



## Erasmus Policy Statement<sup>i</sup>

### Overall Strategy

Since 1972 the University of Calabria implemented strategies for the development of its international dimension.

Internationalization strategy derives from a number of important premises: teaching and research are key drivers, languages in teaching and international experiences are central.

We make great efforts to provide our students with a variety of opportunities abroad and foreign students with meaningful international experiences also at UniCal, thanks to our international recruitment program.

Broad-based support is crucial but successful internationalization requires we work with as many members as possible inside and outside the Campus.

In this context participation to EU and non-EU programs is very positive both for the quantity and the quality of the exchanges performed for education and training purposes.

The prior signing of Inter-institutional agreements (for Erasmus) and of Cooperation Agreements (for non-EU countries), are compulsory for implementing exchange activities. International partners are chosen according to the specific needs individuated by university departments, also taking into due account subject area priorities, compatibility of academic profiles (level/standards considered adequate for mobility and other project activities), similar research fields and other issues (students' placement interests in SMEs) necessary for establishing contacts with partners in some countries rather than in others, relationship trust, partners' capacity to participate actively in projects in order to reach objectives and attain results foreseen. Agreements are regularly monitored at central level as to eliminate the inactive ones and to ensure subject area balance and reciprocity in the number of exchanges.

Quite a high number of agreements has been established with Universities, enterprises and organizations in EU countries for Erasmus study and placement mobility, with different foreign universities in all Continents aimed at promoting cooperation in research fields and in teaching activities.

Geographical priority areas for collaboration have been identified in: Europe, Mediterranean, Latin American and North American Countries (a special program has been implemented for students enrolled in a Latin American University having Italian parent(s), for attending courses at UniCal for periods ranging from six months to one year; Sub-Saharan Africa and Asian Countries, in particular China and Indonesia. In some of these countries, the strategic choice has been to present our University at international educational fairs.

The development of the international mobility experience confirms its role as a motor of growth for the whole region. More than 2000 students, researchers and teaching staff benefit of study, research or teaching periods abroad. On their return they transfer the know-how and experience acquired abroad to their territory, whereas abroad they have been "ambassadors" of their country.

In the framework of Erasmus, from 1989 to date, exchanges have increased more and more for students in all three cycles and also for teachers and staff. About 200 Erasmus students are sent abroad for credit mobility plus 77 for placement each year and 170 incomings are hosted. For placements we underpin the long and positive experience gained through the implementation of mobility in the previous LdV programme for students/graduates (2003) and with the creation of an

Erasmus Placement consortium in the LL Programme (2007). The consortia is in force and training opportunities on a wider scale (170/year) are provided to outgoing students by nine Italian Universities. The project was awarded as best practice in 2009 by the European Commission in Prague.

In the last four years, the number of international students in our Master Degree courses has grown from about 0.5% to about 4,5%, 305 internationals on about 9000 students enrolled, coming from 50 different Countries in the world.

Young researchers mobility is also encouraged through an additional support to PhD and post doc students.

Double degree programs are also available for our students with different Universities in Moldavia, Russia, Germany, Czech Republic, Spain. Work is being done to develop new dual degree programs with Universities in Latin America, China, USA, Canada and Australia. Students involved are more than 50.

The great offer of receptive facilities for students in residences on campus (dorms represent 10% of Italian public Universities full offer) allowed to launch a program of 80 scholarships per A.Y. for international students who wish to enroll in a Master Degree Course (2nd Cycle) at UniCal. The University coordinates an Erasmus Mundus multiple PhD program, called "Eudime", that is designed to implement excellence innovation, mobility and multidisciplinary investigation approaches related to membrane science and technology.

The Consortium includes 8 EU institutions and 10 associate partners.

### **Strategy for the organization and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects under the Erasmus+ Programme.**

In a period in which unemployment increases and the market requires people with the right mix of skills the challenge remains with HEIs which must focus on enhancing the quality of activities. Therefore, strategic interventions are foreseen to better international activities also by strengthening links between University, research and business for excellence and innovation in academic activities.

The University's objectives for strategic planning have been identified after a careful analysis reflected in its three-year plan, in the performance plan and in the financial plan for research and international relations.

Some identified priorities are:

- 1) encourage increase in outgoing students from UNICAL for the completion of their training and for thesis development in graduate schools/research centers abroad;
- 2) pursue quality in exchanges of students, graduates, teachers, researchers to HEIs and to enterprises in EU and non-EU Countries;
- 3) provide extra financial support to students and in particular to disadvantaged ones;
- 4) develop projects with universities /graduate schools to provide local/foreign students training exchange opportunities, possibly common joint degrees;
- 5) allocate funds to attract foreign researchers/teachers also providing hospitality and services in Campus;
- 6) establish appropriate agreements for scholarships allocation (possibly reserved) to foreign students.

Quality is pursued through:

- promoting widely international opportunities;
- ensuring placements in SMEs fitting needs of students, graduates and researchers;

- bettering orientation on courses;
- tutoring, supervision of mobile students;
- widening attention to language issues;
- recognizing students' achievements in home curricula using widely ECTS;
- issuing the Diploma Supplement to outgoings;
- updating yearly the ECTS course catalogue;
- publishing the ECHE on the web site;
- facilitating recognition of staff activities;
- monitoring and publishing performance results.

### **Impact of our participation in the Programme on the modernization of the University of Calabria and possible objectives to be achieved.**

According to Europe's strategy 2020 employability is one of the main priorities to which Universities may highly contribute to as engines of competitiveness, innovation and key drivers for growth, jobs and prosperity in Europe.

In fact, in a period of deep crisis in which unemployment rates are increasing more and more and the labor market in all fields requires that professional figures have the right mix of skills and transversal competences, the challenge remains with HEIs that must find the right strategic actions to meet these needs.

To this end, in order to meet the priorities of the modernization agenda, the strategic actions of the University will be concentrated on:

- enhancing the quality of courses and training activities through regular curricula updating so that graduates have a better level of qualification and the types of knowledge and skills they will need to succeed and to be flexible enough to adapt to rapid changes in the labor market;
- integrating applied research results into educational offer and knowledge transfer to the local market;
- Improving the quality and relevance of the University by creating more opportunities for students and staff to study, train or teach abroad;
- intensifying international exchanges of students/teachers to business and of entrepreneurs to University also for the collaboration in new curricula design;
- applying cross-border European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System for the recognition of periods spent studying or training abroad;
- valuation and extension of quality partnerships with SME's (in previous EU programmes) to other forms of cooperation addressed to students, graduates and researchers;
- increasing the attainment levels of graduates also by strengthening more the strategic links between University, research and business in order to foster excellence and innovation in study and training, in research and teaching both at regional and international levels ;
- improving governance and injecting additional funding, national and private, to better sustain innovation in teaching, learning and research and this is also referred to international activities.

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<sup>i</sup> section D of the application for the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, call 2014.