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KAIROS 2030: A NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR ESSCA SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

ESSCA has unveiled its strategic plan for 2030 designed to consolidate its European non-profit governance model, committing the School to a new phase in its transformation. Named *KAIROS 2030*, the strategic plan comes at a time of profound geopolitical, technological, societal and demographic change and new professional aspirations.

Taken from Greek philosophy, the term *KAIROS* refers to the right moment to make a change of course. Symbolic of a new direction, the term is also the acronym for ESSCA's six strategic commitments: *Knowledge, Artificial Intelligence, International, Responsible, Openness, Sustainability*.

KAIROS 2030 is built upon four main strategic pillars: innovation, internationalisation, operational effectiveness, and institutional outreach and promotion of the School's employer branding.

It encapsulates ESSCA's ambition to seize opportunities to support its long-term development whilst affirming its position as a benchmark European school - based on a unique multi-campus model and being an independent, non-profit, organisation for over 50 years.

"This new and ambitious strategic plan announces a clear intention: to make ESSCA one of the very best working, research and learning environments in Europe by 2030. To reach this goal, the quality of our programmes, the student experience and the impact of our research are at the very heart of our project" says Jean Charroin, Dean & CEO of ESSCA.

From vision to action: a four-pronged plan

KAIROS 2030 builds upon the success of ESSCA's preceding strategic plan (*Odyssée 20/24*), which enabled it to achieve sustainable growth, through innovation, quality and a strong European identity. Despite an uncertain health and geopolitical context, this plan guided ESSCA through a period of transformation. This included the opening of new campuses in Strasbourg, Malaga and Luxembourg, the launch of key programmes (Masters of Science, ESSCA Online Campus, an MBA with the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts et Métiers), and prominent partnerships with institutions including CentraleSupélec, Berkeley, and the École des Ponts ParisTech.

ESSCA's non profit model (EESPIG : Etablissement d'Enseignement Supérieur Privé d'Intérêt Général) has been solidified via a unique adaptive tuition fees scheme, unprecedented among European business schools. ESSCA also retained its triple crown accreditation status for the maximum possible period, the authorisation to deliver Bachelor and Masters-level degrees across its 10 campuses, and was also awarded the Sustainable Development & Social Responsibility label for the maximum term. Boosted by a 40% rise in students over five years, ESSCA published 500 research articles (over half of which were in A and B-ranked journals)

and entered leading international rankings for the first time such as Shanghai and THE Impact). Odysée 20/24 laid solid foundations on which *KAIROS 2030* will build.

The new strategic direction has been developed following an 18-month process involving over 6,000 hours of discussion with 825 students, faculty staff, alumni, parents and partners.

The School's main actions up to 2030 are structured around four main priorities:

1. **Innovation:** through effectively combining management sciences, the humanities and technologies and the development of impactful research;
2. **Internationalisation:** via multi-campus curricula, double degrees and international exposure. The aim is to attract more students from around the world;
3. **Operational effectiveness:** by drawing upon an agile non profit model that guarantees academic quality, optimises resources and strengthens societal impact;
4. Rallying the community around a **strong employer branding and strengthened institutional outreach.**

Pillar 1 - Innovation will be central to programmes, research and teaching by combining management science, the humanities and technology

KAIROS 2030 represents an ambitious evolution in learning outcomes at ESSCA. There will be a focus on **increased hybridization of skills and customised curricula**. This will be achieved via dual curricula during the Masters section of the Grande Ecole programme; the **launch of new programmes in key sectors and remodelled MScs** (MSc Finance & Fintech, MSc International Business Online); BBA programmes on the non-French campuses, as well as a **hybrid focussed MBA on Business & Technology**.

This strategy is also reflected in **differentiated international programme formats**: Masters in Management across three continents, a Bachelor's programme available in three European countries, and the development of double degrees abroad. These curricula will be enriched by the School's European campuses on which they are delivered and the network of top-level international academic partners.

ESSCA is also announcing **the creation in 2026 of a doctoral programmes (PhD, DBA)** with a first intake scheduled to graduate in 2030. **A research media centre** and an extension of ESSCA Knowledge will also improve the sharing of research findings, strengthening the School's academic impact with organisations and wider society. One of the aims of high impact research will be to foster innovation within the portfolio of initial and continuing education training programmes.

As part of its digital acceleration process, ESSCA is aiming for **20% of courses to be digitalised by 2028, alongside an expansion of its ESSCA Online campus**. The School is investing in the development of flexible formats, varied specialisms and a heightened customisation of learning outcomes in response to the wide variety of profiles and ambitions among students. Artificial Intelligence will play a key role, by helping to create personalised study plans for students.

"Our ambition is to educate new graduates capable of evolving in a world going through major change, by formulating management sciences, humanities and technologies. This process is in line with the era of the fourth industrial revolution that requires preparing responsible, critical and committed people who are capable of making innovation meaningful and contributing to a

more sustainable society”, explains Christine Sinapi, Dean of academic programmes at ESSCA.

Staying true to its role as a committed societal actor, ESSCA is stepping up its dedication to lifelong learning via innovative formats adapted to each stage in a person’s professional journey, whether it be students, recent graduates, or active professionals going through retraining.

A student experience re-focused on living standards and commitment

Student well-being remains a core pillar of ESSCA’s strategy. Listening carefully to student needs and acting on them is a priority.

A **student life blueprint**, devised in tandem with ESSCA representatives, will be implemented across all campuses to coordinate all actions relating to the standard of living, inclusion, risk prevention and association life. ESSCA wishes to offer an enriching set-up in which to learn that takes into account all personal, social and professional aspects of student life.

Individual commitments, be they associative, civic or professional in nature, will be promoted via a **skills passport** and a system of **open digital badges**. This scheme will enable students to formalise any extracurricular skills obtained that will be of use to their entry into working life.

Training programmes on inclusion will be made available to all students. Diversity and inclusion-focused student projects will be supported with dedicated budgets.

As part of this drive, ESSCA continues to invest in the quality of its campuses to offer students a stimulating and welcoming environment.

Pillar 2 – Living internationally, at the heart of Europe

With campuses established across ten towns and cities in France, Europe and China, ESSCA is reinforcing its position as an **internationally oriented European school**. *KAIROS 2030* reiterates a focus on making Europe the bedrock of internationalisation, whilst ensuring intercultural exposure for all students.

The School is implementing innovative teaching formats that enable each and every student to enjoy a genuinely international experience.

Each campus plays a specific part in line with local economic needs, which in the case of ESSCA’s non-French campuses is:

- **Budapest:** created in 1993 as part of the opening up of Central Europe to European integration, the Budapest campus traditionally offers learning tracks dedicated to international business, underpinned by issues relating to supply chain management.
- **Shanghai:** developed in 2006 whilst China was going through a major period of business practice innovation and unprecedented economic development, the campus rapidly became specialised in the field of marketing, specifically within the luxury industry.

- **Luxembourg:** opened in 2023 to strengthen ESSCA's European roots, the Luxembourg campus is closely linked to the fields of finance and compliance.
- **Malaga:** also unveiled in 2023 to support the School's European positioning, the cultural roots of this site enable it to attract students from Central and Latin America to Europe. The programmes on offer reflect emerging technologies that are present in the local ecosystem such as cyber-security, crypto-currencies, and the metaverse.

In parallel to this, the School is re-focussing its academic partnership policy on high value projects, including double degrees, collaborative research, and the co-development of executive or certifying programmes. **The aim is to guarantee that each ESSCA academic programme feature a significant amount of international exposure, wherever the training is taking place.**

Pillar 3 – A non-profit associative structure strengthened by improved operational effectiveness

ESSCA is reiterating its identity as a not for profit higher education institution, independent known for its EESPIG qualification. This model enables the School to dedicate all its resources to missions of public interest: academic excellence, social openness, research outreach and contributing to site policy.

In *KAIROS 2030*, ESSCA is initiating **an ambitious operational effectiveness plan to optimise the allocation of resources across all its campuses and strengthen its economic viability to meet the expectations of its communities.** This plan is focussed on integrated risk management, continual improvement of its carbon footprint and the optimisation of management processes and programmes.

A significant IT investment plan is also being rolled out, including the renewal of the School's Enterprise Resource Planning information system, and the gradual incorporation of AI into steering processes for a higher performing, more economic energy set-up.

At the same time, ESSCA is setting itself a fundraising target of one million euros by 2030 to help finance high-impact public interest projects: social accessibility, pedagogical transition, and sustainable infrastructures.

"Operational efficiency, one of the pillars of our strategic plan, is based on the long term to give ESSCA the means to embrace all its challenges within the framework of its values, particularly agility with the enhancement of our resources, the optimisation of our processes, and the incorporation of innovative technologies" explains Isabelle Dreno, Deputy CEO of ESSCA.

Pillar 4 – Rallying communities around a unifying brand

One of the key pillars of *KAIROS 2030* is to **strengthen the feeling of belonging** to the ESSCA community and to leverage the brand as a tool to bring people together and extend the School's reach.

An **engagement strategy** is being deployed with all internal target audiences and partners: students, faculty, staff, alumni, and companies. The aim is to establish a shared culture, grounded in the School's values – **Humanism, Responsibility, Agility, Reliability** – and embodied at all levels.

ESSCA is striving to develop a **community of active school ambassadors** by 2030. To support this initiative, the institution is initiating the required HR labelling steps (Happy@Work, Speak & Act) to recognise the standard of the working environment and encourage collective commitment.

About ESSCA

Based on its 115-year history, ESSCA School of Management is a renowned and firmly established French and European institution. A pioneering school in terms of teaching innovation and social and economic inclusion, it has striven to evolve on a permanent basis to incorporate the demands and challenges of the modern world with a will to train responsible leaders and assist organisations undergoing change.

A private higher education institution of common interest built upon a not-for-profit associative structure and a member of the Conférence des Grandes Ecoles, ESSCA School of Management delivers an officially recognised 5-year post-secondary Master degree and also offers a fully accredited Bachelor in International Management degree programme, an MBA Business & Technology, an Advanced Master, and Master of Science programmes. The school also offers a range of training programmes designed specifically for senior executives, managers, and operational teams, with degree-awarding training (including an Executive Master in Global Management) and custom programmes. ESSCA is also developing on-line designed by ESSCA online campus.

Thanks to its AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS triple crown accreditation, a status held by only 1% of business schools around the world, the School is an internationally renowned institution. It features in the top 100 Masters in Management programmes in the world in the 2023 Financial Times ranking and holds the 53rd position globally for custom executive education programmes. In terms of impact and research, ESSCA is also featured in the Times Higher Education and ARWU (Shanghai Ranking) rankings.

Strengthened by a multicampus structure that helps consolidate its appeal to local regions and the showcasing of French expertise in the areas of higher education and research, ESSCA can call upon a network of almost 21,500 alumni working all across the world and currently welcomes over 500 faculty and staff and 7,000 students on its campuses in France (Aix-en-Provence, Angers, Bordeaux, Lyon, Paris and Strasbourg), Hungary, China and most recently in Spain and Luxemburg.

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