



ERASMUS+

**Erasmus: Key action 1: Erasmus
Charter for Higher Education**

EACEA-03-2020 ECHE-LP-2020

1. ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

1.1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff

Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Partnerships for Innovation

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation:

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)

Humanitas University (HU), located in Milan, was built in 2014 alongside the renowned Humanitas Research Hospital (HRH), nearby the main campus. The degree courses currently active are the International Medical School, the Nursing School, the Physiotherapy School, and the MEDTEC school. Two PhD programmes (MEM, Molecular and Experimental

Medicine, and DASMEN, DataScience in Medicine & Nutrition), 19 post-graduate residency programmes and several Masters have also been activated during the last 5 years for most branches of medicine and nursing.

HU's mission is to train globally minded healthcare professionals through state-of-the-art interactive teaching methods and closely integrating its clinical and research communities. In this context, a few words should be spent to describe the MEDTEC school, which was activated in the current academic year. It is an integrated trans-disciplinary six-year training programme, which allows students to be awarded a Bachelor's Degree in Biomedical Engineering in addition to an MD in Medicine. The MEDTEC programme aims to train professionals who will be able to apply medical and technological know-how as a means of providing innovative and quality medicine. In this frame, the programme strongly focusses on enhancing the medical skills of a doctor through the integration and acquisition of the basic competences and approaches relevant to Biomedical Engineering.

At HU the process of internationalization is intentional, and the faculty and staff are fully engaged in its optimal implementation. The Medical School and the MEDTEC School were conceived as international programmes from their beginning and are entirely taught in English. Approximately 34% of our medical students come from countries other than Italy, whether from the European Union or elsewhere. The geo-educational map of non-European countries includes nationalities from four continents, such as United States of America, Canada, Israel, Brazil, South Africa, Korea, Russia, China, India, Iran, Nigeria, and Angola. Fully aware of the issues raised by the process of globalization, HU aims to prepare professionals capable of exploiting their competencies in different social and cultural settings, mindful of the different approaches to health and disease. To that end, HU strongly encourages the formation of an international and multi-ethnic learning community and the evaluation and incorporation of learning experiences coming from internationally oriented academic institutions. Although only a part of our undergraduate and post-graduate courses uses English as the teaching language, the internationalization that inspires them is intended to spread to and impact also the courses held in Italian, fostering the theme of inter-professionalism and expanding the horizon of degree courses that are more traditionally rooted in the territory. Besides the international relationships and agreements deriving from enduring research and clinical collaborations of the faculty with partner institutions worldwide, HU's approach in choosing institutions and countries with which to establish mobility programmes is developing with care and attention not only to the core principles that have inspired its foundation, but also to the analysis of the students that have been attracted to the degree courses and their educational goals. Currently, HU has established structured connections with the United States, Russia, China, Brazil, Argentina, Canada, India, UK, Finland, Spain and Poland. These include relations set in the frame of an Erasmus+ Inter Institutional Agreement (IIA), as a result of HU first ECHE accreditation in 2017. In this context, the goal for the next years is to strengthen those relations, especially in the United States and in Europe.

USA is a target country for the following reasons: 1) American students and postgraduate institutions have started to show a considerable interest in education provided by European countries and in particular in HU; 2) reciprocally, international medical students at our university are strongly interested in spending a traineeship in the United States or having access to residencies in that country. To those ends, we have joined AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges) Visiting Student Learning Opportunities which includes short term training activities for medical students in US. In addition, HU prepares its students for the USMLE (US Medical Licensing Examination) by providing a curriculum in line with the requested educational standards and collaborating with the US National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). HU MD graduates could apply for the USMLE since our University is listed in the IMED (International Medical Education Directory). In order to implement the opportunities offered to HU students to spend a study period in USA we believe that Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility will give a boost in defining new partnerships for student exchange.

Europe is another target area since several students are considering to move to other European countries for their specialty school or as a working destination. In order to support

them in the right choice of the country that might better fit to their needs, a study or training period structured through Erasmus+ will be implemented by HU in the next years. The main areas of interest are Northern Europe, while for the Mediterranean area Spain, in view of the health systems and health and welfare structure of these countries, could bring out important and fundamental considerations and experiences for our students. Europe is an important target area also for staff mobility, with the goal of spreading professionalism and sharing best practices with foreign colleagues. Faculty development is an essential component of an HEI modernisation, which is actively pursued with respect to modern and interactive teaching methods and the intercultural challenge of enacting them within a heterogeneous student population. A strong policy of visiting professors has also been established with the purpose of having at least three of them per year. The participation in the Erasmus+ activities is therefore believed to represent an incredible opportunity not only for students but also for the faculty and open faculty (e.g. medical doctors and nurses from the hospital who are trained in their educational competencies so as to deliver high-quality tutoring activities to students). The participation to the Erasmus+ programme is also expected to have a strong impact on lecturers' and students' thinking and actions. By continuous reflection and awareness development of the goals of the courses and teaching methods, as well as of the type of professionals expected to be formed, the process of internationalization is expected to improve the outcome of teaching and learning and the progressive engagement of the co-educational community in global health issues.

Humanitas University has the ambition to further internationalize its student population, the student's learning environment and the student's learning experience. To this aim the participation to the Erasmus+ programme can foster both actual mobility and virtual mobility of students and staff as to create a coeducational community that is truly international and where both students and faculty can grow in their knowledge and skills and in their ability to be proactive in the international community and make a difference.

At our university, mobility goes hand in hand with quality, as a way to keep up with the highest standards of medical education and excellence in research. Digitalization is becoming increasingly important for an HEI modernization as a way to ensure the quality of processes by making them more objective, streamlined, reproducible, and sustainable. In the context of international mobility, the digitalization process is a fundamental step to foster student exchange while reducing mobility costs and administrative burdens, thus helping in creating an interconnected European Education Area. Inclusion is also a key aspect: ideally, access to mobility should be guaranteed to all students as an essential part of their personal and professional development. This implies not only the promotion of physical mobility, but also the development of virtual mobility approaches (virtual exchange activities, blended mobility, etc.). As it has become particularly evident in the last months, the importance of developing such approaches, and be able to provide high quality remote learning, will be a key factor in the process of modernization and internationalization of any HEI. In this frame, the Erasmus+ programme could provide tools, activities, opportunities and resources both for implementing virtual mobility and for sharing of best practices.

HU is strategically located in Milan and in the region of Lombardy, which is home to many internationally recognized HEIs and the most important Italian hospitals. In addition, Lombardy, and particularly Milan, is the heart of Italian business and provides fertile ground for the knowledge triangle to work. This highly competitive environment represents an exciting resource and a challenge for our university and students. In this context, HU supports and promotes any action aimed at strengthening the link between education, research and business; it is already active in many local, national and international initiatives fostering innovation and collaboration between HEIs and industry.

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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Relevant Erasmus action for HU institutional strategy

The objectives of HU's internationalization process falls under both Key Action 1 – which promotes the learning of individuals through mobility, and will be implemented for students (both undergraduates and post-graduates) as well as teaching staff – and Key Action 2 – which promotes cooperation for innovation and good practice.

Under the Key Action 1, HU is interested in continuing and expanding the mobility opportunities between Programme countries (KA103 calls), in line with the objective of strengthening relations with other European countries, with particular interest towards Northern Europe and the Mediterranean area. In addition, for the next seven years we also expect to take part into International Credit Mobility (ICM or KA107 calls), opening up to exchange of students and staff with non-EU Partner countries. In particular, target areas of interests will be the US, South Mediterranean, Middle East, and Africa (related to Bangui project, see below). It is worth mentioning that KA107 might represent in the near future an important tool to support and further develop a recently activated initiative involving HU, the Bambino Gesù Hospital and the Bangui University in Central African Republic (<https://www.humanitas.it/news/25438-progetto-bangui-humanitas-university-contribuisce-alla-formazione-dei-medici-della-repubblica-centrafricana>). Indeed, in the last year, few members of the HU academic staff have offered teaching and training activities to undergraduate (School of Medicine) and post-graduate (Pediatrics residency) students in Bangui, through both physical and virtual staff mobility. This year Humanitas University is going to host two physicians from Bangui for a traineeship on echography and CT. We expect that the participation to Erasmus+ action will help us to further implement and better structure this project. Finally, considering the uniqueness of the MEDTEC undergraduate course, which has recently been activated and involves the partnership between Humanitas University and the Politecnico di Milano in the programme organization, we are planning to build a National Mobility Consortium (through the KA108 action) which will allow to activate exchanges between Biomedical Engineering and Medical School degree courses in Programme and Partner countries.

Through the first key action, it is expected that a mobility experience for our students, who are already studying in an international setting, may further expand their interest in becoming active members of the global community, sharing their values, attitudes and skills in a meaningful way with others. For the teaching staff, we believe that a mobility experience will help them revise and expand their teaching methods and refine their sensibility in teaching foreign students. For administrative staff, international mobility will promote exchange of good practices, lifelong learning, multicultural awareness, interpersonal and communication skills which will be useful in their daily work activities. Areas of particular interest for staff training include digital skills, development and management of virtual mobility learning pathways, multicultural approach to health and education, pedagogical and/or curriculum design skills, etc. More in general, the mobility of individuals through the Key Action 1 is envisaged as a first step which may pave the way for future cooperation projects also within the Erasmus Key Action 2 (such as strategic partnerships or capacity building projects, depending on the specific objectives of cooperation).

In the second key action, a specific interest concerns strategic partnerships. The priorities of this action, which include 1) supporting opportunities for all individuals in developing and acquiring skills (i.e. multilingualism, STEM competences, AI, etc.); 2) promoting internationalization; 3) tackling skills gaps and mismatches by curricula development; and 4) rewarding excellence in learning and teaching, are all very relevant to our institutional strategic plan and modernization agenda. The interest in strategic partnership projects include not only the field of higher education, but also vocational education and training (VET), due to the highly specializing and technical nature of most of our courses and the close collaboration between the University and the Humanitas Research Hospital. Indeed, HU has been and is currently involved in applications under the KA202 action.

Through Key Action 2 we expect to: 1) develop, test and implement online and/or blended forms of learning and mobility to be integrated in courses and curricula; 2) foster collaboration

with higher education institutes (HEIs) providing international courses, analysing the transcultural dimension of such courses so as to understand the most efficient teaching dimension in a multi-ethnic community and to establish common, high quality principles and contents of the educational process that can be spent in a global community; 3) support the modernisation and curricula development of selected partners through a joint capacity building project.

Practical implementation

At the core of HU's project of internationalization is the idea of preparing global health professionals endowed not only with knowledge and skills that can be spent flexibly in different geographical and cultural settings, but also with a capacity for self-directed learning, critical thinking and problem solving. To those ends, the content of the integrated courses and modules, the teaching methods, the assessment methods and the professionalizing activities are carefully chosen and planned. Therefore, HU's clarity in its choice of partners and in defining the content of the agreements is very relevant, as are the ways the different activities falling under the agreements are implemented, organized and monitored. The Director of International Relations, in collaboration with the Office for Medical Education, has the duty of overseeing that such activities (courses, clerkships, etc.) and the time-frame of their actuation (e.g. year, semester) comply with the core educational principles of HU's courses. Continuous dialogue among the stakeholders of the internationalization process (students, faculty, staff, Board of Directors, etc.) is also considered of paramount importance to clarify goals, outcomes and new policies in a virtuous circle that promotes common growth.

The administrative framework to support and manage the mobility of individuals (both incoming and outgoing) under the Key Action 1 is already in place and is supervised and monitored by both the Director of International Relations and the Erasmus Coordinator. The Erasmus/international Office includes currently 3 members who take care of the negotiation and management of inter-institutional agreements, the revision and update of information on the website (in collaboration with the HU WEB team), the preparation and publication of the yearly calls for Erasmus+ grants for both student and staff mobility, and are responsible for supporting the students (both incoming and outgoing) before, during, and after mobility. For each degree course, a specific Erasmus Committee, including both administrative and teaching staff, is taking care of the evaluation and selection of the candidates for mobility. A designated member from the Student Office is responsible for producing the Transcripts of Records for incoming students, as well as ensuring appropriate registration of credit recognition for our outgoing students. A person from the Grant Office is involved in managing the active Erasmus+ Projects (including intermediate and final reports) and supervising the allocation of Erasmus grants to mobile students and staff. Finally, the Language lab is providing linguistic support for both incoming and outgoing mobile participants, offering courses in English, Italian, Spanish, German, and French. Individual linguistic support is also offered.

In addition, the HU's strategy for practical implementation of projects within the Erasmus+ framework will include:

1. The provision of support to visiting professors teaching at the International Medical School and in the PhD programmes;
2. The attainment of a consistent number of international cooperation agreements, giving students more opportunities for mobility;
3. An increase in Erasmus ICM partnerships for non-European mobility;
4. A progressive enhancement of staff skills and number for the management of Erasmus-related application for funding within the KA1 and KA2 areas (e.g. grant writing and reporting);
5. The implementation of a database for the monitoring of all international visiting students and staff;
6. The development of specific approaches for virtual or blended mobility with our strategic partners. Special attention will be given to virtual mobility teaching projects, such as international electives courses. These courses will be designed so that students can participate in virtual classrooms focused on interactive teaching

methods, and establish long distance connections with their foreign peers at collaborating institutions. Some forms of virtual mobility, such as virtual exchange activities, are particularly well-suited for intercultural learning and soft skills development, and could represent an important integration of core curricula of students as well as part of the continuing professional development of HEI faculty and staff.

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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We expect that the participation to the Erasmus+ programme will significantly foster the process of internationalization and international cooperation of our University in the next seven years.

We identified 5 main targets and related qualitative and/or quantitative indicators:

Target 1. Strengthen collaboration with current Partners and increase the number of Partnerships, to be able to offer our students a more diverse and wide choice of destinations, and more integrated learning paths. To this aim, for each degree courses, 3-4 key partnerships will be identified mainly considering the quality and transparency of the Partner Institution as well as the similarity -or complementarity- between learning pathways.

Indicators:

-Number of active IIA (inter-institutional agreement)

Target 2. Increase the number of undergraduate and post-graduate students accessing to mobility (both incoming and outgoing). Currently we have on average 7 outgoing and 5 incoming students each year. We plan to double/triplicate the number of participants to the Erasmus+ in the 2021-27 timeframe. First, the Erasmus+ program activity will be actively and more widely promoted through recurrent informative sessions organized by the Erasmus Office and by involving former Erasmus students and Student organizations (such as the ESN) as sponsors and ambassadors for the program, by sharing their own experiences. Second, more tailored mobility plans will be built for students of each degree course, to facilitate both the integration of mobility within the student career path and the automatic recognition of activities achieved abroad. As an example, for Medical students, it is envisaged to activate mobility for study (for at least one semester) during their clinical years (5th or 6th). Instead, for MEDTEC students it is expected to plan two mobility windows for study: one during the 2nd and 3rd year, mostly involving the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to Biomedical Engineering, and the second during the 5th and 6th year, mostly focused on medicine and surgery subjects and related clinical training activities. Third, considering that the type of courses currently in progress at HU are highly professionalizing, we will expect that a significant proportion of mobilities will be devoted to training (including clinical traineeship in medical, nursing and physiotherapy fields, research traineeship and digital skills trainings)

Indicators

-Number of students participating to Erasmus+ selections for both study and training mobilities (including blended or virtual mobility). The goal is to have at least twice (by 2023) or three times (by 2027) the number of candidates compared to available grants.

-Number of outgoing students completing their mobility program. The goal is to approximately duplicate (e.g. 12 outgoing mobilities/year) the number of mobilities before 2023, and triplicate

(e.g. 20 outgoing mobilities/year) before 2027. This will correspond to have about 3 outgoing students every year for each undergraduate degree course before 2023, and about 5 outgoing students for each undergraduate degree course before 2027. We plan to develop a part of this mobility in a blended form.

-Number of incoming students from partner HEI completing their mobility program. Reciprocally, we expect to duplicate the number of incoming students (e.g. about 6 students/year) before 2023, and to triplicate it (about 10 students/year) before 2027.

-Accreditation of a National Consortium for the mobility of students and staff involved in the MedTEC School. Expected to be achieved before the end of 2022.

-At least one KA107 project (non-EU mobility) obtained in the next 2023/24

Target 3. Increase the number of staff accessing to mobility. International mobility is an important tool for lifelong learning, both for faculty members (faculty development), and for non-academic staff. As for students, the Erasmus+ program activity needs to be more widely promoted to the staff through recurrent informative sessions organized by the Erasmus Office and by involving former mobile participants as sponsors and ambassadors for the program. Tools available for staff mobility for training (such as the IMOTION platform) will also be better presented to the staff and made directly accessible through a link on the HU LMS system. The periodical definition of priority areas for mobility could also help in stimulating faculty and staff from different departments to participate in international mobility.

Indicators:

-Number of staff members participating to Erasmus+ selections for both teaching and training mobilities. The goal is to have at least twice (by 2023) or three times (by 2027) the number of candidates compared to available grants.

-Number of outgoing staff. Achieve at least 2 staff (including faculty and open faculty) outgoing mobilities/year before 2027

-Number of visiting staff. Achieve at least 2 staff incoming mobilities/year before 2027.

Target 4. Improve the quality of mobility to keep on with the high standards required by the ECHE. The areas for improvement include: a) transparency and accessibility of information on the website; b) progressive digitalization of all procedures and implementation of the Erasmus without papers; c) keep the high quality of support services for incoming students (language support, visa and permits support, accommodation, counseling, support to people with disability, access to campus facilities, etc)

Indicators:

-Satisfaction of students concerning their mobility experiences, as assessed from the evaluation questionnaires (both EU evaluation forms and our own) and final reports of Erasmus projects

-Quality of the support for mobility participants before, during, and after the mobility (Erasmus office)

-Quality, clarity, and accessibility of information available to both incoming and outgoing students before the mobility,

-Quality of implementation of the digitalization process.

-Proportion of ECTS successfully achieved during mobility with respect to total number of ECTS approved in the LA

Target 5. Increase the participation of HU in international cooperation projects, with specific interest firstly for strategic partnerships and, secondly, for joint capacity building projects.

To date, our institution has mainly operated under the Erasmus Key Action 1, although we have participated as partners in KA2 project applications. Strategic Partnerships will offer the opportunity to collaborate with Partners for the implementation and exchange of good practices concerning trans-disciplinary curricula that could better meet the need of the job market, innovative teaching strategies, virtual and blended form of teaching and mobility. Instead, joint capacity building projects may represent in the future a tool to support and expand the undergoing collaboration with the Bangui University for the development and modernization of

MD and nursing curricula, as well as for vocational education and training of health professionals.

Indicators

-Number of projects submitted under the KA2 action (including VET applications)

-At least one KA2 project (strategic partnership or joint capacity building project) awarded in the 2021-27 time-frame