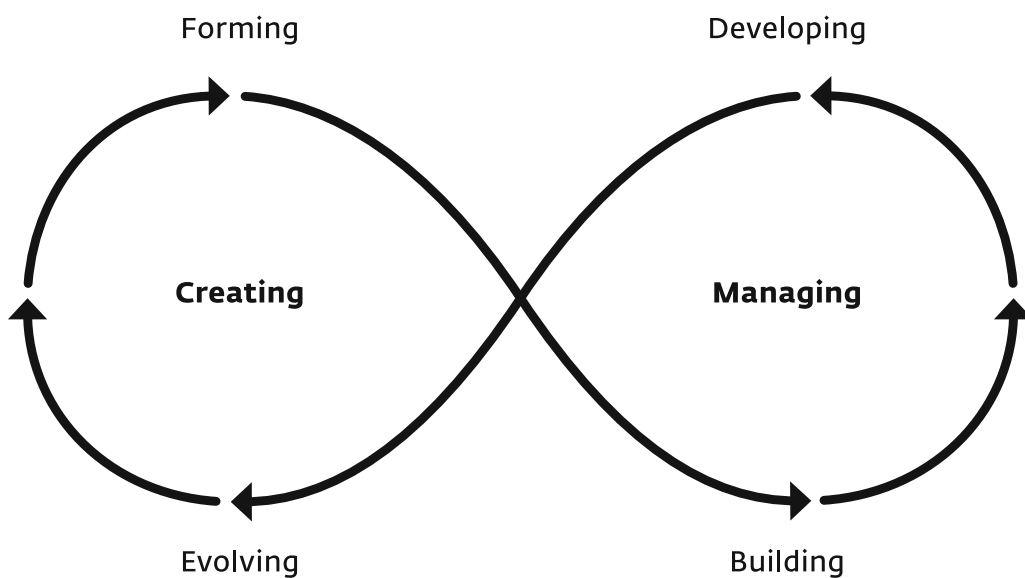
During the development of CEMS as a global alliance the partnership now focusses on setting more ambitious goals and achieving results in a global world. It is about converging ambitions and directing energy towards a common goal. CEMS is a diverse alliance by nature, and the growth in the number of members continue although the speed of expansion is limited to the adoption of new schools that apply to the purpose and values of CEMS as alliance in management education and offering a curriculum according to the principles of a defined Master in International management. Visible results are important to continue investing in the collaboration. Results generate energy for the partners and make visible the added value of the collaboration. If concrete results are not forthcoming, there is a good chance that the partnership will come under pressure and disintegrate. The way of working, the coordination of activities and the management of the activities in the alliance or the network are central. Work is being done on formulating goals, looking for a desired approach, naming activities and dividing tasks and roles. Essential now are diplomacy, process skills and an eye for mutual differences in the partnership. It is an art to handle paradoxes and tolerate differences.

The fourth stage is about evolving CEMS as global value-based alliance in a global and dynamic world. The alliance faces the task of continuing to innovate if results fail to materialize, the context changes and the pressure increases. Is the partnership capable of innovating and reinventing itself? Over time, the visible importance of the alliance may decrease, as may the will to continue investing energy in it. Innovation seems necessary, but costs money and disrupts current activities. Innovation may require reforming CEMS and admitting new partners. This can put existing relationships and identity under pressure. In the case of CEMS that do not have a limited number of partners, it is precisely the continuous admission of new members what might challenge the initial assumptions of the alliance and gently push the collective for evolution or for more radical transformation.

In this evolving stage, careful collaboration is now essential. The central question is how the collaboration can be maintained and how collaboration can still be renewed. In evolving the alliances, it is an art to recognize and cope with stagnations. Strong and visionary leadership to cope with multiple views on problems and future perspectives for the alliance and sincere involvement from key members and key people, are essential here.

The four stages described above are not linear phases in the life cycle of alliances. It is a dynamic pattern full of paradoxes and tensions.

Figure 8: Life cycle of creating and managing alliances



The challenge of value-based alliances like CEMS lies in the combination of playfulness and professionalism. Playfulness is necessary to build common ground and get people inspired by the purpose of the alliance. Playfulness without professionalism leads to uncoordinated activities, which may be fun but have little impact. Professionalism is about making considerations in building and managing the alliance. The awareness of dilemmas will help gain a deeper understanding of the complexity and dynamics of alliances.

The forming and evolving stages experience the same kind of dynamics related to visioning the future and creating common ground. It is a process of creating and co-creating the alliance. The building and developing stage are both focusing on growth and impact. These stages are related to managing the alliance and balancing between growth and stability. The development stage is probably the most complicated stage of an alliance. A good process in the forming and growth stages is important as basis for the development phase and to cope with the tensions and paradoxes in this stage. A clear purpose guides the alliance through this development and transparent guiding values create stability in this process of change and development.

The evolving phase seems the most dynamic stage since the purpose of the alliance could be questioned. The evolving stage could be evolutionary and revolutionary with a complete transformation of the alliance. To enter the evolving stage, it is important to foresee the future of the alliance, which might be ambiguous and unclear. This process of foreseeing and adapting should already start in the development phase. Transparency in the governance structure in all stages contributes to the success of an alliance. In the different stages the governance structure may change as a response to the growth and development of the alliance. A steering or supervisory board has the essential task to look at the future and what strategic choices are possible and have to be made. To keep the alliance together ritual, stories, storytelling, and sensemaking are essential, as well as understanding of the history of the alliance where it comes from and where it goes. A learning history of the life cycle of the alliance is useful to understand the past and the future. Trust is important in every stage of the alliance as well as engagement of the members.

Forming, building, developing, and evolving of alliances can be summarized with the question “What are we going to do to have meaning in the future?”. Answering that question is about looking for connection, identity and meaning to contribute to the future of a community.

Appendix 1: Conceptual foundation and methodological justification

Methodology of learning history

The methodology of learning history makes organizational learning practical. The method helps to make a memory of the development of organizations to understand the dynamics in the history of the organization. By describing the history of the organization, it becomes possible to learn from the past, understand the present, and visualize the future. The idea of organizational learning points out that not only people at the top but many others at various other levels in organizations work on revitalization, improvement, and renewal. Roth and Kleiner (1996) developed a method based on this idea: learning histories. Their assumption is that many people work on renewal, but that we rarely organize the collective memory. To tackle this loss of memory Roth and Kleiner propose writing a learning history as a collective learning process. For the CEMS learning history students conducted interviews to reconstruct meaningful situations or episodes from the CEMS history, so that the whole CEMS community can learn from them. A professor has been guiding the students as a research team to create some distance and prevent blind spots. The team asks the persons in the interviews about meaningful decisions and developments and who, what decisions, and which actions contributed to success. The interviewed persons can choose what they want to talk about and add results themselves. The team mainly asked open questions like: ‘What was your involvement in CEMS? What was happening then? What did you see, what did you feel?’ The conversations are worked up meticulously. The team then constructs the tale of the development of the organization. Letting the various people concerned have a say is called *multi-voicing*. This principle ensures that the story is not boxed in but reflects the perspectives of the various actors involved and stays close to emotions. The patterns of innovation or change are revealed. The methodology of learning history works towards a written story in retrospect. This story is given back to the people in the organization which contributes to sensemaking, decision making, and visualizing the future of the organization what might be possible (Boonstra & De Caluwé, 2007).

Conceptual framework

Many organizations, whether private or public, are embedded in networks of partners. In our global world, we see more cooperation in networks and alliances to cope with turbulence in the environment in which organizations operate. For organizations in a dynamic environment that want to contribute to a positive world based on a fair economy and justice, building alliances for the common good is an interesting path. This path entails that there are people building alliances and working together in economic and societal change. They envisage the future, try to find their way in an uncertain world and try to shape their future.

In creating and managing alliances four stages in the development of alliances can be distinguished: forming, building, developing, and evolving the alliance.

When entering alliances and networks, it is primarily about forming the network. It is the phase of getting to know each other and exploring possibilities to reinforce each other. It is mainly about developing trust and investing in relationships. In the building stage questions arise about the appropriate forms of cooperation in which the position and specific contribution of the partners is regulated. Form and content create clarity about governance and decision-making procedures. Investing in knowledge exchange and knowledge development is an important activity to give shape to the collaboration. The stage of developing alliances involves organizational choices when the alliance is expanding and growing. It is about bringing people from different worlds together and looking for a common identity and meaning. Visible results are important to continue investing in the collaboration. The fourth stage is about evolving the alliance. The alliance faces the task of continuing to innovate when the context changes and the pressure increases. Careful collaboration is now essential. The central question is how the collaboration can be maintained and how collaboration can still be renewed to fulfil future needs.

The forming and evolving stages experience the same kind of dynamics related to visioning the future and creating common ground. It is a process of creating and co-creating the alliance. The building and developing stage are both focusing on growth and impact. These stages are related to managing the alliance and balancing between growth and stability.

References

- Boonstra J.J. & De Caluwé, L.I.A. (2007) *Intervening and changing. Looking for meaning in interaction*. Wiley.
- Boonstra J.J. & Eguigeren M. (2022) *Creating and managing sustainable alliances*. Profit Editorial. (forthcoming)
- Roth, G. & Kleiner, A. (1996) *Field manual for the learning historian*. MIT.

Participants and researchers CEMS Global leadership class, Esade 2022

Antipova, Viktoriia
Arik, Yunus Dogaç
Aydar De Aragão, Maria Eugenia
Baena Soares, José Eduardo
Bawart, Moritz
Bombo João, Weza
Boreel, Emilie
Casey, Jack
D'Anna, Federico
Dillie, Clementine Julie
Elbathy, Mariam
Elberskirch, Linda
Elkhettar, Mamoun
Fontaine, Pierre Rieul
Franke, Jan-Niklas
Grunewald, Donna Lena
Hannigan, Niall
Hordvik, Victoria
Hu, Yuke
Jiang, Dongming
Karaan, George Elias
Kistner, Luca Pascal
Koivuvaara, Petra
Li, Peishan
Locatelli, Pietro
Malwade, Anurag
Manhes, Damien Thanh-Son
Megele, Marco Georg Mario
Mourad, Cynthia Marie-Ange
Muscolo, Matteo Giuseppe
Navarro Gamboa, Camila
Phong, Asther
Pineaud, Patrick
Pinot Estrada, Sebastian
Rio, Valeria
Rostand, Anais
Saint-Ives Sardinas, Carlos
Schallier, Margaux
Szendeczki, Dóra
Taddei Santoni, Chiara
Torrejon Muñoz, Verónica
Venturi, Lorenzo
Wang, Yiye
Weber, Maximilian Anton Martial
Weihmann, Tom
de Skowronski, Stanislas

Interview partners

Valéria Appert, Société Générale, Development project officer. Corporate partner.
Eugenia Bieto, President CEMS and member CEMS executive board, 2010-2018.
Caroline Borgas, Salesforce. Business development representative. Corporate partner.
Jaap Boonstra, CEMS Professor Global Leadership and Chair CEMS Faculty group, 2005-Present
Ivana Casaburi, CEMS Academic director at Esade, 2019-Present.
Cristine Cote, CEMS Academic director London School of Economics and Chair of Academic Committee.
Léa Duranton, Category manager LVMH, Corporate partner.
Marcos Eguigeren, GABV. Former executive director. Social partner
Nicole de Fontaines, CEMS Global Office - Executive director. Engaged with CEMS since very beginning.
Josep Franch, Member of CEMS General Assembly as Dean Esade Business School, 2014-2022.
Carlo Calluci, Member General Assembly and vice president CEMS Executive committee, 2000-2012.
Albert Gimeno, CEMS Academic director at Esade, 2002-2019.
Lisa Heheberger – CEMS student Stockholm School of Economics 1997-1998. Now CEMS professor.
Jean Paul Larçon, Professor at HEC and founder of CEMS alliance. Involved as CEMS honorary member.
Jordi Montana, Professor at Esade and visiting professor HEC 1985-1999, involved since start of CEMS.
Xavier Mendoza, Member CEMS General Assembly and Academic Board, 2000-2008.
Isa Moll – CEMS student St. Gallen 1992-1993. Now involved as CEMS professor.
Maja Murka, CEMS program manager at Esade since 2010.
Antonia Maria Serra Segura, International affairs officer at Esade and involved in CEMS since 1998.
Rafael Sarda, CEMS taskforce for designing bock course, Chair Faculty group. Involved since 1999
Alfons Sauquet, Visiting professor at CEMS schools, Chairman faculty group. Involved since 2004.
Rita Soltesz, CEMS Global office - Academic Director Academic affairs, involved since 2003.
Xavier Villar, Delotte. Business analyst. Corporate partner.


Sources of information

1. C.E.M.S. Master International Management. First curriculum brochure 1990. Archives CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France.
2. The global strategy of the C.E.M.S. As defined and agreed upon the C.E.M.S. members, General Assembly, Academic Year 1989-1990. Archives CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France.
3. Community of European Management Schools. The content of the European degree. Archives CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France.
4. C.E.M.S. Master International Management. First curriculum brochure 1990. Archives CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France.
5. CEMS General Assembly Preparation Meeting. Presentation for members, 8 November 2020. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France, 2002.
6. CEMS Mission statement 2008. Leaflet CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France, 2008
7. Student guide for the CEMS Master's in International Management 2003-2004. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France, 2002.
8. <https://cems.org/students-alumni/student-life>
9. CEMS Executive Board meeting, 10 and 11 May 2007. St Gallen, The future of globalization and associate membership. Possible options of MIM globalizations. Archives CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France.
10. The CEMS success story. The first 25 years. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France, 2013.
11. <https://www.cems.org/about-cems/vision-and-mission>
12. CEMS magazine. The Culture issue. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France, 2016.
13. CEMS Magazine, The Sustainable Development issue. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France. 2019.
14. <https://www.cems.org/cems-mim/programme-description>.
15. CEMS Students guide and graduation rules for the CEMS Master in International Management. 2020-2021. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France. 2020.
16. CEMS PRME Report 2021. CEMS, Jouy-en-Josas, France. 2021. https://issuu.com/cems/docs/2021_-_prme-report-3-1_2021-04-29-125822
17. <https://www.cems.org/about-cems/governance>
18. Boonstra J.J. & Eguigeren M. (2022) *Creating and managing sustainable alliances*. Profit Editorial.
19. <https://www.cems.org/corporate-social-partners/cems-corporate-partners>
20. <https://www.cemsalumni.net>

Appendix 2

CEMS as global alliance of business schools and network of students and partners -2022

Countries and members schools		Business Partners and Social partners
 Australia	University of Sydney Business School	<u>Corporate Partners</u> ABB ABInBev AlphaSights Ltd Amplifon S.p.A. Arcelik AstraZenica PLC Bain & Company Barilla Bayer Beiersdorf AG BNP Paribas Boston Consulting Group China CITIC Bank International CO@ Management Coca-Cola HBC Coloplast Maimler Deloitte Toche Tomatsu DHL Consulting E.ON Inhouse Consulting EDP – Energias de Portugal S.A. EF Education First Equinor ASA Facebook Gartner Google Groupe SEB GXO Logistics H&M Henkel AG & Co Hilti Hyundai Motor Company Integration Consulting Jardine Matheson Kearney Kone Kowa Company Ltd. L'Oréal LG Chem Lufthansa Group Luxottica LVMH Mastercard McKinsey & Company MET
 Austria	WU (Vienna University of Economics & Business)	
 Belgium	Louvain School of Management	
 Brazil	Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo-FGV	
 Canada	Ivey Business School	
 Chile	Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez	
 China	Tsinghua University School of Economics and Management	
 Czech Republic	University of Economics, Prague	
 Denmark	Copenhagen Business School	
 Egypt	The American University in Cairo	
 Finland	Aalto University School of Business	
 France	HEC Paris	
 Germany	University of Cologne	
 Hong Kong	HKUST Business School	
 Hungary	Corvinus University of Budapest	
 India	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta	
 Ireland	UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School	
Italy	Università Bocconi	
Japan	Keio University^{[9][10]}	

 Netherlands	Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University	<p>METRO MVM Zrt Nokia Nomura Holdings Inc. Novo Nordisk Oesterreichische NationalBank Plzensky Przdroj Procter & Gamble Richemont Salesforce Santander Bank Polska S.A. Siemens Healthineers Simon-Kucher & Partners Skoda Auto a.s. Société Générale Inbail-Rodamco-Westfield IniCredit United Overseas Bank VTB Group Whirlpool Whiteshiled Partners Yara International ASA Zeb Zurich Insurance Group</p> <hr/> <p><u>Social partners</u> Care International Fairtrade International Global Alliance for Banking on Values Kiron Open Higher Education ESA - European Space Agency Transparency International United Nations Alliance of Civilizations WWF International</p>
 Norway	Norwegian School of Economics	
 Poland	Warsaw School of Economics	
 Portugal	Nova School of Business and Economics	
 Russia	Saint Petersburg State University Graduate School of Management	
 Singapore	National University of Singapore	
 South Africa	University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business	
 South Korea	Korea University Business School	
 Spain	ESADE Business School	
 Sweden	Stockholm School of Economics	
 Switzerland	University of St. Gallen	
 Turkey	Koç University Graduate School of Business	
 United Kingdom	London School of Economics and Political Science	
 United States	Cornell University	
Students 1300+ of 80+ nationalities		
Alumni 17,000+ from 108 nationalities and working in over 75 countries		

