

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?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the goal of building a European Education Area¹ and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

(UNITUS) considers its participation in Erasmus 2021-2027 program as fundamental for the achievement of its internationalization and modernization objectives.

The Erasmus objectives and actions required in submitting the application to ECHE are fully consistent with the Internationalization objectives that Unitus has set and included in the recent internationalization three-year planning document. UNITUS aims to improve its international dimension because this enhancement is deemed as strategic for the students when entering the international work world and at the same time it allows UNITUS to be placed among the best international higher education institutions. Similarly, UNITUS intends to redesign its course catalogue with innovative courses taught with innovative methods, combining these aims with more efficient administrative management.

These two strategic objectives will be pursued through the following operational and instrumental objectives:

1 enhancement of the course catalogue in English also by adding international master's degree courses aimed to attract international and exchange students;

2 boosting English language learning for all University students through the enhancement of the courses taught in English together with the aim of increasing the number of regularly graduated students who have also acquired at least 12 ECTS abroad;

3 increasing the attractiveness of degree programmes for international students by supplying English materials, video lessons, student assistance and exams besides developing further cooperation agreements leading to double degrees;

4 increase in the number of undergraduate, postgraduate students and STA/STT mobility by strengthening collaborations in targeted field with qualified foreign institutions. In this context, the actions will be aimed at consolidating the most promising cooperation agreements;

5 application of methodologies and innovative teaching areas that encourage students' learning, lead them towards innovative professional areas, attract international students and new partner universities;

6 improvement of the administrative procedures in order to provide prompt and timely information about the course catalogue to the incoming students, to speed up the payment of the financial support to outgoing students and the full automation of the procedures spanning from the setting out of the Learning Agreements to the recognition of the credits acquired.

7. To foster integration among students from other parts of the worlds;

8. To aim at producing professionals open to international contexts.

The achievement of the operational objectives will have an impact on the following activities:

- Mobility for study and traineeship activities (incoming and outgoing students in all study courses; mobility for traineeships, especially at the master's level);

- Number of international degree programmes, where courses are delivered entirely in a foreign language and include a structured international mobility leading to a double, joint or multiple degree, mostly for master's level courses;

- Mobility of teaching and technical-administrative staff from the central administration and from the departments. The improvement of their internationalization skills makes them play a key role in contributing to the development of the international agenda; thus, they also play a role in modernizing the system and becoming more sensitive towards the international activities;

- Improvement of UNITUS international ranking position with regard to parameters relating to internationalization and, in particular, with regard to:

- programs delivered in a foreign language leading to a double, joint or multiple degree;

- international students enrolled in these courses;

- exchange incoming students within European and International Mobility Programmes;

- outgoing students both for study and traineeship within European and International Mobility Programmes;

- enlargement of the international partnership;

- Organization of international events such as summer and winter schools as intensive programmes integrated into existing BA, MA and doctoral programs, International Staff Week for teachers and technical-administrative staff;

- Improvement for graduated students in entering the work world in innovative and international areas.

¹ For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website: https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

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.

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UNITUS aims to continue its participation in all the Erasmus+ key actions: KA1, KA2 and KA3. During the Erasmus+ program UNITUS has put in place several actions to promote an active participation in all the Key actions of the Program. This has led to the creation of joint programs, with a consequent increase in the number of staff and students mobilities. Furthermore, this has enhanced the achievement of objectives and competences connected with skills development and innovation. Under the new Erasmus program these actions will be reinforced. Participation in the different key actions will be promoted by UNITUS and implemented through the Mobility and International Cooperation Office (UMCI) in cooperation with the Departments and the degree courses boards. UMCI will provide technical assistance during the application and execution phases and will monitor the compliance with ECHE principles. UNITUS top management will assure institutional commitment fostering the participation in the different Key actions and the dissemination of the results. Training sessions will be organized to present the several opportunities given by the program and will be addressed to Erasmus coordinators of each department, to study courses directors and to students.

The target is to promote the Erasmus Program as a strategic tool to achieve the internationalization of the University. Through the Erasmus Program, UNITUS will be able to implement its strategy focused to bring its study programs to an international dimension. This will be done through the review, modernization and planning of the degree courses. In this context, the international experience of students and staff will play a key role in creating an increasingly diverse and international academic community. Closer cooperation between UMCI and the UNITUS Research and Liason Office will be implemented under the Coordination of the Rector delegates for International Relations, fundraising and for talents attractions. This is to exploit the growing synergies and complementarities between the new Erasmus and Horizon Europe programs, in particular for the preparation of Capacity Building projects, Strategic Partnerships and international cooperation with third country institutions. Each department will carry out projects in its research sectors in compliance with its internationalization objectives but still in harmony with the general institutional strategy.

In the framework of its internationalization strategy, Unitus has defined the following operational objectives:

- Enrolment of international students and increase of incoming mobilities;
- Increasing outgoing mobility of students, Phd students and staff;
- Strengthening collaborations with foreign institutions of interest for the UNITUS strategy.

Through a joint and synergic action between the Central administration and the Departments, the following actions will be taken:

- enhancement of courses taught in English;
- Preparation of teaching material, video lessons, and assistance for exams in English;
- Development of further cooperation agreements aimed at activating double degrees;
- Implementation of innovative interactive and online teaching methods;
- Promotion of the University through the UNITUS Orienta digital platform and other forms of communication;
- Enhancement of language training (English and other foreign languages) for all UNITUS students;
- Italian language training for incoming students;

Improvement of administrative procedures and enhancement of student services in order to:

- timely provide information on the course catalogue for incoming students,
- smoothing the processes for the definition of the Learning Agreement, the release of Transcript of Records and full recognition of the ECTS.

UNITUS participation in the Program will contribute to the achievement of the University's institutional strategy as it will increase:

the number of courses offered in a foreign language;

the number of double degree programs;

the number of international students;

the number of exchange incoming students (in the framework of mobility programs);

the number of outgoing students both for study and for traineeship;

the widening of international partnership. All the activities developed within the Erasmus Program, in compliance with the founding principles of ECHE, will enhance the quality and the international dimension of UNITUS graduates, increasing their job opportunities in a more innovative environment, rich in international challenges.

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.

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The modernization agenda is at the base of UNITUS institutional strategy and it represents a necessary prerequisite to meet the emerging needs of students, researchers and the job market.

The initiatives taken up by UNITUS are aimed to:

1. increase the attractiveness of UNITUS;
 2. increase the number of enrolled students by promoting the participation of those categories socially / economically disadvantaged and / or with special needs;
 3. improve the governance of the University by promoting professional development policies for staff members;
 4. improve the quality of education and research by enhancing and tuning the existing dialogue with the stakeholders.
- Participation in the new program will allow to strengthen the activities aimed to the modernization and internationalization of UNITUS.

For several years UNITUS has been particularly involved in initiatives related to the quality / relevance of higher education; international mobility and research projects. UNITUS study courses are designed so as to meet not only the quality requirements but also the new challenges of the global market. This makes them unique in meeting the increasingly specific needs of the students.

The transfer of knowledge will be promoted through a constant cooperation between the Research Office and the Mobility and International Cooperation Office. UNITUS participation in the Erasmus Program will have a significant impact at different levels on all the components involved.

As regards students, participation in the program will allow to:

- acquire new scientific knowledge and skills by meeting the new needs students have in relation to the work world;
- facing different didactic, social, cultural and scientific contexts, in an international dimension, with interlocutors from different educational backgrounds, thus learning to manage and overcome intercultural barriers, in a foreign language;
- master a second language thence increasing one's professional skills;
- improve employability through the creation of new professional figures in the topics covered by mobility;
- increase benefits also for those students who do not participate in the mobility activities, allowing them to interact with foreign incoming students and teachers. This will increase their interculturality and competence when in contact with international realities.

As for the teaching staff, participation in the program will allow to:

- develop greater synergies that will encourage the creation of new collaborations aimed to international scientific and educational projects;
- compare, in a dialectical dimension, their own teaching and research methods with different cultural realities;
- integrate their teaching and scientific skills, by placing them in an international dimension so as to increase the quality of their teaching;
- carry out joint programs, double degree agreements and international cooperation;
- facilitate the reception of teachers, researchers and scientists, with the aim to consolidate cooperation relationships.

UNITUS involvement in program activities will lead to:

- gather immediate benefits that will affect the internationalization and modernization strategies;
- improve the requirements to climb up ranking positions;
- a greater attractiveness towards international students;
- the modernization and expansion of the training offer with the implementation of courses in English, integrated within newly signed double degrees;
- the submission of cooperation and research projects;
- achieve the objectives described in the University Strategic Plan;
- the enhancement of the regional visibility of Viterbo and UNITUS as an international study center and excellence research center;
- the development of skills and training of new professionals.

The impact on the local and national community will be the following:

- quality improvement of the national university system;
- interaction with the stakeholders aimed at achieving common objectives also by sharing human and scientific resources;
- professional enrichment of UNITUS staff who will become capable of accepting new technological challenges, and of better outlining new professional profiles, in the most representative UNITUS sectors;
- acquisition of a greater international integration between the local and the national community thanks to the strengthening of cooperation between Partner and Program Countries;
- creation of a collaborative network between universities, research bodies, local, regional and national institutions, and business companies, with consequent positive effects on the local and national production system;
- development and dissemination of environmental and human sustainability policies with the aim of promoting the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises that can combine innovation and sustainability, in response to new global challenges.

The indicators used to assess the impacts will be the following, divided by area (target levels shown in parentheses):

Internationalization level:

- acquisition of the English language (target: level B1 for all students and level B2 for the large majority of Master's students, with the exception of the students of the Language courses);
- enhancement of language skills in other foreign languages through intensive courses designed for outgoing students (three other foreign languages besides English);
- number of applications received for outgoing SMS and SMP mobility (students min. 400, teachers min. 20, staff min. 15 per year);
- number of actual beneficiaries of outgoing mobility (60% of the number of applications received for students, 95% for staff mobility out of the positions available);
- quantity of credits acquired / recognized (24 ECTS each per semester for outgoing students, 100% recognition);
- EU Survey results (min. 90% of satisfied beneficiaries);
- number of applications received for incoming mobility (students min. 150, teachers min. 50, staff min. 40 per year);
- number of actual beneficiaries for incoming mobility (90% of the number of applications received);

- quantity of credits acquired by incoming mobility students (min. 24 ECTS each per semester per student);
- results of the satisfaction questionnaire (min. 90% of satisfied beneficiaries);
- activation of double-degree agreements (min. 6 at end of the program period);
- activation of international study courses in English and with structured international mobility (2 by the A.Y. 2021-22; another 2 by the end of the program period).
- proportion of PhD students spending at least 3 months abroad (min. 57%);
- development of audio-video materials, teaching materials, student assistance and exams in English (in at least 30% of the courses).

Teaching modernization:

- Activation of complementary distance learning activities (80% of courses);
- Development of multimedia classrooms where interactive and online activities can be carried out (60 additional classrooms during the program period);
- Development of international traineeships (min. 110 / year);
- 90% satisfaction (minimum level) of beneficiaries towards teaching;
- Development of seminars / lessons held by exchange incoming teachers (min. 50 per year).

Increase and improvement of the quality of research with partners of cooperation projects:

- n ° of joint scientific publications with partners of cooperation projects (minimum 2 scientific publications per year);
- new research projects with cooperation project partners (admission to finance of at least 1 new international project per year).

Administrative management:

- joining the European Student Card and related applications by December 2020;
- publication of the course catalogue by May 30 of each year;
- compliance with the terms as for the payment of scholarships to students and outgoing staff (100% in compliance with the deadline fixed by the EU and for the total of signed contracts).

Orientation and dissemination:

- Designing of an English language portal aimed to orientate incoming students;
- Participation in international events organized by UNITUS (min. 2 / year), with minimum 40 participants per event;
- Synergies with the Alumni association for the development of Erasmus ambassadors and the organization of international awareness events (min. 1 event / year).

TIMELINE

The Milestones in the timeline for all the actions described above are the following:

2021 - Enhancement of English language learning for all University students.

2021 - Improvement of administrative procedures.

2021/22 - Supply of teaching materials, video lessons, student assistance and exams in English, by means of the development of further cooperation agreements aimed at awarding double degrees.

2022 – Enrichment of foreign language courses by activating international master's degree courses in order to attract incoming students, officially enrolled or participating in mobility programs.

2023 - Wide application of innovative teaching methodologies to foster the attraction of foreign students and the cooperation with universities abroad.

2023 - Achievement of the targets relating to the mobility of students, PhD students and staff.