

1.2 Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

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?

For several years, the University of Genoa has been placing internationalization and development of cultural exchanges among the main objectives of its policy. The fruitful participation in many projects activated in the frame of the Erasmus+ Program 2014-2020 has strengthened this vocation. The University comes out enriched and enhanced, with wider geographical, academic and scientific horizons and with significant advantages for all activities, first of all for teaching and learning. The important experience in the context of KA 107 action led to new synergies with non-European institutions and different countries, such as, for example, the USA, Morocco, Albania, the Russian Federation.

The experience gained with Erasmus has allowed to extend its good practices (CFU recognition, attendance certificate, grant provision procedure, final report) to other types of mobility that have been organized on its model, leaving their specificity unchanged. On this basis, the "International Students' Mobility Handbook" has been realised, to codify mobility procedures and at the same time to guarantee transparency and quality, the same principles on which the University has based its policy in managing the Erasmus mobility. Among the other types of mobility thus implemented, there is the "thesis research" mobility: the call provides for thesis research periods of stay abroad at research institutions, companies, universities. Thanks also to Liguria Region fundings, mobilities with prestigious Institutions, some of which in the USA (NASA, University of California - Berkeley) have been activated.

Active participation in the EU program on the one hand and the need to create a single tool for organizing the different types of mobility on the other hand, promoted the renewal of the course catalogue, adapting it to the needs of internationalization to keep the University tuned in to an increasingly global world. The course catalogue has been radically updated significantly increasing the number of courses taught in a foreign language (mainly English) and of double-degree courses. In the context of internationalization, a significant step forward is also represented by the teaching of Chinese language and culture, activated at the School of Humanities.

Thanks to the dynamic dialogue with international partners, the challenge to modernize the "university system" has also been faced. Modernization is to be considered not only as computerization of procedures (to the advantage of Italian and international students, coming in the frame of exchange mobility or degree seeking) but also as a new approach, which is more in tune with the dynamism of the socio-economic-political context and of the different partners (not only universities but also primary and secondary schools, research bodies, companies, cultural associations) through the participation in different KA2 (Strategic Partnership and Capacity Building) and Jean Monnet projects that have refined the sensitivity to issues like inclusion, digitalization, cultural mediation, European identity, environment.

The expectations of the University of Genoa for the next seven years are based on these premises, whose aim is to further strengthen its European and international vocation, as well as to give substance to the multifaceted meaning of modernization. More precisely, the participation in the Erasmus program is a fundamental and essential part of the University's internationalization strategy in order to achieve an ambitious and challenging objective: to reach such a high level of internationalization that makes students, teachers and staff feel deeply international, regardless of their nationality. The strategic actions that the University plans involve three areas: university networks, outgoing student and staff mobility, international incoming students and teachers. Based on the past experience, the University of Genoa expects participation in the Erasmus program to provide a first-rate contribution in each of the listed areas, thanks to the multiplicity of actions and projects contained therein. In this context, the increase in relations with European partners has particular importance, especially through Erasmus projects that can promote advanced collaboration forms, among which the activation of integrated study courses that include, in some cases, languages of instruction other than English.

With regard to modernization, the University expects participation in the Erasmus program to provide a significant and distinctive contribution to the following actions: a) to upgrade technological tools for

classroom/ laboratory teaching, for teachers and learners; b) to computerize procedures in order to improve services and their accessibility and usability, thus enabling both users and employees to have a better experience, through “user friendly” web applications. For this purpose, a fundamental contribution is offered by the solutions adopted during the current health emergency, which enabled the University of Genoa to satisfy new demands and guarantee the availability of remote educational and administrative activities; c) to make greater efforts to adapt EU projects to the socio-economic-political context and to the different social partner; d) to give more attention to the working and business world, also through participation in specific projects, thus strengthening the encouraging upward trend obtained in the last calls; e) to promote traineeships in the field of digital skills, in particular by involving more students of the humanities area; e) to improve students' language skills, also thanks to a specific project developed by the Language Skills Development Sector aimed at first-year students; f) to improve the web portal, currently in starting phase, dedicated to collect and evaluate the applications of international prospective students, in order to select the degree seeking students that best meet the requirements and expectations of the different Study Courses.

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 University of Genoa is committed to carry out all the projects activated in the frame of the Erasmus Programme, learning from its experience and being open to external stimuli as well as to the internal needs of evolution and growth for which international collaboration is crucial.

The commitment to mobility with Programme and Partner Countries will be consolidated. For an even more significant participation, partnerships will be carefully selected to ensure quality mobility, focusing on: 1) correspondence between course catalogues 2) feasibility of the mobility (e.g. attractiveness of the destination, European and otherwise, linguistic aspects, particular socio-political and health conditions).

Also participation in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees will be characterized by evolution and growth, through proposals with consolidated partners, starting from long-lasting and successful double degrees, and working, where the legal provisions allow, to apply for Joint degree courses. Considering the strategic nature of the action and the commitment made in recent years to increase the double-degree courses, the University of Genoa aims to propose this action as the natural upgrade of already existing collaborations with trusted and actively cooperating partners, hopefully expanding the scientific-disciplinary area, also including humanities.

To strengthen the connection with the European academic context, the University intends to take advantage with confidence of the tool represented by the *European Universities*, as demonstrated by its application for the 2020 call within an alliance coordinated by Universidad de Sevilla, where the University of Genoa had the role of promoter, together with the Université Côte d'Azur. This application is a paradigmatic example of how the University intends to use the actions of the Erasmus program to implement its internationalization strategy. In fact, the application was submitted with other more traditional and specific Erasmus projects, such as the Strategic Partnerships, in which the partner universities focused on cooperation themes and methods, taking advantage of synergies and complementarity that characterize them. The participation of the University of Genoa in these initiatives will contribute significantly to the goal of making students, teachers and staff feel international and part of an international academic community.

The University's strategy, within the projects arising from Erasmus actions, to take advantage of its experience, its network of partners and its added value in different fields of knowledge, combined with a strong focus on current and cross-issues and with an enhanced dialogue with differentiated social actors will represent an excellent viaticum for the Partnership for Innovation proposal. Moreover, the University is not new to this kind of experience and the interaction with business and school world has been successfully funded by European Community to complete important projects.

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

The University of Genoa is strongly committed to the Erasmus + program and considers its benefits as a driving force for consolidating its internationalization strategy and as a defining feature of recent years, as well as a significant growth index. By encouraging quality mobility and participation in interdisciplinary and concerted projects, the University hopes that the impact will be long-term including:

- the consolidation of its international image and the rooting of quality mobility, factors which, together with the course catalogue, represent an excellent vehicle for promotion, especially in international education fairs;
- the internationalization of the course catalogue with the increase of courses (especially of II level master) in English and double-degree courses;
- seminars / lessons held by visiting professors from prestigious institutions, to start partnerships with;
- greater interconnections with the business world for quality European projects, especially for the benefit of research and innovation sectors.

Quality mobility is certainly achieved through a careful selection of partners and students, but also through the enhancement of every available tool to ensure that all deserving students can have an experience abroad. For a better impact on the so-called "vulnerable social groups", the University is committed to maintaining and strengthening its financial contribution, with additional scholarships, calculated on family income basis. Furthermore, to increase the positive impact on participants with disabilities, synergies with the relevant office will be strengthened and the most suitable destinations for these students will be evaluated, starting any blended mobilities for a more complete and effective learning process. Another area of expected impact is the staff mobility, which is crucial for internationalization to permeate all aspects of academic life, especially by raising awareness also of offices that usually don't deal with international issues but which could benefit from an international collaboration (e.g. the offices involved in computerization, e-learning, welfare).

More generally, to broaden the impact of Erasmus + actions on the academic community, the EACEA call will be properly and timely disseminated by the University, also through targeted communications according to the specific actions. In this phase, for each call, it is considered to identify, according to the University policy, the most significant and congruent areas, and draw on them the attention of the teachers, highlighting the most suitable actions for the development of projects to be submitted and the possibility of a financial support at the end of the funded project, in order to ensure its future sustainability.

These actions will also be supported by constant information (website, internal newsletters) on the results achieved in the Erasmus + program, so that a wider academic audience, especially in the area of humanities, still not very present in the various Erasmus actions, "becomes more familiar" with it and with its potential, thus becoming prepared to "read" future calls with a careful and proactive look. Strategies such as those above described require at least two years to be adopted and known, but starting from the third year they are supposed to give significant results.

As to quality, it can certainly be supported by regular ongoing monitoring, aimed at verifying the mobility trend. However, drawing on the recent health emergency, the quality of Erasmus + actions can also be improved introducing effective IT tools in remote administrative management and using faster and more accessible means of communication, than e-mail, to face and solve urgent problems. As an example, starting from a. y. 2020/21, a new online service will be available for outgoing students. This service is part of the wider project "Erasmus profile", which students access through the Online Student Services, using their credentials. In view of streamlining and digitizing the procedures, the Profile is a virtual place to manage Erasmus practices, upload and fill in the necessary documents for mobility, including the Grant Agreement for mobility, receiving a feedback on their position, without necessarily going to offices, writing email or calling.