

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Please be aware that your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect the current involvement in Erasmus+ you intend to undertake. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future please amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your respective National Agency accordingly.

Humanitas University (HU) is located in Milan and built alongside the renowned Humanitas Research Hospital. The course degrees that are actually active are the International Medical School and the Nursing School but steps have already been taken to activate other courses and post-graduate residency programs for medical doctors. HU mission is to train globally minded healthcare professionals through state-of-the-art interactive teaching methods and close integration with its clinical and research community. Even though HU was founded officially only in 2014, it has a 15 year experience in educating medical doctors, young scientists and health professionals. Since 2000, Humanitas Research Hospital has in fact been hosting Nursing, Biotechnology and Medicine courses for the State University of Milan, organizing the teaching and professionalizing activity for students by means of its Office for Medical Education and the extensive tutorship program provided by the hospitals. Nowadays, HU, besides students that are officially enrolled as HU students, is still organizing the teaching activity and hosting the final years of the International Medical School of the State University of Milan. As a whole, its students populations amounts therefore to around 500 students. At HU the process of internationalization is intentional and the faculty and staff are fully engaged in its actuation. The medical course that constitutes the core around which HU was thought and built was created as an International Medical School and not simply as an Italian course translated in English. Around 30% of our medical students come from other countries both from the European Community and non-European countries. The geo-educational map of HU includes European countries such as UK and Greece and non-European countries such as Canada, United States, Brazil, Angola, Saudi Arabia, Korea, China, India. Fully aware of the issues raised by the process of globalization, Humanitas Medical School aims at preparing doctors capable of exploiting their competencies in different social and cultural settings, mindful of the different approaches to health and disease. For such a purpose, the school strongly encourages the formation of an international and multiethnic learning community and the evaluation and incorporation of learning experiences coming from internationally-oriented academic institutions. Even though only the Medical School uses English as the teaching language, the process of internalization that inspires it is intended also to spread and impact on courses held in Italian as to foster the theme of inter professionalism and expand the horizon of degree courses that are more traditionally rooted in the territorial reality. Besides the international relationships and agreements deriving from long lasting research and clinical collaborations of the faculty with partner institutions worldwide, HU's approach in choosing institutions and countries with whom to establish mobility programs is developing with care and attention with respect to the core principles that have animated its foundation and the analysis of students that are attracted by the different course degrees and the goals of their education. HU has already established structured connections with Unites States, Russia, China and India. United States were chosen as a target area for two reasons:

- 1) American students and postgraduate institutions have started to show a considerable interest in education provided by European countries;
- 2) conversely, international medical students at our university are strongly interested in spending a traineeship in United States or have access to residencies in that country. To this purpose, a collaboration with the American National Board of Medical Examiners (the institutions that prepares the tests necessary to practice medicine in US) has been established and our medical school curriculum and activities have been discussed and revised with them.

HU is also processing requests of agreements coming from other countries and the many requests coming individually from foreign students attracted by the quality of Humanitas research hospital. A strong policy of visiting professors has also been established with the purpose of having at least three of them per year. Humanitas University has the ambition to further internationalize its student population, the student's learning environment and the student's learning experience. The University already offers its Medical School and Ph.D. programmes in English and aims at increasing its intake of international students in these programmes and to promote as much as possible 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.

Please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme.

If not applicable, please explain:

At the core of HU project of internationalization there is the idea of preparing global health professionals endowed not only with knowledge and skills that can be flexibly spent in different geographical and cultural settings, but also with the capacity of self-directed learning, critical thinking and problem solving. To this purpose the content of integrated courses and their modules, the teaching methods, the assessment methods and the professionalizing activities are carefully chosen and planned. For HU, the clarity in partners' choice and in defining the content of the agreements is therefore very relevant as well as how the different activities that fall under the agreements are implemented, organized and monitored. The Director of International Relations, in collaboration with the Office for Medical Education, has the duty to oversee that such activities (courses, clerkships, etc.) and the time-frame of their actuation (e.g. year, semester) comply with the core educational principles of the courses of HU. A continuous dialogue among the stakeholders of the

internationalization process (students, faculty, staff, Board of Directors, etc.) is also considered of paramount importance as to clarify goals, outcomes and new policies in a virtuous circle that promotes the common growth.

The objectives of HU internationalization process falls under both the Key Action 1 that promotes learning of individuals through mobility and will be implemented both for students and teaching staff; and the Key Action 2 that promotes the cooperation for innovation and good practice. Through the first Key Action, it is expected that for our students, already studying in an international setting, the mobility experience may further expand their interest in becoming active members of the global community and share their values, attitudes and skills in a meaningful way with others. For the teaching staff, we believe that the mobility experience will help them to revise and expand their teaching methods and to refine their sensibility in teaching to foreign students. In the second Key Action, particular attention will be given to foster collaboration among HEI involved in international courses as to analyze the transcultural dimension of such courses, to understand the most efficient teaching dimension in a multiethnic community and to establish common high quality principles and contents of the educational process that can be spent in a global community. HU strategy for implementing international cooperation projects within the Erasmus+ framework include:

1. Recruit and select high quality international candidates for PhD program;
2. Provide support to visiting professors teaching in the International Medical School and in the PhD program;
3. Reach a consistent number of international cooperation agreements to give students more opportunities for mobility;
4. Increase of Erasmus Mundus partnerships for non-European mobility;
5. Implement a database aimed at monitoring all international visiting students and staff;
6. Establish cooperation with other HEI providing international courses to explore educational issues in a multiethnic community and to establish a common background for global medical doctors and health professionals;
7. Develop, together with strategic partners, specific approaches for virtual mobility;
8. Educate staff and faculty to the intercultural approach.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on the modernisation of your institution.

Please refer to each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue:

Erasmus + Key Action 1 (KA1):

HU wants to prepare students able to face the challenging reality of a European society that, while still strongly anchored to its traditions, is undergoing the process of globalization. Medical doctors, health professionals and researchers need therefore to build their knowledge on a sound background while being flexible and critical in its application to the working reality. The entrance selection of students via knowledge-based criteria is a critical step that supposedly allows only students with good previous learning abilities to have access to higher education. However, aspects related to the different geographical and cultural origins need to be taken into account if high level attainments are to be reached. To this purpose, HU is working on establishing an intercultural educational approach by studying the learning background of its students and researching on learning methods that can foster their potential. We believe also that part of a successful postgraduate outcome is due to an informed and convinced choice of the appropriate course degree. HU has therefore established an information campaign to guide secondary school students in their university choice in health sciences. Being a new and modern institution born on the intentionality of internationalization, HU is carefully monitoring the learning outcomes of its students both cognition-wise and skill-wise as to understand how to best guide its learning programs and to build and support a strong institutional “geo-educational” map. Humanitas Medicine and Nursing degrees are strongly rooted in a very modern hospital and research centre where attaining quality and quality verification are at the forefront of the everyday agenda. Medical doctors and nurses of the hospital (open faculty) are trained in their educational competencies as to deliver a high quality tutoring activity to students. This activity is of paramount importance considering that the type of courses currently activated by HU are highly professionalizing and therefore require the tutoring expertise of working professionals in the clinical field. Faculty development is also actively pursued with respect to modern and interactive teaching methods and the intercultural challenge of enacting them within an heterogeneous student population. The possibility of participating in international exchange programs is therefore believed to represent an incredible opportunity not only for students but also for the Faculty and the Open Faculty. The process of internationalization is also expected to have a strong impact on lecturers’ and students’ thinking and actions. By a continuous reflection and awareness development on the goals of the courses and teaching methods, as well as on the type of professionals that are 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. To this purpose, also in courses that are traditionally territory-rooted such as nursing, a parallel track will be activated through which students will be exposed to more global health themes. HU has recently activated a new integrative merit-based training course called “Excellence in Research Track” (ERT) for medical students interested in investigating the relationship between basic and clinical research.

Mobility goes hand in hand with quality for our University, as a way to keep up with the highest standard of medical education and excellence in research. 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 (Moving Beyond Mobility). 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 a virtual classroom focused on interactive teaching methods and establish a long distance connection with

their foreign peers at collaborating institutions. HU is strategically located in Milan and in Lombardy region, which is home to many internationally recognized HEI and the most important Italian hospitals. In addition, Lombardy, and particularly Milan, is also the heart of Italian business, providing a fertile ground to make the knowledge triangle work. This highly competitive environment represents both an exciting resource and a challenge for our University and for 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 to foster innovation and collaboration between HEI and industry.