

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

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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]

The University of Sassari (hereinafter referred to as "UNISS") is a small-medium sized HEI, that includes 13 departments hosting 14,000 students. Given its unquestionably historical and cultural central role in Sardinia, its activities are deeply rooted in the cultural and social fabric of the island. Despite being in a way affected by geographical insularity, UNISS enjoys a favourable position at the heart of the Mediterranean region. Exchange, mobility and internationalization policies are therefore being improved, so as to curb the negative effects of insularity through a concerted strategy, making the most of its collaboration with EU research centres and HEI's, and fully developing its potential in the framework of EU international cooperation initiatives. UNISS indeed intends to take up a leading role in the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean research and HE area and the promotion of a Euro-Mediterranean Lifelong Learning initiative across all southern Mediterranean countries, from Morocco to the Middle East.

Being aware of the importance of the internationalization of teaching and research, based on the priorities set in the framework of the Bologna Process – mobility, recognition and employability –, UNISS will continue to invest resources in international student mobility, that is regarded as an integral part of academic curricula.

Its latest unprecedented achievements are the direct result of its far-sighted international mobility strategy, both in study and placement activities.

Sharing both its past and future with the rest of its European partners, UNISS pays great attention to the Mediterranean scenario. It is affiliated to a number of regional and topic-specific networks, such as Xarxa Vives d'Universitats (21 Catalan universities), the Excellence Network of Island Territories (ENIT/RETI), the Mediterranean Universities Union (UNIMED) and the Euro-Mediterranean University network (EMUNI). Through active participation, UNISS intends to tighten the bonds of collaboration with the eastern and southern Mediterranean HEI's, also with a view to the future developments envisaged by the Programme.

UNISS is also a member of Uni-Italia, a China-Italy collaboration platform, and a partner of a great number of non-EU and non-participating HEI's, aligning its external policies with the proposals put forward by the EP, contributing to make European Higher Education Institutions poles of attraction for international students, researchers and innovators.

Regarding its international mobility strategy for first, second and third cycle students, scholars and clerical staff members, UNISS will:

- confirm the strategy implemented in the management of Erasmus SMP outgoing mobilities, that earned UNISS the highest share of EU and national funding for placement mobility;
- boost incoming placement mobility through the "Erasmus Placement in Sardinia" project, launched by UNISS to support the key drivers of the EU's "knowledge triangle", through the publication of a collection of training opportunities offered by local agencies and companies;
- advocate international mobility as an instrument to achieve the objectives envisaged by each degree course and promote greater employability and flexibility of graduated students;
- promote quality and effective international mobilities, also by means of merit-based grants to be awarded to outgoing students with outstanding academic records;
- promote non-EU mobilities for study and placement, in the framework of the "Ulissee" programme, launched by UNISS in 2010;
- improve the quality of the services provided to promote international mobility, also through the support of departmental mentors;
- support scholars through the promotion and recognition of the activities carried out abroad in the framework of the Programme;
- promote dialogue and exchange of best practices also at administrative level, thanks to participation in STT mobilities.

UNISS regards the process of internationalization of curricula as pivotal to fully implement its openness-based strategies and to develop cooperation with other HEI's for the harmonization of current and future double/joint/multiple courses, the latter being one of the main goals to be achieved.

A joint Course in Planning and policies for the City, Environment and Landscape has already been launched: the course issues a European Master's degree diploma, in addition to national certifications.

In 2012/13, three additional international joint Master's degrees were launched by the Department of Architecture, Design and Planning, in collaboration with Spanish, German and Chinese universities.

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 strategy adopted by UNISS to foster the development of EU and international cooperation projects in the fields of teaching and research, underlines the importance of international student and scholar mobility as a tool to outline appealing international curricula. The strategy implemented by UNISS is organized into actions, namely: a substantial share of the grant is credited to outgoing students one month before the scheduled date of departure; foreign language (for outgoing students) and Italian Culture and Language courses (for foreign students) are organized; access to the services and benefits provided to Erasmus students are extended to non-EU exchange students, in the framework of the "Ulissee" programme; assistance is provided by an ombudsperson to all incoming students; students may benefit from the opportunities offered by a wide collaboration network involving EU enterprises and research centres, which host Erasmus Placement and Leonardo da Vinci grant beneficiaries; in order to provide a comprehensive collection of placement opportunities to SMP incoming students, the "Erasmus Placement in Sardinia" pilot project was launched, fostering quality mobilities; help desk and mentoring services are also available at departmental level; all the activities carried out by students abroad, including thesis research and informal learning, are fully recognized.

The actions taken to enhance communication and the visibility of curricula are paid great attention by UNISS, being in the process of submitting its ECTS-Label application.

A bottom-up approach is implemented to tackle governance-related issues in the framework of the Bologna Process (EP resolution of 13 March 2012). UNISS is also involving the local civil society and institutions (trade unions, SME's, consortia, etc.) in order to boost its "third mission". Agreements have also been signed with ESN Sassari and other youth associations to jointly promote a number of "Youth on the Move" initiatives.

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]

By participating in the Programme, UNISS intends to strengthen its commitment towards the building of an EHEA, boosting the internationalization, modernization and development of teaching and research through international mobility and cooperation, new educational pathways, staff training, and academic and scientific dialogue.

- 1) A higher number of outgoing students involved in quality mobilities, and the ability to take advantage from EU and non—EU international mobility experiences, will result in the education/training of better qualified, flexible and employable graduated students at all levels, well beyond local and national borders.
- 2) The crescendo of student and staff exchange, in addition to new international collaborations, will result in more fruitful research opportunities, that will also promote quality education and the development of knowledge and analytical capability to its full potential.
- 3) A proactive participation in the Programme will improve attractiveness and increase the number of incoming mobilities, encouraging diversification in teaching methodologies and more adaptive curricula.
- 4) The strengthening of inter-institutional relations may have a positive impact on the local scenario, prompting collaborations between research and entrepreneurship. Through the "Erasmus Placement in Sardinia", a pilot project launched by UNISS in collaboration with the Municipality, the Province and the Chamber of Commerce of Sassari, students may benefit from quality placement opportunities offered by the local institutions and enterprises based in the North of Sardinia. Positive results are expected at economic, social and cultural levels, in terms of institutional cooperation (Key Action 2) and third mission.
- 5) The participation in the Programme is expected to provide new instruments to support UNISS in the promotion of a new form of governance that may better suit its development requirements, while fully matching its specific academic profile. Future opportunities may result in the development of a more robust and flexible self-financing capability. UNISS will continue to streamline the management of EU, national and local funding, including the share granted by the Autonomous Region of Sardinia. Nonetheless, a closer collaboration with the southern Sardinian university will be applauded, especially as far as local funding is concerned. Such collaboration will contribute to the design of a HEI model that will respond better to the economic and social challenges that UNISS is about to face, and in a more rational and effective management of resources.

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