

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

D. Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees. (max. 5000 characters)

Original language [EN]

Internationalisation has become one of the main strategic aims of the University of Ioannina during the last years, and constitutes an objective inscribed in its academic, research and development agenda. Within the limited resources available to a small university but with a major regional, national and international impact, the University of Ioannina encourages student and staff mobility, international cooperation and multilateral projects that strengthen further its role as a key academic pole in the South-Eastern Balkans, as well as an academic center of excellence on a national and international level.

Cooperation with other EU countries has been constant and ongoing. The University has been actively participating in the Erasmus Programme and its various actions, has been an important partner with a number of Erasmus Universities with which student and administrative, academic and research staff mobility, both outgoing and incoming, has been thriving, and has been a partner in various scientific projects across the EU. The University wishes to develop these relations further and is planning to take a more active role in the new Erasmus-for-all program.

It is worth noting that the University of Ioannina has a substantial faculty body with international experience who have already developed formal or informal partnerships with institutions of higher learning abroad. Partners are chosen on the basis of common backgrounds and scientific interests as well on the basis of promising academic collaboration and research outcomes; and while they concern, for the moment, mainly Europe and the USA, the University wishes to develop partnerships with Asia and Africa as well, both in the humanities and in sciences, whether theoretical or applied. Additionally, the University is planning to develop a teaching and research strategic network with the immediate neighboring Balkan countries as well as Turkey, both EU and non-EU members. To this direction, it hopes to constitute an academic pole of excellence, becoming the center of a co-operation network for joint or multilateral projects, in which mobility will play a key role. There is significant scientific work being conducted in the Balkans and Turkey (and Third Countries such as Egypt, recently), which is, nevertheless, not yet brought forth; the Uoi's strategic aim is to take a leadership role towards enhancing cooperation among academic institutions and communities in the South-Eastern Europe which will lead to concrete scientific results.

The academic community of the University of Ioannina is visible both nationally and internationally and develops partnerships either through personal, professional or academic networks or, more formally, through international project applications, calls for tenders or other, more institutional forms of networking. Mobility is encouraged on every level and for all members of the academic community, with non-discrimination policies and focus on disadvantaged and under-represented groups. Concerning students, important work has been done both on the undergraduate and graduate level, the result of which being the ever increasing number of outgoing students (organised on a fair, transparent, coherent and documented way, in line with the stipulations of our National Agency), but also of incoming students, despite the language barrier. Administrative staff participation in mobility schemes is promising, and the University is confident that it will further increase in the coming years. Faculty mobility, both incoming and outgoing, is also substantial and permits academic collaboration with colleagues abroad.

Although the Uoi's participation in the development of joint degrees has to the present been rather small (largely due to the former strict legislative framework concerning higher education, recently modified) - joint programmes have been implemented, especially in the framework of Erasmus IPs and, recently, Erasmus Mundus -, the University sees the new Erasmus-for-all program as a unique opportunity towards the development of such courses of study that respond to the demands of the new multilingual and multicultural work reality. The University is planning to take an active role in this direction, since one strategic priority for the years to come is to foster the interconnectivity between the academic and the professional world so as to provide our graduates with the tools needed in order to enhance their academic and vocational background for future employment.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme. (max. 2000 characters)

Original language [EN]

The UoI collaborates closely (among others) with the European Training Foundation, the European Environment Agency, the European Science Foundation, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, Eurostat, ESA, UNESCO, OECD, NATO. International conventions in EU and non-EU countries play a key role in promoting teaching and research on an international level. Joint European Master courses are high on our agenda and raise the attractiveness of our University. Memorandums of Understanding with HEIs from a wide spectrum of countries (both EU and non-EU) are one of our central actions since they encourage reciprocal exchanges of people and ideas and joint publications. Erasmus agreements often derive from these Agreements coupled with other educational and scientific actions (such as the large-scale afforestation project with the University of Istanbul in 2009). The UoI also participates in International Associations and Networks which provide a platform for dialogue, create mechanisms for the implementation of common policies and synergies (such as the proposal under the Erasmus-Mundus recent call with a consortium from the UniAdriatic network, or the ASEA UNINET meeting to be held in Ioannina in September 2013), and promote the flow of information through the organisation of regular meetings and conferences (recently, the dissemination of the information on the pilot EU-funded U-Multirank project). These actions are accompanied by institutional measures which commit our University to fully support the implementation of academic linkages and strategic networking within or outside Europe. The UoI has invested on a publicity strategy which promotes its international orientation, with the IRO in the front line of this scheme. This effort is consolidated by the local media which offer coverage of the regular output of activities attracting local and national publicity and raising awareness not only of results achieved but also of existing funding opportunities.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)

Original language [EN]

The participation of the UoI in the Programme is part of the Institution's strategy for modernisation and internationalisation in a way that this strategy (a) acknowledges the key contribution of mobile staff and students, and of participation in European and international cooperation projects, to enhance the quality of UoI's curricula and students' experiences, and (b) supports the European modernisation and internationalisation agenda in higher education. Mobility and cooperation are central elements of UoI's institutional policy, and, specifically, with regards to the policy objectives that UoI intends to achieve, to develop cooperation with partners in other EU or non-EU countries in the framework of a clear strategy for internationalisation, promote and support student and staff mobility - including underrepresented groups - further develop non-discrimination policies, outline a clear policy towards the development of integrated, transnational teaching activities (joint courses / modules / curricula, double / multiple / joint degrees), recognise the importance of, and provide visibility to, the results achieved by their staff members engaged in individual mobility or in cooperation projects with strategic partners, and take into account the results of internal monitoring of European and international mobility and cooperation activities to date, thus further developing its international performance. The strategy of UoI for modernisation and internationalisation has a constant focus towards the following key actions: (1) Student and staff mobility (within Europe and / or to / from Third Countries); joint master's degrees, (2) Strategic partnerships, knowledge alliances, capacity building with neighbouring countries, capacity building with Third Countries, (3) Networks and policy support measures. Participation in activities under Key Action (1) and Key Action (2) should be underpinned by high quality mobility of staff and students and cooperation with HEIs and other strategic partners such as enterprises, regional authorities, etc. Therefore, the participation of UoI in the Programme is expected to have the following 5 major impacts on the modernisation of the Institution: (1) Increase attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs, (2) Improve the quality and relevance of higher education, (3) Strengthen quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation, (4) Link higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development, (5) Improve governance and funding. The modernisation and internationalisation (EU and non-EU) strategy of the UoI will be published on the website of UoI within one month after the signature of the ECHE awarded by the European Commission.

* COM (2011) 567 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0567:FIN:EN:PDF>)