



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Erasmus+ Policy Statement

Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Umeå University is a knowledge-driven organisation with a genuine desire to develop, seek answers, pose new questions and strengthen our position in the scientific community. We strive to provide students and staff with unique opportunities for learning and development, at the same time serving society with new knowledge and creative citizens. Our dynamic and open culture produces high quality in education and research. The University, tightly embedded with the local communities, acts as an engine in the region connecting people to the global knowledge community, greatly contributing to the development of the European identity in the region.

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is essential to Umeå University, providing a quality framework for our international aspiration. We aim to offer internationally competitive and innovative education and high-quality research and thus play a prominent role in the global education arena. Being global is at the heart of the University's identity and an integral part of our character. International cooperation and partnerships are fundamental for sustainable education and research of high quality. Participation in the Erasmus Programme makes our campus a more exciting, creative and culturally diverse environment, as well as bringing new perspectives to our students on all levels. Hence the programme is a vital part in our mission to prepare our students for careers both in Sweden and abroad. Through participation in the Erasmus Programme, our teachers, researchers and administrative staff can take part of exchanges and collaborations from which they learn, bring back and share knowledge they have acquired. This enhances the quality of our research and education, and assists in educational renewal.

In our newly formulated Vision, Umeå University in the Future, (April 2019), three principles guide us in our international journey. These three principles, Responsibility for the Future, Collaborative Development of Knowledge and Competitive Edge and Pride, are all in line with the aims of the Erasmus Programme. The initiatives offered within the new Erasmus Programme provide essential opportunities for Umeå University and are significant in realizing Umeå University's Vision.

Umeå University has a long history and long-term commitment of developing flexible educational options that both meet the needs of a variable working life, where lifelong learning is a necessity, as well as the specific needs of the sparsely populated region of Northern Sweden, where we are located. By investing in creative and innovative environments, we are prepared to take on urgent challenges to secure a sustainable future. We have the ambition to use our geographical position and the unique opportunities this gives us to contribute to new knowledge of global importance, inspired and propelled by the Sustainable Development Goals in the Agenda 2030.

The new Erasmus Programme will assist Umeå University in fulfilling future objectives to international collaboration and exchange. Accordingly, Umeå University collaborates closely with strategically selected partner universities around the world, and for these to be sustainable, we have well established structures for international cooperation. Moreover, by joining the European University Initiative, Umeå University has the ambition to establish new relations with universities, companies and other institutions, making broader collaboration possible, enabling exchange of knowledge and good practices, innovation in teaching and coordination of academic programmes.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Umeå University is one of Europe's leading universities with regard to innovative and virtual environments. Digitalisation and modernisation are integral parts of our education. A large part of our courses integrates campus and on-line teaching and flexible forms of teaching can thus be carried out regardless of time and space. This provides excellent opportunities for lifelong learning.

Umeå University is characterized by inclusion through providing wide access and participation, equality, diversity and equal opportunities. We provide support and opportunities for students from all cultures and backgrounds and strive to increase the number of students undertaking an international mobility experience.

Umeå University strives to have deep and long-term relationships with businesses and public sectors for knowledge development through collaboration between education, research and innovation. By being involved on a regional, national and international level we provide our students' and staff with the opportunity to engage in global issues.

The priorities for the European Education Area and the aims of the Erasmus Programme will guide us in our work to meet the demands of the future.

Reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

The Erasmus Programme has been vital for the development of our international engagement at Umeå University. The programme has given us the opportunity to develop an extensive collaboration within research, education and mobility of students and staff with European universities, as well as with universities outside of Europe.

The new Erasmus Programme will assist Umeå University in fulfilling future objectives to engage in both European and non-European strategic partnerships and will offer us a framework to both strengthen established links and initiate new ones.

Key Action 1

Using the opportunities within Key Action 1 is fundamental for our university in order to reach our target with globally competent students and staff. It enables us to collaborate with strategically important partner universities as well as organizations that enrich the quality of our education.

Our mobility activities are aimed at all levels of studies and all academic staff engaged in education and research, as well as university staff. To facilitate the possibilities for students, teachers and administrative staff to participate in mobility activities, International Office is working closely with the faculties and departments. In order to ensure full and equitable access to participants Umeå University announces and provides information, both in Swedish and English, through several communication channels.

By offering our students the possibility to both study and to work abroad, we will equip them with a wide knowledge that stems from intercultural awareness, preparing them for a working life in a global world. International staff exchanges provide the opportunity for continuous pedagogic and scientific development, and professional and personal development for our staff.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Another objective is to offer a working and teaching environment with international dimension in order to raise the level of educational quality and thus continuously increase our attractiveness as a study and workplace.

International and mobile staff will also contribute to Internationalisation at home, providing students, who cannot study abroad for various reasons, with an international perspective in their education. Over the last few years, Umeå University has expanded the participation within the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility Programme (ICM). The collaborations have been successful, which has led to more interest at our university to engage in Erasmus+ activities. ICM has opened the door for less represented subject areas, countries and staff categories to join the activities within Erasmus +. During the new programme we see these as good practices for how we can increase our mobility activities, reach new targets and expand our project collaborations.

By offering different types of mobility opportunities for students, such as traineeship and blended mobility, we see the possibility to strengthen our education. This will support us in reaching students that usually do not participate in international mobility. The new mobility initiative targeted for PhD students will enable us to increase the level of mobility activity for this category within the Erasmus Programme. Broader participation of students increases the international perspective, both at home and in general. The new programme will strengthen our already existing cooperation and also make it possible to implement new opportunities.

Key Action 2 and 3

During the upcoming programme period we strive to increase our presence in Key Action 2 and 3 projects with the aim of strengthening the quality of our education. Through participation in international cooperation, within Key Action 2 and 3, researchers, teachers and staff will be able to collaborate and with jointly developed structures on departmental, faculty and central level a more strategic approach will be enabled. Participation in Key Action 2 and 3 projects will strengthen our competency and capacity to build successful internationalisation projects with other universities and organisations.

The possibility to engage in the European Universities Initiative means that we will be able to learn and share knowledge, benchmark and develop structures for collaboration giving more students and staff from different discipline areas and backgrounds the possibility and incentive to participate in European /international activities.

The benchmarking and development opportunities within the Erasmus Programme will allow Umeå University to strengthen our position as a leading global university. This can be utilized to make an impact and to influence international policy development in research, innovation and education both in and outside of Europe.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is a prerequisite for our university to implement strategies for internationalisation and to reach our goals. It will enable us to further strengthen the integration of research and education through internationalisation in accordance with our vision statement.

Some objectives in Umeå University's Vision are:



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

- Umeå University takes responsibility for the future and is a role model among European universities.
- Umeå University attracts a diverse range of students who enrich the academic environment with a variety of experiences and perspectives.
- Umeå University offers flexible educational options that meet the needs of a variable working life where lifelong learning is a necessity.
- Umeå University meets the increased demands of competitiveness brought on by globalization and we have a strong position in Sweden and globally.
- Umeå University aspires to offer a qualitative education with international dimension. The impact of internationalisation at Umeå University is measured by both qualitative and quantitative results, such as number of mobile participants, participant satisfaction, acquired knowledge, learning outcomes and academic recognition. Our evaluation of participation in the programme results from combined evaluations for each area.

Quantitative and qualitative monitoring and reporting is undertaken regularly by the International Office and international coordinators at departments and faculties. Information and results are included in the University's annual report and presented in different forums where internationalisation is discussed. With our newly implemented support system for internationalisation we will be able to improve our monitoring possibilities and to measure activities and outcomes. Combined with the Mobility Tool+ report system and the participant reports we are able to follow up and evaluate our activities within the Erasmus Programme. These support systems provide us with essential information and give us the base for improvements. The monitoring of our participants before, during, and after the mobility gives us the possibility to support them and receive insights on further progress.

Participating in activities provided in the Erasmus Programme will support us in our effort to increase the internationalisation at all levels. Our ambition is to increase the number of students with an international perspective during their studies, which is one of the activities in Umeå University's Quality System for Education. We will also continue to develop our curriculum for our programs to allow for more students to participate in international mobility. With regards to staff mobility our ambition is to increase the number of outgoing staff undertaking a teaching/training period abroad by combining support and information efforts on all levels within the university.

We will continue our efforts in promoting projects and networks within Key Action 2 and 3, involving more stakeholders, both within and outside the organization. In order to strengthen the cooperation between education and research and expand our university's participation in Key Action 2 and 3, we will continue develop our internal support. This will also enable the share of good practices both internally and externally.



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Decision for the support of mobility activities within the international dimension of Erasmus+ KA131 for the programme period 2021-2027

Umeå University has decided to accept applications for funds from participants undertaking mobility activities within the international dimension for the below categories (in order of priority):

- Students and staff participating in mobility to Fribourg University in Switzerland until the academic year 2028–2029 when the agreement ends.
- Outgoing students within approved ICM projects.
- Exchanges within the university-wide projects: MIRAI, SASUF, SCERIC and ACCESS.
- Internship Scholarship for Minor Field Studies (MFS) Applications.
- Preparatory visit for staff for ICM projects
- Teaching mobility to partner higher education institutions outside Erasmus+ countries.
- Preparatory site visit prior to the application of KA2 project.

Motivation

Student and staff exchange to Fribourg University in Switzerland:

Agreement with partner university in previously planned European university alliance. The agreement is valid until the academic year 2029 and mobility to this partner has begun. We should continue to enable scholarships within the exchange for as long as the agreement is valid.

Outgoing students within approved ICM projects:

ICM projects rarely allow for exchange of outgoing students at bachelor's and master's level. For the project to involve exchange of students and not only reception of students, we will finance outgoing students to partners within approved ICM projects.

Exchanges within the university-wide projects:

Umeå University actively participates in several international university-wide collaboration projects where mobility is a natural part. However, projects often have no or limited funding for staff and student mobility.



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UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

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Grants through the international dimension would enable these projects to include valuable mobilities.

Traineeship grant for Minor Field Studies (MFS) applications:

MFS gives students the opportunity to spread knowledge about Sweden's development cooperation and leads to an increased understanding of Sida's work. This can be linked to Umeå University's sustainability work and work for the global goals in Agenda 2030. Through MFS, students gain valuable international experience that can be linked to the university's internationalization policy. To enable more students who want to complete an MFS traineeship, approved, but not MFS-accepted applications can be handled within the International Dimension as an Erasmus traineeship.

Preparatory visit for staff prior to ICM projects:

To enable collaboration prior to an ICM application, staff mobility may be granted to the project coordinator or another person relevant to the project. Mobility is carried out as skills development (job shadowing, exchange of best practice) or teaching mobility.

Teaching mobility to partner universities outside Erasmus+ countries:

Enabling teacher mobility to partner universities outside Erasmus+ countries through the international dimension is important to increase international collaboration and a way to market Umeå University to prospective students from the partner universities outside Europe.

Preparatory site visit trip prior to the application of a KA2 project:

To enable collaboration prior to a KA2 project application, staff mobility may be granted for the project coordinator or another person relevant to the project. Mobility is carried out as skills development (job shadowing, exchange of best practice) or teaching mobility.

Distribution

The use of the International Dimension should not be in competition with regular Erasmus programme country mobilities. Mobility is awarded to the above-mentioned proposals after a budget evaluation and discussion between the person manager for Erasmus budget and the head of International Office annually.

Decided 251217 by

Ingrid Svensson, Director International Office