



# ERASMUS+ 2021-2027



## Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

### **INTERNATIONAL (EU AND NON-EU) STRATEGY**

Internationalization plays a strategic role in UNICA for the progress of the University itself and for its pivotal role in the economic and cultural development of the metropolitan area of Cagliari and the entire Region of Sardinia. In fact, UNICA has identified among its priority strategic objectives, as indicated in the 2019-2021 integrated programming strategic document, that of increasing its international dimension, promoting opportunities for international mobility of students as well as of academic and administrative staff activating international study programmes that allow to train graduates capable of responding to the demands posed by the integration and globalization of society and labour markets.

Within the new internationalization strategy for the next seven years, participation in the Erasmus+ for UNICA focuses on increasing mobility of incoming and outgoing students, also through the simplification and standardization of the recognition procedures for studying and training activities carried out abroad and the digitalization of the mobility management procedures. The internationalization strategy will also foster and support the participation in cooperation projects which, by promoting opportunities for discussion and mobility between university professors and foreign universities, aims at the continuous improvement of the quality of the didactic offer and at the exchange of good practices, to increase the quality and equity of the education system as a whole.

Participation in the Erasmus+ program is intended above all to ensure that the following objectives, among others, are achieved:

- Respect of the measures that guarantee equal access to the most vulnerable, actively promoting mobility opportunities abroad for those who are in a disadvantaged condition for economic, social, cultural and physical disability reasons;
- Promotion of sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles to strengthen the knowledge and skills of the participants in facing the needs and problems that life poses daily.

The priority objectives of participation in the program are therefore inclusion and sustainability, two elements which are no longer negligible but are essential for the development of an inclusive university that wants to promote equal opportunities.

UNICA has joined the Erasmus+ Program since its inception and thanks to it and to other institutional initiatives aimed at supporting international mobility and cooperation, it has adopted appropriate policies at all university levels aimed at continuously improving the quality of the study programmes and increasing the number of courses/programmes taught in English in order to respond to the expectations of all those who benefit from the education service and giving life to a mechanism of cultural growth that has favoured the socio-economic development of the entire Sardinia. The tools that originated this development are the mobility for study and traineeship, the mobility for staff training and teaching staff, the cooperation between European and non-European institutions through strategic partnerships, the contribution given to the improvement of cooperation and development policies and the participation to international networks (e.g.: EUA, EUF, UNIMED, etc).

Of utmost importance in UNICA's internationalization strategy is its partnership in the European Digital UniverCity (EDUC) Alliance funded under the Erasmus "European Universities" initiative. The partnership in the European EDUC University allows UNICA to actively participate in the building of the European Education Area. The Consortium of 6 European universities located in 3 different areas of Europe, east, centre and south, with different and complementary characteristics, different

languages and different training needs, is the best tool to strengthen existing academic ties and develop cultural and social links thanks to the creation of a common space for knowledge, the development of intercultural and interdisciplinary skills, the learning of other European languages, the exchange of experiences and teaching methods and the increase of collaborations in the field of scientific research in various areas.

As a member of EDUC, UNICA's internationalization and modernization strategy partly coincides with the strategy of the entire consortium, whose fundamental objective is to establish, by 2022, an innovative cooperation between the six members thanks to the activation of a common sustainable structure and the adoption of digital tools to test innovative pedagogies, so that to reinforce and diversify the types of mobilities (also virtual mobility) of students and staff (target 50%).

The main objectives of UNICA in E+ for the next seven years can be summarized as follows:

- Implement actions aimed at increasing the participation in the Erasmus+ program of students, teachers and staff by promoting accessibility, participation and involvement of people with special needs in the educational processes, interacting in mutual respect beyond physical, intellectual or cultural differences, to shape a University that welcomes everyone. Continue to guarantee students and staff fair and transparent selection procedures, clear complaint procedures and award grants in a fair, transparent, coherent and documented way.
- Implement actions aimed at increasing the participation of those who are in greater economic difficulties, increasing the overall investments in social mobility, which will be achieved through an increase in scholarships, economic benefits and the offer of blended or short mobilities.
- Develop sensitivity towards sustainability to reach an integrated vision of the different dimensions of development, referring not only to the environmental one, but also to the economic and social development, promoting mobility for study related to the theme and organizing activities and events aimed at increasing awareness on the subject.
- Improve the overall offer of the Unica campus, also by leveraging new teaching technologies and new environments for study and learning, to offer students high quality support, spaces and services to better enjoy their daily experiences at the university.
- Increase the number of incoming students for mobility and of international students (from the current 3.5% to 5% by 2027) through the offer of quality teaching, a greater number of courses taught in English, especially at the level of master's degrees, and of international university programmes, joint and double degrees, of international doctorates, of short or blended mobilities, of international summer schools, that prepare students to enter the working and / or scientific world thanks to the achievement of high language and other soft skills and of internationalizing curricula.
- Continue to implement the system for the recognition of credits and activities accomplished during mobilities by both students and staff, especially with non-European partners where the evaluation systems differ the most. Ensure the full implementation of the ECTS system, in order to ensure the quality of mobility activities and the transparency of recognition procedures through the adoption of the appropriate transparency tools and the annual publication of the updated Catalogue of the academic offer on UNICA website.
- Increase the dematerialisation and digitalization of all the necessary documents for the management of mobilities, promoting and encouraging the use of a series of digital devices (Erasmus Without Paper and European Student Card) to simplify the procedures for recognizing mobility and to allow students to exchange information securely and ensure its transfer from one higher education institution to another.
- Strengthen international placements of undergraduates and recent graduates, leveraging partner companies to increase students' digital skills through digital internship experiences (e.g. application development, software, scripts, websites, data analysis, IT security, cloud computing, quantum and artificial intelligence, etc.) and, at the same time, develop the international dimension of the CLab UniCa (Contamination Lab) which exposes students to a stimulating environment for the development of entrepreneurial innovation projects. The goal is to promote the international dimension in the culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, interdisciplinarity and the diffusion of new learning models in collaboration with the international business.
- Increase educational exchanges and collaborations in the field of scientific research through the mobility of PhD students, teachers and researchers, the activation of an increasing number of cooperation projects in different academic sectors and developing a greater interaction between

centres and laboratories of high-quality research to transfer knowledge and technology on an international basis.

Guarantee the commitment of looking after the implementation and follow-up phases, enhancing, through a planned process, the transfer of the positive results of the programs and initiatives to the decision-makers of the local, regional and national systems, also through the implementation of an institutional, confidential forum for all university components, aimed at the discussion of issues related to the quality of E+ activities and thus convince individual end users to adopt and / or apply the results of actions and initiatives.

### **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**

UNICA has always been very active in adhering to the actions and initiatives of the E+ Program.

Since its inception, KA103 with its various mobility activities has been a pivotal tool for the development and modernization of UNICA's educational offer because through E+ our University has been able to offer its students and staff educational and training opportunities capable of strengthening the European identity and enable them to fully understand what the concept of 'European' entails in all its diversity.

It is therefore our intention to further enhance mobility initiatives in this European education area to allow a better response to the needs of the economy in terms of strengthening key competences and soft skills which, in a context of rapid and profound changes brought about by technological evolution and globalization, can become driving forces to promote employment and active citizenship. Recently, starting from 2016, UNICA has used its knowledge of the Erasmus program and its decades of experience in mobility, for the realization of the KA107 action, thus participating in the growth of the Program itself and its diffusion in non-European countries, especially in the African continent.

This action has allowed our University to guarantee students and staff an even wider and more diverse educational and didactic offer, to stimulate interculturality and new opportunities for research and collaboration, as well as to spread the European model of higher education and contribute to the development of a system of evaluation of results shared outside Europe and capable of facilitating academic exchanges.

UNICA is also very active in the Key Action 2 and is currently a partner in numerous Strategic Partnerships, Consortia, Knowledge Alliances, Capacity Building projects. Since last year UNICA has also been a partner of the EDUC European University and looks forward to this partnership with pride for the opportunity it gives its partners to create a truly European university that can cooperate easily beyond respective borders and compete internationally.

UNICA undertake to implement the following activities and initiatives to improve its participation in Erasmus+:

Publish and promote knowledge of the European Charter for Higher Education at all levels and in all sectors of the University in order to facilitate its application.

Spread the knowledge of the European Charter for Higher Education among non-European partners, so as to promote its principles and encourage their implementation.

Increase the quality and quantity of Inter-Institutional agreements and collaborations with other European and non-European universities by reflecting the quality requirements of the Erasmus Charter for all organizational and managerial aspects of mobility and agreeing on a series of quantitative and qualitative measures designed for the mobility.

Encourage, in collaboration with the S.I.A. (Services Centre for Inclusion and Learning), an increase in mobility numbers for people with learning difficulties or with physical disabilities, so as to promote the accessibility, participation and involvement of people with special needs in the educational processes and foster a University of hospitality that belongs to everyone and is for everyone.

Promote the new forms of short and blended mobility, increasing the University's overall investments in social mobility, above all to increase the participation in the mobility experiences of people with economic difficulties who can thus obtain those specific, technical and professional skills that lead to a stable employment and satisfactory jobs.

Support the business vocation of students thanks to an economically advantageous and quality assistance offered by the University Contamination Lab, through free mentoring, networking and contamination experiences aimed at the development of entrepreneurial innovation projects.

Propose training courses and awareness-raising events on sustainability agenda 2030, in order to allow all E+ participants to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, active citizenship and the enhancement of cultural diversity.

Promote, through international cooperation, ways of enhancing the pedagogical skills of teachers and their skills on sustainable development in all its dimensions (economic, social, environmental and institutional) that will make them capable of carrying out educational and training activities for the benefit of the least developed Countries.

Activate a highly international and attractive overall educational offer especially for foreign students through the activation of dual and joint degree programmes (especially master's degrees), international doctoral programmes, the increasing number of courses taught in English and international programmes fully offered in English, so that to also improve the Internationalization at home.

Periodically and timely update the course catalogue on the institutional website to allow incoming students a rational and thoughtful choice of their studies.

Regularly update the database of placements available in order to favour a weighted choice of the most useful internship experience for completing the academic training.

Guarantee support to participants in mobility from the moment of selection to the preparation of the necessary documents (LA, Visas, Residence permits, insurance), to the search for accommodation and to social and cultural integration, up to the recognition of the activities carried out during the mobility experience.

Assure the recognition of the credits acquired and the activities carried out during the mobility quickly and with an automated procedure. To this aim UNICA has already approved and implemented recognition procedures in line with the ECTS Users' Guide together with the elaboration and annual updating of the grade distribution tables for each study programme to be used for the recognition at home and for inclusion in the transcript of records.

Ensure adequate linguistic preparation for incoming and outgoing participants, also through teaching in a blended mode, in Italian, English and other European languages in order to ensure that all incoming students reach a good level of knowledge of the Italian language and have a good knowledge of at least one other foreign language in addition to their mother tongue (or their mother tongues);

Digitalize the procedures for international mobility as much as possible also with the publicity and active participation in the Erasmus+ App and European Student Card Initiative tools.

The actions in which UNICA participates and will participate in the near future within the E+ represent a crucial and essential tool for the realization of its internationalization and modernization strategy which would not be otherwise possible.

Within the framework of a European Education Area, it is fundamental to work on the collaboration between European universities which the Erasmus Program makes possible through the numerous actions available. With the aim of adapting its offer to the needs of contemporary society and above all to the training needs of its students, UNICA will continue to promote and support international mobility activities for study and training and cooperation in research and teaching, as well as staff training, adapting them to the new societal challenges and to the new ways that will arise from them.

In particular, the new social situation created with the current Covid-19 pandemic is likely to influence the future management of life in general and international exchange activities in particular. UNICA is ready to face this new challenge with the available tools it has and with the development of the new tools that will become necessary. Moreover, the partners in EDUC aim at creating, in a short time, a digital tool to share teaching and research activities and the materials necessary for the training of students and staff that will allow the exchange of knowledge, experiences and skills and intercultural and interdisciplinary training also at a distance, that will benefit the entire academic community and the entire society in which the European University of Education operates and also all those who will be partners of Unica in Erasmus+ activities.

## **EXPECTED IMPACT OF OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAMME ON THE MODERNISATION OF OUR INSTITUTION**

### **Objective n. 1: Increase the number of participants in the E+ Program actions and initiatives**

Qualitative Indicators: high level of user satisfaction; Quantitative Indicators: 30% increase in number of people in mobility; Basic Data: number of people in mobility compared to the previous academic year; Target: 5% annual increase; Impact on the Institution:

Implementation of integrated institutional strategies for social inclusion, gender equality and success in studies (years 2021-2026);

Reduction of the gap between the skills that Sardinia needs and the skills it has. Through physical and virtual mobility in EDUC and Erasmus+, UNICA graduates will be able to take advantage of a range of transversal skills (problem solving and other soft skills, digital skills etc.) necessary to meet the needs imposed by a rapidly changing world (years 2023-2026);

Considerably increase participation of UNICA teachers who, through international mobility, exploit their pedagogical skills and human relations skills to carry out educational and training activities on environmental sustainability in developing countries, especially in the least developed countries (years 2025-2026);

### **Objective n. 2: Increase overall investments in social mobility**

Qualitative Indicators: measuring progress in the collection of dedicated resources; Quantitative Indicators: quantitative evaluation of financial, structural and human resources to be used for carrying out the program activities; Basic data: public and private co-financing in the previous three years; Target: 1% annual increase; Impact on the Institution:

Involvement of the University's governance in promoting the active and conscious participation of all members of the university community in the pursuit of clear and shared improvement objectives (years 2021-2026);

Participation of the other institutions of the local and regional context (Municipality of Cagliari, Autonomous Region of Sardinia, ERSU, Fondazione di Sardegna) in the development of joint and effective system actions (years 2023-2026);

Strengthening of fund raising thanks to the support of Erasmus alumni and local organizations for a wider collection of financial, structural and human resources available to ensure the development of the planned activities and the respect of the commitments undertaken in the medium and long term (years 2025-2026).

### **Objective n. 3: Develop sustainability commitments.**

Qualitative Indicators: High level of user satisfaction measured with a specific questionnaire and assessment of the social impact of investments for this objective; Quantitative Indicators: number of training courses, research and events with an international dimension, on the subject; Basic data: number of courses, events and research activated in the last three years through the EDUC and ERASMUS+ networks; Target: 1.5% annual increase; Impact on the Institution:

Establishment of a governance process capable of ensuring the integration of sustainability into the University's functions and processes that pertain to internationalization (years 2021-2026);

Creation of a study and work environment based on the values of inclusion, gender equality, enhancement of differences, equity and non-discrimination and where financial aid is available for students from low-income backgrounds (years 2023-2026);

Implementation and support of initiatives that encourage the transfer of knowledge and good practices to the partners of Erasmus+ activities to maximize the impact, effectiveness and scope of UNICA's actions related to sustainability objectives (years 2023-2026).

### **Objective n. 4: Modernization of the UNICA Campus**

Qualitative Indicators: Sample surveys to be carried out with Students, Teachers, Incoming staff. Quantitative Indicators: number of incoming students; Basic Data: number of incoming mobility students in the last academic year; Target: 5% annual increase; Impact on the Institution:

Introduction of new teaching and learning models with the use of digital tools for the organization of online courses or virtual classes that can offer personalized experiences, even remotely, for the benefit of students, teachers and staff (years 2021-2026);

Adoption of a structured management capable of developing specific reception services (tutoring, linguistic mediation services, hospitality services) and guaranteeing health protection of participants

through the creation of learning environments that enhance the experience of international students, protagonists of increasingly diversified forms of mobility (years 2021-2026);

Improvement of the quality of services for the integration of international students with particular attention to the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, providing dedicated learning environments that are safe, non-violent and inclusive for all (years 2021-2026).

**Objective n. 5: Increase the international dimension of the University and its attractiveness**

Qualitative Indicators: higher level of satisfaction of users benefiting from the international training offer; Quantitative Indicators: Number of international bachelor degree and/or master's degree programmes with joint, double or multiple qualification; Basic Data: number of international degree programmes in the last academic year; Target: 10% annual increase; Impact on the institution:

Internationalization and sustainability of the training offer over time with the construction of courses that have learning outcomes and relevant contents in an international context (years 2021-2026);

Considerably increasing the number of scholarships available for students from developing countries globally, and especially for the benefit of young international protection holders who intend to continue their studies and research in the country of asylum and access high school education (years 2023-2026);

Presence in UNICA of a vibrant international community in which the E+ program acts as a multiplier of other initiatives (international seminars, summer and winter schools, international doctorates, joint dissertations, actions for refugees and for less developed countries) (2025- 2026).

**Objective n. 6: Academic recognition**

Qualitative Indicators: satisfaction questionnaire for students on academic recognition; Quantitative Indicators: number of ECTS achieved abroad for ERASMUS mobility/Number of months spent in mobility. Basic data: number of recognitions approved in a standardized way; Target: 1% annual increase in credits achieved abroad compared to the figure of the last academic year. Impact on the Institution:

Revision of the University guidelines for the recognition of study and traineeship activities abroad, introduction of the recognition of other learning activities and allowing the transfer and accumulation of credits acquired in various types of mobility (including distance/blended learning and the "free mover") - (years 2021-2026);

Digitalization of recognition procedures for learning activities through the implementation of the three tools Erasmus Without Paper, Erasmus+ App and the European Student Card (years 2021-2026);

Publish and regularly update information relating to the grading system of the institution and to the grade distribution tables of all study programs to ensure that students receive clear and transparent information on the procedures for the recognition and conversion of grades (years 2021-2026);

**Objective n. 7: Digitalization of Erasmus+ processes**

Qualitative Indicators: Evaluation of the effects generated directly by the new process for the benefit of participants and of the UNICA system; Quantitative Indicators: number of Erasmus+ processes fully digitized; Basic data: Erasmus+ student career managed through the application Esse3 CINECA.; Target: 100% digitalization in 6 years; Impact on the institution:

Simplification of administrative processes through the digitalization of all the procedures in use for Erasmus+ by ensuring that the Esse3 CINECA career management system connects, rapidly and safely, to the IT systems of the other universities through Erasmus Without Paper (EWP), for the exchange of electronic data relating to students (years 2021-2026);

Completion of the ongoing experimentation of the European Student Card through the strategic partnership Educards, coordinated by the University of Rennes 1, of which Unica is a partner together with the other European Universities of EDUC. (years 2022-2026);

Promotion of the use of the Erasmus+ Mobile App tool through a digital identification that will simplify the completion of the Erasmus administrative procedures and facilitate the dialogue with the Europass system and other European tools. Students will have the opportunity to easily find the necessary information for the implementation of their mobility and to carry out the entire online procedure throughout the European territory, access online courses and services and get the rapid and automatic recognition of learning activities (years 2022-2026).

**Objective n. 8: Cooperation University/international companies**

Qualitative Indicators: Appreciation of traineeships and business creation activities with an international dimension. Percentage of participants who have developed skills in ICT and in business

creation.; Quantitative Indicators: Percentage of participants who have carried out a traineeship in digital skills; Basic Data: number of students, recent graduates and PhD students participating in the outgoing or incoming Erasmus traineeship in the last academic year; Target: 10% annual increase; Impact on the Institution:

Foster an increasingly marked relationship between universities and businesses to develop the new digital skills required by the global job market and increase the number of university students who achieve the skills - technical and professional – required for employment and entrepreneurship (years 2021-2026);

Contribute, through participation in the activities of the UNICA Contamination Lab training programme, to the creation of a pool of highly qualified people who are able to develop a vocation for business creation and possibly develop a start-up (years 2022-2026);

Support the further development and testing of teaching methods, especially for recent graduate students and doctoral students, to foster creativity and innovation (years 2023-2026).

#### **Objective n. 9: Cooperation for innovation and knowledge transfer**

Qualitative Indicators: High level of satisfaction on the collaborations in progress and on the results of these collaborations; Quantitative Indicators: number of KA2 and KA3 projects funded under the Erasmus+ program; Basic Data: reference to the same indicator as the average of the previous 3 academic years; Target: 10% increase; Impact on the Institution:

Through the European University EDUC promote high quality education and research, thanks to the strengthening of the correlation of teaching, research and innovation and to the transfer of knowledge and skills, especially of a digital nature, to transfer innovative practices at local, regional, national and European level (years 2021-2026);

Training and updating of the staff involved in the project management and in supporting staff and students who intend to participate to the projects, in order to facilitate procedures and reduce the preparation time for applications (years 2023-2026);

Dissemination of project activities from the early stages to its end on a dedicated page of the university's website and on its social networks, in order to maximize the impacts on participants, institutions, local stakeholders and the entire European education area. The dedicated web page will contain a summary of the project activities and a list of the participating staff at UNICA, with the link to the project's official website. The dissemination activity will include updating the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform for the entire life cycle of the project (years 2025-2026).

#### **Objective n. 10: Monitoring, evaluation and dissemination of results**

Qualitative Indicators: monitoring and evaluation of activities, with interviews and questionnaires aimed at verifying the satisfaction and correspondence of experiences to initial expectations; Quantitative Indicators: number of monitoring, evaluation and final reports. Target: 3 annual reports; Impact on the Institution:

Promote, in the university, the principle of achieving the objectives through the phases of programming, monitoring, self-assessment and application of corrective actions, evaluation of the achieved results and the actions taken (Carry out annually, in the period 2022-2026);

monitoring, to verify the progress of actions and initiatives, comparing the verified final result with the expected one at the planning stage and make an evaluation, using this information to find out the reason why things function or not, identify possible alternatives, see unexpected effects, start processes aimed at improvement. (Carry out annually, in the period 2022-2026);

prepare the social reporting annually at the end of activities and proceed to the publication and dissemination of the results achieved through comparable indicators and data, in a dimension of transparency and sharing. Promote the improvement of activities for the benefit of the entire university community and the surrounding territory. The final report will determine whether our University's participation in the program has actually achieved inclusion and sustainability. (Carry out annually, in the period 2022-2026).