

HMU Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)

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The Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU) supports the EU Modernisation and Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education, and the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is integral to the realisation of our institutional plans, strategies, and aspirations.

The Erasmus Program is one of the flagships of HMU, mainly due to the distinctions we have received for our Erasmus actions in the past. We encourage our students and staff to participate and to represent us abroad through the mobility schemes offered by the Erasmus Programme. We will actively promote international mobility when recruiting new students (for example at University Open Days) and to current students through our network of departmental co-ordinators, a programme of departmental presentations and our newly established program called Study Abroad Fair. At the same time, we will demonstrate our strong institutional commitment to equality of opportunity, offering additional financial assistance to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have successfully planned with partner institutions to enable students with disabilities to participate in Erasmus exchange. We will build on our experience to enhance and develop inclusive policies and practice regarding all aspects of mobility. Additionally, we will aim to promote and disseminate our Institution and opportunities we offer to potential incoming students, through our International network. The main tools we use to keep our communication alive with our partners include emails, revised website, participation & organisation of Erasmus Weeks, participation in conferences (with an educational orientation), frequent communication with the National Agencies of the geographical priorities we have set. Moreover, we take all the actions for our incoming students to have the same opportunities (and obligations) as our local students and we try through social character actions to integrate them within the local HMU academic ecosystem.

Recently, our University was upgraded from Applied Science to a Research University, and the Erasmus Programme will help us to link

our newly launched PhD programs with similar & complementary ones of our International collaborators. Additionally, all the bilateral agreements that we establish target more than just contributing to the student & staff mobility: we envision the establishment of joint online & blended mobility courses and degrees, in collaboration with our Erasmus network.

Our priorities along the implementation of the Erasmus programme include the following:

Geographies. HMU geographical priorities regarding the establishment of new bilateral agreements and cooperation include programme countries and partner countries in the region of the Mediterranean & Western Balkans. This priority is dictated by the joint needs and historical links we share with the Institutions of this area. While maintaining our existing geographical priorities (in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Balkans), we remain open to new appealing opportunities. Our strategic plan includes the strengthening of our relations with Institutions in USA, China, and East Africa. The Erasmus Program and its International mobility actions will facilitate this objective and contribute to both the internationalization and modernization of our Institution. Partners. Our international partnerships in both Programme and Partner countries facilitate and support staff and student mobility, student recruitment, developments in teaching and learning, collaborative research, and capacity-building. International collaborative partnerships are a core element in our broader strategic objectives regarding teaching, learning and research. All successful partnerships are the result of shared commitment to, and mutual benefit from, the relationship. We are continuously examining the educational and research needs of our staff. In HMU research and education are interlinked and our participation in the Erasmus program is essential for further strengthening this relation between new knowledge and the knowledge offered to our students. Our international partner

institutions are diverse, reflecting the different needs and priorities of our partners and our own students and staff. All our bilateral agreements with Programme and Partner Country Institutions aim to (a) be aligned to our educational and research priorities; (b) enrich our educational offered programs in all levels with skills (technical and soft skills) that will lead to the higher employability of our graduate students at a national or European level.

Evaluation is a key of success for our modernization and internationalization. We will monitor and evaluate the performance of our collaborations with Programme and Partner Countries Institutions. Only the active ones and only those ones that generate the envisioned results (e.g. student and staff mobility, newly established collaborations in educational and research level, establishment of research collaboration) will be renewed and kept. We expect to focus primarily on the development of selected existing partnerships and to extend their scope so that they contribute to achieving the objectives of the EU Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education, for example, by developing relationships with other key stakeholders and/or cross-sector co-operation. We recognise the importance of regular monitoring and evaluation, as well as benchmarking with peers, to inform and influence our future practice, policy, and strategy. We will seek to develop further, in co-operation with HEIs in participating countries, our contribution to capacity-building for higher education in post-conflict Partner countries.

Operational priorities. Through the interaction of our Administration (Rector and Vice Rectors responsible for our Educational & Training Programmes and Research) and the International Relations Office, we encourage the development of academic-led initiatives and projects, disseminating information about new opportunities and promoting good practice in all aspects of our international operations and strategy. We also encourage our staff to Call: EACEA-03-2020 —

Erasmus: Key action 1: Erasmus Charter for Higher Education EU Grants: Proposal template (EACEA Erasmus+ IBA): V1.0 – 11-02-2020 12

also involve us during the building of the consortium, in order to contribute to the composition of the various collaboration projects (see actions KA2). We actively disseminate across the institution and to the local community and beyond, as appropriate, examples of the outcomes and benefits of our international partnership activity. In regard to mobility we are committed to extending the range and nature of the opportunities we can offer to our students, as integral or optional credit mobility components of an ever-increasing range of degree programmes, principally, but not exclusively, at Bachelor level. This will include both study and training in program and partner countries. Mobility of academic and administrative staff is a priority for effective partnership relationship management, support of co-operation projects, professional training, teaching delivery and programme development. In this context we will explore opportunities for joint delivery of Master's programmes with partners from both Program and Partner countries.

We envision that the impact of the European Union's Modernisation and Internationalisation Agenda in Higher Education will be seen at the HMU in each of the priority areas:

- 1. Increase attainment in the Erasmus Programme.** Within the framework of our participation in an European University consortium, we have set a target for at least 10% of our staff and students to have participated in a face to face or virtual or blended mobility schemes within the next three years. This will be encouraged with the introduction of joint international modules and the offer of more training opportunities for our students. To support and motivate our staff participation in the mobility, we will include this participation among the qualifications to be assessed for any staff member promotion

2. **Increase inclusivity.** We believe that a diverse student and staff body makes the University stronger and more impactful. We will develop our commitment to widening participation and inclusivity, through the financial support to low-income students and facilitating the participation of special needs students in the programme to ensure everyone can benefit from the experience of another educational system and culture and contribute to the European idea of integration

3. **Improve the quality and relevance of higher education.** We set as a primary objective of our strategic plan the high employability of our graduates. Our educational programmes will provide the most requested soft and hard skills to increase the impact of our university to the local, national, and European society needs and priorities. We will actively promote to students and staff the personal and professional development benefits of international mobility and highlight to prospective employers the transferable skills and competences typically associated with this experience, such as cross-cultural communication and language skills. Moreover, attention will be given to the establishment of bilateral agreements and participation to collaboration programs and mobilities that are linked with the needs of the fourth industrial revolution e.g. digital skills, data science, blockchain, robotics, cyber security etc.

4. **Increase use of technology in our educational activities.** As providers of a broad-based portfolio of offered courses, we will continue to develop and diversify our transnational education provision at all three cycles. Across all our programmes, both distance learning and campus-based, we will make innovative use of new information and communications technologies to enrich teaching and enhance the student experience.

5. **Make the knowledge triangle (university-research-market) work.** We will very much encourage both the linking of our educational and research actions and establishing of international mobilities with the market world. In HMU we believe that the market should inform our educational and research actions, to enhance the impact of

programmes to the society and promote innovative and useful research outcomes.

We will develop our research collaboration with industry and the public sector and will seek to increase opportunities for integration of industrial experience into degree programmes.

6. Develop language skills. We will support and promote the learning of Greek language to our incoming students. An accredited Greek language course will be one of the mandatory modules for all incoming students. In parallel, we will exploit all European Commission available online tools regarding language support for the incoming students. Regarding HMU students, in collaboration with the University Governance Bodies we will try to promote the language offered courses for our undergraduate students and mandatory courses. The online offered tools from the European Commission will also be exploited

7. Improve our governance and funding. Our collaboration with other Institutions through the Erasmus will help us to re-evaluate our governance, implement good practices and identify and fix areas for improvement. We will learn through our international collaboration and modernise our educational and research programs. Additionally, our participation in the Erasmus programme is expected to attract funds for the further modernisation for our educational facilities and tools

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

The HMU strategy priorities include:

1. Modernize and Internationalize our community and program of studies
2. Ensure teaching excellence
3. Strengthen and modernize the existing program curricula in all the cycles

4. Support blended mobility and teaching strategies
 5. Introduce new programs in Bachelor and Master level that address the modern market and educational needs e.g. 4th Industrial Revolution and 4th Educational Revolution
 6. Strengthen the links of Research and Education
 7. Strengthen the links between the Market World and our Educational and Training Programs
 8. Strengthen the digital literacy of our Academics and Staff
 9. Increase the staff and students mobility to 10% of the total respective population
 10. Provide priority in teaching and training of the soft skills of our student community
 11. Support the Open Science within our community
 12. Improve the support provided to our students e.g. emotional support, facilitation during their transition from High School to University or from University to the market world; offering multidisciplinary modules for all the HMU students
 13. Improve our Governance and Strategies in local and European Level
- HMU will participate in all the actions of the Erasmus Program:

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) – Learning Mobility:

The participation in this action will be secured with the annual submission on the frame of the 103 and 107 calls. In these proposals our partners will be selected based on level of collaboration and mobility data from prior years and on the frame of our educational and research priorities. Only partners that have demonstrated that they can generate the envisioned results ((e.g. student and staff mobility, newly established collaborations in educational and research level, establishment of research collaboration) will be selected. The mobility of higher education of students and staff (incoming and outgoing) will address mainly the priorities (1), (4), (5), (6), (7), (9), (10) and (13) listed above. We envision our students and staff (incoming and outgoing) to build a more European culture, be acceptive to other cultures & religions, and be ambassadors of this European culture. Moreover,

good practices will be integrated within the Educational Program and Procedures of HMU. Incoming staff mobilities for teaching will provide a more international character to our offered modules and expertise, that we do not have in HMU. Priorities will be given to blended & digital teaching & learning topics, soft skills development and open science. Our outgoing teaching staff will experience new environments and bring new policies and strategies to be integrated within HMU educational framework. A report will be submitted from each participant (outgoing) to inform us about the good practices which can be transferred in the HMU. Regarding the Erasmus mobilities concerning staff training, the latter will be focused on current needs of the HMU and priorities set by the European Education Area e.g. training in digital literacy or open science. To motivate the participation of our staff in the mobility schemes, these mobilities and the successful reporting and implementation of the good practices will be evaluated during the promotion of our staff members.

Additionally, all the incoming students & staff will evaluate us at three stages: during their arrival, in the middle of their stay and afterwards. This will be done to capture their impressions and correct the 'bad' policies. HMU envisions to increase the number of incoming students and staff by 10% each year. This will be facilitated through (a) the communication & dissemination of HMU through National Agencies and International Offices of the Partner Universities; (b) continuously communication & support of the incoming students & staff; and (c) motivation of our staff to offer their lectures in English. Finally, the mobility of market stakeholders will be promoted to strengthen the links with the entrepreneurs. The latter will be called to provide invited talks in one of the research priorities of HMU (e.g. engineering) or participate as guest lecturers in one of our undergraduate or postgraduate programs.

Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) – Cooperation among organizations and Institutions

Participation in KA2 action will address priorities 1 to 12

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices; HMU is already coordinating six such projects (2019-20) and the topics are in agreement with the market and educational needs of the University. HMU will continue to support the submission of such projects, and will support its staff in all phases: before the submission (helping the building of the consortium), during the proposal writing (auditing the proposal, contribute to the writing e.g. dissemination policy), after the approval of the proposal by helping to its implementation e.g. disseminate its results within and beyond its community and after its lifetime by working together with the Principal Investigator on how the generated results can be exploited from HMU academic ecosystem.

Partnerships of Excellence – European Universities; HMU is already part of such a consortium, please check: <https://athena-uni.eu/>. Its participation in the Advanced Technology Higher Education Network Alliance (ATHENA) reflects its research and educational priorities and leverages all the opportunities offered by the Erasmus program to boost its modernisation and internationalisation.

Partnerships of Excellence – Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees; HMU supports and encourages the participation in such consortia of excellence. The offer we help relates to the building of the consortium, the facilitation of the accreditation and recognition of the offered degree and the provision of the facilities to run such degrees. Moreover, such degrees are among the HMU priorities since they will attract high performing students from abroad to our research programs

Partnerships of Innovation; HMU with its recently established Research Centre will support consortia on the frame of the Erasmus Project that encourage the collaboration between scientists, academics and the market / Industry world. HMU will support such projects along all the stages and will encourage its staff members to

submit such proposals on the frame of the research (materials science, medical oriented fields, agriculture, tourism, renewable energy sources) and educational priorities of the University

HMU Participation in actions of the KA3 calls will support the policy development and cooperation across Europe. For HMU this is also essential for our participation in the European University initiative (ATHENA)

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 impact of participating in the Erasmus Plus project is strong and involves all its stakeholders: Academics, Administration Staff, Students, and the Institution itself. More analytical the envisioned impact per stakeholder and the related quantitative indicators are listed below per stakeholder:

Envisioned Impact to Academics:

1. Extend their educational and research network
2. Enhance their teaching capabilities by being exposed to a different audience
3. Build their English Proficiency
4. Use teaching material that was developed within the framework of other Erasmus projects
5. Engage them to participate and submit proposals on the frame of the Erasmus KA2 actions
6. Encourage them to establish new bilateral agreements with their network partners ad Institutions

7. Enrich their CV and help them to get promoted

Targets related to Academics:

1. Increase by 10% the staff mobility for teaching per year ((including incoming and out-coming staff members)
2. Submission of one report by each mobility participant with a proposal for policies that can be integrated in the HMU system
3. Number of Staff Info days to promote and support staff mobility organized by HMU. The target is at least two such Info events to take place per year in the HMU
4. Inform the Academic Community of the open calls on the frame of the Erasmus KA2 actions and promote the assistance that can be offered by the HMU across all the stages of the project. The target is for this information to be communicated through the International Relations Website, Newsletter and Social Media Pages. Moreover, during the Info Days for Staff these services will be disseminated
5. Submit a plan in collaboration with the HMU governance bodies on how to incorporate the successful participation in the Erasmus in the promotion evaluation of the engaged staff member. Successful participation includes the following: (a) Number of staff members of the host institution that visit HMU; (b) Number of submitted Joint Projects on the frame of the KA2 actions; (c) Number of approved joint projects on the frame of the KA2; (d) Introduction of joint lectures or modules with our partners; and (e) the number of live bilateral agreements that have been established with them as the contact person. The target is to increase by 10% the number of projects HMU staff will submit or participate in per year
6. Increase the number of submitted joint research projects resulting from the mobility actions

Envisioned impact to staff using the mobility schemes for training:

1. Acquiring both technical and soft skills as a result of their mobility

2. Increasing their linguistic literacy
3. Building their European cultural mindset and making them more open to anything new and foreign
4. Strengthening their CV and benefiting their promotion

Targets related to staff:

1. Increase by 10% the mobility for training per year (including incoming and outgoing staff members)
2. Submit one report per mobility with the practices can be integrated to HMU infrastructure and how

Envisioned impact to students:

1. Expose themselves to new educational systems and organizations; shape their working ethics
2. Introduce them to topics and infrastructure that does not exist in the HMU
3. Build their European cultural mindset and make them more open to anything new and foreign
4. Extend their network
5. Introduce them in training programs beyond the Academic Calendar e.g. participation in Intensive Courses on the frame of KA2 projects the HMU participates or coordinates
6. Spend part of their postgraduate studies abroad
7. Introduce them to postgraduate study options and employability opportunities
8. Spend part of their PhD in a partner Institution or Company

Targets related to students:

1. Enhance by 10% per year the number of students mobilities for study and training
2. Organize two Info Days and Study Abroad events by the HMU per year
3. Organize Dissemination Events for our Partner Universities to get informed for the opportunities offered by HMU – two such events will take place each year

4. Submit a report per mobility regarding the good & bad policies related to the mobility
5. Document the support provided by HMU in all the stages of the mobility (e.g. emails, VISA documents, financial support, submission of instalments, learning agreements & transcripts)
6. Number of students extending their mobility period for studies or training; the number of students spending part of their postgraduate program abroad; and the number of students finding employment abroad as a consequence of their mobility
7. Number of students spending part of their PhD on abroad
8. Number of modules added into the Diploma Supplement as a result of the mobility

Envisioned Impact to the HMU

1. Build its reputation and disseminate its programs and research
2. Enrich its study curricula with new postgraduate degrees as a result of its international collaboration with partner and programme Country Institutions
3. Enrich its study curricula with new joint modules run in collaboration with HMU international network
4. Build its research and educational infrastructure
5. Integrate all the outcomes of Erasmus Programmes' in which HMU participates, in an open access repository to be used by any interested stakeholder
6. Build the Institutional blended and online educational capacity
7. Improve its governance and policies

Targets related to HMU:

1. The number of dissemination events organized by HMU and number of events in which HMU participated for the Erasmus projects. We expect HMU to organize and host in Crete one Erasmus Week each year and to participate in four similar events across Program and Partner Countries. Moreover, two Info days for students and for staff will be organized by the International Relations Office during the year

2. The distribution of the International Relations Office newsletter to its network to attract students and staff to participate as incoming & outgoing participants along the Erasmus actions
3. The number of new courses, and the number of courses in its programme curricula that will be updated as a result of its staff involvement in the Erasmus Programme
4. The number of new postgraduate degrees introduced because of its international collaboration in the Erasmus Program
5. The number of joint PhD programs with partners abroad
6. The total budget assigned to HMU due to the participation in the Erasmus Programme; as mentioned before the target is to enhance HMU participation (submitted projects) in the KA2 actions by 10% per year
7. Submission of a plan to incorporate the successful participation in Erasmus programme in the staff promotion
8. The number of blended mobilities happening each year; The target is for this number to increase by 10% annually
9. The number of the offered modules using asynchronous and synchronous methods; the target is that at least 20% of the modules offered to our students (including the incoming ones) to use asynchronous methods within a two year timeframe