



UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme?

How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the goal of building a European Education Area and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

The University of Split has recognised the relevance of participation in Erasmus+ and other EU flagship initiatives from the very beginning of their implementation in the Republic of Croatia in 2009.

Development Strategy of the University of Split implies internationalization as a strategic investment in the future. It defines UNIST as a leading university in this part of Europe, determined to become a strong recognizable HEI, contributing to the development of Croatia, region and EU. Internationalization is one of the main strategic objectives of UNIST, emphasising the importance of integration into and building the European Education Area by internationalization of its study programmes, design of joint study programmes with eminent European and international universities, increasing the number of student and staff mobilities and active involvement in cooperation projects.

Our determination to pursue the active role in the creation of new higher education era within the European Education Area was acknowledged in 2019, when the University of Split became member of one of the first 17 alliances of European Universities. UNIST joined forces with five European partners (University of Cádiz (UCA, Spain), University of Western Brittany (UBO, France), Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel (CAU, Germany), University of Gdańsk (UG, Poland) and University of Malta (UM, Malta) to create The European University of the Seas (SEA-EU).

Becoming a part of the European University alliance is the strategic response of the University of Split to the economic and social challenges and it currently represents the highest level of internationalization in the higher education area. Key commitments of The European University of the Seas (SEA-EU), which can be mirrored to our internationalization policy in general, include:

- increase the level of knowledge and integration between the partner universities through deep analysis of our educational offers, research strategies, services, databases and infrastructures, sharing resources and good practices;
- develop models for quality assured automatic academic recognition of foreign qualifications and periods of learning;
- internationalise our curricula, our students and our staff;
- craft joint study programmes to facilitate the mobility of our students – at undergraduate, masters and doctoral level;
- develop measures to overcome the identified mobility obstacles;
- improve the linguistic competences of our students and staff and foster multilingualism;

- strengthen and promote the European identity through cultural and social dimension, respecting non-discrimination policies;
- increase the number of joint research projects and boost the scientific productivity;
- reinforce the Erasmus traineeships in companies;
- increase University-industry cooperation.

The participation of the University of Split in the Erasmus Programme is the prerequisite for reaching our strategic goals and a key instrument of internationalisation and modernisation of our institution. It has become a crucial part of our institution's daily operations and our objective is to continue with its implementation and promotion, constantly increasing its quality. By participating in the Erasmus programme, the University of Split ensures the implementation of a long-term strategy that focuses on creating an international European university.

University of Split promotes and facilitates responsible research and innovation strategically through the Science and Innovation Department and its four offices. The Science Office supports research and science outputs and, as a part of Euraxess network, provides assistance for incoming and outgoing researchers, related to research and mobility, different grants and fellowships. The Research and Development Office facilitates creation of tangible research outputs. Projects Office supports and structures activities in a project oriented approach through external financing. Technology Transfer Office manages resulting intellectual outputs towards innovations through commercialisation while also supporting both researchers and SMEs through Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) maximising impact and sustainability of outcomes.

The University of Split has been awarded with Human Resources Excellence in Research award (HRS4R), as a provider of a high standard working environment for researchers. UNIST adheres towards promotion of the opportunities offered by the cooperation projects and provision of relevant support to staff and students.

We intend to continue promoting the Erasmus opportunities through our membership and active involvement in the work of several university networks (EUA, EUF, TETHYS, UNIADRION, AACR).

The pool of our Erasmus+ inter-institutional agreements offers various possibilities for our students and staff, and our objective is to enrich it on an annual basis with new, innovative and quality cooperation arrangements with universities in Europe and around the world. So far we have concentrated on cooperation with universities from Asia, Latin America, Western Balkans, Australia, US and Canada. Our intention is to strengthen the existing cooperation agreements and stay open for new cooperation arrangements outside our traditional pool of partners, whenever we find it possible to share good practices and promote our strategic goals and values of Erasmus programme.

Since Erasmus focuses on students, we wish to include the student perspective in our strategic approach to internationalization. Our student representatives express their expectations from our participation in Erasmus. They find that having large number of Erasmus students helps spreading the word and recognition of our University as an important member of the European Education Area. Receiving large number of incoming students obliges us to keep pace with modern demands, have our lectures in foreign languages and use advance technologies. Hosting international professors at our University could play significant role in broadening our perspective as well as motivating young individuals interested in specific topics, showing them new ways for development. We should not underestimate experience and enthusiasm of our outgoing students

and professors who, with their newly gained knowledge and connections, could make significant changes within our academic society.

For all the afore-mentioned, the University of Split fully supports and commits to the EEA policy objectives of making learning mobility a reality for all, removing obstacles to the recognition of qualifications, modernising the development of curricula, fostering language learning and multilingualism, European University alliances, synergies between teaching, learning and research, driving innovation in the digital era, enhancing teacher support, promoting active citizenship, inclusion and preserving cultural heritage and fostering a sense of a European identity and culture. Education and culture should be the answers to the economic and social challenges and drivers for jobs, social fairness and active citizenship, creating Europeans who are able to understand and preserve shared European values and our shared identity in its diversity. Learning, studying and carrying out research should not be hindered by borders. We wish to contribute to promoting the vision of Europe as an attractive place to study, carry out research and work.

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution.

Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

We would like to take part in all Erasmus+ Key Actions: KA1 Learning mobility (Programme and Partner countries); KA2 Cooperation among organisations and institutions and KA3 - Support to policy development and cooperation.

In implementation of mobility and cooperation projects, we apply principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion of students and staff (paying special attention to those with fewer opportunities). We commit to implement the high quality mobility of staff and students, as well as cooperation with partner HEIs and other strategic partners, e.g. enterprises and regional authorities. In student mobility, full automatic recognition of all credits (based on the ECTS system) gained for learning outcomes satisfactorily achieved during a period of study/training abroad (including blended mobility) is a priority.

KA1 Learning mobility of higher education students and staff at the University of Split is managed by the International Relations Office and implemented through a network of Erasmus and ECTS coordinators at the University and its faculties/departments. Selection procedures for mobility activities are fair, transparent, coherent and documented. All students and staff are selected through public calls, with the right to appeal. Course catalogue is published and regularly updated on our website. Information on the grading system used and grade distribution tables are published on our website and communicated to the students and partner institutions for the purpose of grade conversion. Studying and teaching mobilities are implemented within the framework of Inter-institutional agreements. Preparatory activities, including linguistic and intercultural, are organised for outgoing mobile participants. Student and staff mobilities are based on Learning/Mobility agreements signed by all parties prior to the mobility. Incoming participants are provided assistance in accommodation, visa and insurance related issues. Students are aware of their rights and obligations as defined in the Erasmus Student Charter. Incoming students are exempt from paying fees for tuition, registration, examinations or access to laboratory and library facilities, on the same terms as the local students. Special attention is paid to promoting safety measures of outgoing and incoming mobile participants, as well as risk prevention and management issues. Incoming students are integrated into local student community and encouraged to share their mobility experience and

promote the programme. Mobile participants are provided quality mentoring and support arrangements (e.g. through buddy system), language support (semester courses, tandem). Transcripts of records for incoming students are issued at the end of their mobilities. Satisfactorily completed study and/or traineeship mobility activities are recorded in the Diploma Supplement. Mobile participants are encouraged to act as ambassadors of the Programme, share their experience and promote the benefits of mobility. Recognition of staff mobility and engagement in cooperation projects with strategic partners is given its importance, due to relevance of sharing best practices and providing visibility of their results achieved.

In order to help Erasmus students integrate into the community, ESN Split organises different types of activities, including sports activities, tournaments and mental health workshops. Furthermore, they are organizing social inclusion activities where they tend to socialize with marginal groups of people or are volunteering for the benefit of our local community, raising awareness among students about different social problems and helping them get to know the bigger picture of our society. Activities targeting intercultural exchange, such as Language tandems, Meet my county events - where native citizens from different countries represent their country and culture, International dinner events – where all students are cooking and preparing their traditional food, Erasmus in Schools – where foreign students come to local schools to help raise interest among young students about different languages and cultures.

Students' council of the University of Split provides different grants which are supporting the above mentioned causes.

UNIST has been implementing cooperation and capacity building projects with partners from Partner and Programme countries since Croatia joined the EU in 2013. The participation has resulted with many international contacts and networks, and is leading to modernisation and internationalization of higher education. Currently there are around 20 Erasmus+ project proposals submitted per year, and the number is increasing every year.

So far, UNIST has participated in different KA2 (Strategic Partnerships, Capacity Building, Knowledge Alliances, European Universities) and KA3 projects, both as a partner and coordinator. Our plan is to continue to participate in those projects and extend our participation to other actions within Erasmus+ programme (such as Jean Monnet, Sport, etc.).

Projects Office provides support to researchers from the application for funding at local, national and international levels to the transfer of the results to the society. Our mission is to inform and support professors and researchers in performing research and securing research funding.

Support in implementation consists of assistance and advice in: achieving planned project goals, administrative and financial support, dissemination activities, assistance in organizing the events and other activities for successful project implementation.

Achieving the objectives of our institutional strategy is not possible without implementation of Erasmus+ actions. Over the new programme period, we would like to take part in and implement all Erasmus opportunities, incorporating them in the regular activities of our University. The University of Split believes that internationalization can be achieved on the foundations of Erasmus activities. Once we joined the Erasmus programme, our University has been transformed for good. The future is unthinkable without student and staff mobilities, cooperation projects and international activities.

From the point of view of our SEA-EU alliance, our European University is a public space for transnational collaboration between universities, professional training centres and businesses, an integrated European campus with strengthened mobility and continuous education of university students and staff. As such, the SEA-EU alliance is fully committed to the European, 10-years

objective of 50 % mobility, developing virtual mobility, increasing classical real mobility of students, but also staff and teachers.

With this aim, SEA-EU members tend to put in place mechanisms to eliminate the barriers for mobility identified within the consortium. Mobility of students, teachers and staff in the European area is an essential facilitating factor for the integration of people around European values. Virtual and blended mobility shall support the physical mobility, which remains priority within our consortium. The creation of the SEA-EU hosting platform for lodging students at host families will make mobility process more inclusive, collaboration with associated partners and stakeholders will enhance traineeships and the development of the family mobility will minimize obstacles to staff mobility.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution? Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.)

You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

The desired impact of our participation in the Erasmus+ Programme is to internationalize and modernize our institution in every relevant aspect, raise awareness of the benefits of mobility and international cooperation and our institution's strategically-oriented international profile, making it competitive at the European Higher Education market through outstanding quality education offer and cooperation with the industry. Universities are important part of social and economic life at the local, regional, national level and globally, so we intend to continue being a strong support to the community through excellence in research and international cooperation. Through our involvement in the Erasmus activities, our university graduates, but also researchers, teachers and staff shall become more competitive at the global labour market. Within the scope of our European University alliance, the impact should be visible in two stages. Along with a three-year "action plan" that is closely linked to the implementation of The European University of the Seas (SEA-EU) project, this alliance also implies a ten-year vision that emphasizes the alliance's sustainability. According to the long-term vision, the goal is to create a fully functional and maximally intertwined European University over the next ten years. A university sharing resources, networks experts, creates new joint projects, programmes, and develops as a whole. A university that is ready to respond to all modern challenges.

University services should become digitalised, offering students support through implementation of the European Student Card. Participation in Erasmus actions shall have impact on the institution in promoting and implementing environmentally friendly practices, civic engagement and active citizenship of our students and staff.

Our plan is to encourage and attract more researchers to participate in cooperation projects, through awareness campaigns. We plan to organize yearly workshops (events) aimed at interested participants. The workshops will provide information about Erasmus+ Programme and overview of good practices. We will also introduce a section on E+ in a newly established newsletter, mostly aimed at researchers. We will encourage participation in webinars by promotion via social media and e-mail. In order to increase the quality of project implementation, we intend to provide continuous development of skills through education of researchers, management and administrative staff. Staff is going to be encouraged to participate in different workshops on project

implementation, job shadowing in partner institutions, etc. We also aim at increasing the quality of project partnerships. When choosing project partners, we will focus on HEIs and other institutions with similar interests and specific issues which should be addressed in common projects and collaborations, in order to assure sustainability and long-term impact of projects.

Targets by 2027:

Qualitative indicators:

- Overall increase of student mobility/Participation level in mobility /Ease of access to mobility (physical, virtual and blended)
- Greater satisfaction with recognition of study periods abroad
- Greater satisfaction with recognition of staff mobility/job satisfaction
- Greater sense of European identity
- Level of inclusiveness
- Level of internationalisation at home
- Level of multilingualism and multiculturalism
- Level of satisfaction with the university services
- Use of European Student Card
- Digitalisation of services
- Increased quality of project implementation
- Increased quality of project partnerships
- Improved sustainability /long-term impact of projects

Quantitative indicators:

- Annual increase of mobile students (outgoing and incoming) by 10%
- Annual increase of Erasmus+ inter-institutional agreements by 5 %
- Annual increase of staff mobility (outgoing and incoming) by 10 %
- Annual increase of staff mobility - Invited staff from enterprises - by 10%
- Increased number of researchers who participate in project proposals - by 10%

The SEA-EU alliance is fully committed to achieving the European objective of 50% student mobility. By developing virtual and physical mobility from the 1st year at the university, the SEA-EU alliance aims to develop a true European identity in the students' minds, fostering multilingualism and multiculturalism. In order to achieve these 10- year objectives, the idea is to realize at least 10% of the overall mobility within the SEA-EU alliance, implemented within the scope of an umbrella Erasmus+ IIA between all partners. The SEA-EU will ensure the base for the virtual mobility implementation and launch a pilot programme of family mobility for staff.

Quantitative indicators for SEA EU:

- Virtual mobility developed and involving 20% of students among each SEA-EU university
- Physical mobility for at least 5% of non-academic staff
- Physical mobility for at least 5% of teaching staff
- An overall objective of at least 20 bilateral virtual mobilities are expected for each SEA-EU university in Bilateral connected classroom and at least 3 to 5 people participating in Collaborative student project.
- 10 families per partner participating in the family mobility

Gender balance policy was respected when setting the indicators.

Fully aware of the COVID-19 impact on the implementation of Erasmus activities, we have introduced mitigation measures, like further development of online learning and virtual activities,



which would consequently have positive impact on achieving our goals in development and implementation of virtual and blended mobility.

Monitoring procedures:

Annually internal monitoring of the quantitative and qualitative indicators – set of measures prepared through annual action plans.

Regular monitoring of projects implementation and results through the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes and the European Commission.

Regular assessment of feedback received through participant reports, both from incoming and outgoing participants; taking appropriate action accordingly.