

## **Declaración de Política Europea (DPE)/Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS) Erasmus+ - ECHE 2020**

University of Burgos (UBU), created 26 years ago, is a relatively young, middle sized, public and comprehensive institution whose Strategic Plan considers internationalization as one of the milestones to sustain a modern, active and attractive university.

Internalisation is key for achieving a quality teaching and better employability of graduates; it's a must for excellence in research and innovation and helps to reach a multicultural and open-minded campus and citizenship. UBU is the only public university in the city and, therefore, very much linked to the city, to the local industry and to the province of Burgos and internationalization at university has impact on the society.

By participating in all Erasmus Key actions, UBU aims at achieving the internationalization and modernization of the institution, as a whole, in line with the objectives settled in the "University Strategic Plan" that sets the guidelines of the institution and that, on a big scale, include most of the principles of the Erasmus ECHE. In line with the Policy stated in the Strategic Plan, additionally, UBU acquired, in 2018, the commitment with the European Commission to adopt the "European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" -Charter and Code-regulated by the so-called "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers"-process. Additionally, UBU has issued an strategic Plan for Research and Innovation, 2019-2024 that includes a line of work named "International Science" whose objectives include giving continuity and support to participation of UBU in International projects in line with the new Horizon Europe. This strategic plan has 3 lines of work, namely: excellence, interuniversity collaboration and internationalization.

The international strategy for the next years includes continuing and strengthening the Erasmus actions, already successfully implemented in the previous years. We want to continue and open new areas in actions such as, mobility KA1actions, building new KA2 strategic and cooperation partnerships and coordinating KA3 actions, but UBU also wishes to move forward and aims at participating in new project such as Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees and being an active partner in one or more European Universities projects.

UBU wishes to develop new initiatives such a "Blended Mobility", is already involved in taking steps towards on-line mobility, and is active in initiatives such as "Service Learning" or internationalization at home. An important achievement in this respect is the "Certificate of International Merits" which has been implemented at UBU for over 2 years now. This Certificate, available for any UBU student, includes a compilation of any international experience carried out by the student, both on mobility as at home. All of them being new strategies that will strengthening its internationalization.

All sectors of University are somehow involved and UBU wants all members of the different university sectors to feel part of the European Education Area.

Erasmus will be essential to achieve these goals. UBU has wide experience where mobility is concerned and we have developed a solid structure to support mobility that has earned very good

rates of satisfaction according to the annual surveys. However, there are new objectives in the mobility actions, for example, reinforcing traineeships and international credit mobility.

Erasmus mobility remains the keystone of internationalization, our outgoing student mobility rates are good (ca. 4%) but the goal is to increase this rate with special focus on students with fewer opportunities; incoming students provide an international experience at home and objective is increasing the numbers.

Staff mobility is also essential, both for academic as for training purposes. Staff mobility for teaching purposes contributes to the internationalization at home and provides academics new opportunities to exchange expertise and to initiate partnerships. Teacher mobility has important interaction with research activities.

Training mobility of administrative staff is important to involve in internationalization some sectors of the community least visible. Another target is increasing mobility with new countries, and to this purpose, we want to increase our international credit mobility projects. UBU has built some very strong partnerships with north American, South American and Asian partners, and it will be desirable to involve them in Erasmus projects. We would like to pursue and strengthen our incipient cooperation with some new geographical areas, such as Western Asia or Northern Africa.

Another goal is to encourage PhD mobility and post-graduate mobility at Master's level. The duration of many Master's programs in Spain (1 year) allows fewer mobility opportunities in this study level. Blended Mobility will allow new chances and impulse postgraduate mobility. UBU offers a number of on-line and blended learning degrees (under and postgraduate), and blended mobility will adjust very well to this course structure.

Blended mobility will make mobility also an option to many students in disadvantaged situations, for either economic, health, or working reason.

Erasmus mobility has also encouraged the number of courses taught in English or English Friendly courses at UBU, giving an impulse to internationalization and involving in the project the "Academic affairs" area and the Schools. It is our goal to pursue with this policy of internationalization of the academic programs. In line with this policy, an impulse has been given to improving the knowledge of English of students and staff. Language courses are provided in a variety of levels and formats (presently, Online, blended) pursuing a better preparation for a fully international university that will be part of the European Education Area.

Partners are essential part of internationalization. Building reliable partnerships is key to a successful internationalization. Partners often contact for Erasmus initiatives after successful collaboration in previous projects. International Research projects are a source of stable and reliable partnerships.

UBU has been coordinator of a number of KA2 projects in areas such as STEM, Engineering, Migrants and less favourable groups, Inclusive education in High Schools or Learning opportunities for impaired people and has been involved in strategic partnerships. UBU is also involved in two KA3 projects, supporting policy reforms and development.

The "Office for International Projects" handles these projects; the Office is part of the KTO and depending on the Vice-rector for Research, Knowledge Transfer and Employability. The Office gives support to initiatives and promotes partnerships for cooperation. The goals for the next years are

both continuing being involved in KA2 partnerships for Cooperation, Knowledge Alliances, Skill Alliances, Strategic Partnerships for Youth, Strategic Partnerships for vocational training and in KA3 Policy reforms actions. Nevertheless, UBU wishes to be involved also in Partnerships for Innovation and in Partnerships for Excellence, both, in European Universities and in Erasmus Mundus Joint Master degrees. The participation in Erasmus Universities and in Erasmus Mundus Projects will be the first experiences in these projects, participation as an active partner in a project seen as more plausible, than as coordinator, considering the size of our university and previous experience.

Some contacts and were made with partner universities in the “Erasmus Universities” previous call, but the submission of the project has been postponed and it is envisaged that it can be a reality in following years.

An important goal is to contribute actively to the building of the European Education Area, making internationalization, by means of real or virtual mobility, available to all students, having a university community able to use more than one language, with credits and degrees compatible in all countries, developing digital skills and promoting innovative learning opportunities. Quality remains an overall objective where internalization is concerned and UBU will try to keep up with the highest standards.

Overall goal is making of UBU a highly internationalised university, where students, fluent in, at least, a second language, will have opportunities to go on mobility programmes with full recognition of studies and /or internships. Where all students have international experiences, both involving mobility but also at home, such as, participating in online mobility experiences, socializing with international students. Where students, become Ambassadors when they are abroad and become a welcoming involved host for inbound students when at home. Students, aware that their employability has been increased due to his/her international curriculum. Students that feel that they study in an international university and feel part of the European project. Students becoming feeling European and aware of multiculturalism and difference. Students that become capable professionals ready to work in different environments and grateful to their Home University and to Europe for the opportunities he/she were granted.

This International university that UBU wishes to be, has capable and international oriented teaching staff, fluent in a second language, ready to teach in English, involved in international projects. Teachers sharing innovative experiences with colleagues from different countries, leading cutting-edge international research, and providing international teaching experiences, teaching abroad and supporting incoming teaching colleagues, and contributing to create a European Education Area, feeling part of a university that provides opportunities to develop their international potential.

An international university also requires Administrative support, and to make a university International, administrative services need to be open to internationalization and capable of being able to adapt to new international procedures and work in a multicultural environment and interact with partner universities.

University of Burgos plans to take part in all Erasmus Key Actions in the next 7 years. Implementation of the different actions is foreseen as follows.

KA103 - Mobility of students and staff: Erasmus Mobility has been implemented at UBU for many years and there is a structure in order to support Erasmus mobility and to ensure that all Erasmus principles are met. Mobility actions are managed at the International Relations Office (IRO) under the supervision of the Vice-rectorate for Internationalization, Mobility and Cooperation. The IRO is responsible for applying for funding in the yearly Erasmus projects to the NA, after careful budget forecast.

- Academic Recognition and OLA: in order to guarantee full academic recognition, internal rules apply. A structure of Erasmus coordinators, School coordinators and Institutional coordinator has been set, so that the procedure is clearly established and the student and the administration of each School knows how to proceed with the LA. In future, UBU will implement the OLA as soon as it is available and for this purpose, it is likely that the existing rules will need to be adapted and it is our plan to do so.

- Interinstitutional agreements and Erasmus Dashboard. For KA 103 This procedure has already started and departments and Erasmus coordinators are now sending their proposals to renew or to sign new agreements to the IRO. Proposals are reviewed by the School coordinators so as to make sure that the agreement is suitable for the School. The IRO undertakes the further procedure, contacting the partner. Erasmus Dashboard will be used for the first time, as soon as it is operative. No student mobility for studies or staff mobility for teaching is allowed without the signature of the agreement. For KA107, agreements are signed after the project has been awarded.

- Selection of Outgoing Mobility: Every Mobility for studies and/or staff: starts with a call for applications that includes all Erasmus principles, and the award criteria are based on merit and non-discrimination. Language requirements apply, according to the information provided by host institution. Information on supplementary financial grants for students or staff with special needs is included. Staff mobility for training, aimed at new innovative teaching techniques is set aside in a separate call for applications in order to encourage this activity.

-Language support to outgoing mobility: students are encouraged to use OLS. In addition, UBU provides additional language preparation. Outgoing staff for teaching purposes can receive individual language support to prepare their teaching, students are offered language preparation courses before departure. Previous language knowledge is required for short mobilities and when language requirements at host institution cannot be achieved without previous knowledge.

-Information and preparation of mobility: each out-going individual receives detailed information for preparation of the mobility: insurance, travels, contact persons, visa, etc., either at Information sessions (Erasmus students for studies) or on an individual basis (Student mobility for Traineeships or staff mobility) and information packages are provided on line, following the environmental friendly policy, with both, general and personalized information. Documents and information are also available on the website.

-Monitoring : the IRO and the academic coordinators keep trace of the students during mobility. ORI sees that all documents both for students and for staff are issued and signed on time, proceeds to the payment of grants. After mobility, documents are also handled at the IRO and sends the students grades or certifications to the Schools for inclusion in the ToRs.

Incoming Mobility for Students: To support incoming mobility, the IRO handles nominations and applications, arranges signature of the Learning Agreements, issues admission letters enrolls international students, and issues and sends the ToR to home institution.

-Support, language preparation, integration and monitoring: The IRO provides support and full information about insurance, visa, accommodation and practical matters prior to mobility. Language preparation is provided by means of a crash intensive Spanish course for beginners, prior to the semester, and language courses during the semester. An orientation week with informative, orientation and activities is organised every semester. A Buddy system is provided to all incoming students. Integration activities pursuing integration in the regular campus life, such as providing free Sports card, or for cultural activities, seminars, etc, are also on the program. Monitoring is carried out by coordinators and by IRO. Support to students with special needs is coordinated with the Unit to support students and staff with special needs. Both offices follow very closely these situations so as to provide all necessary support.

-Course catalogue: An English version of the course catalogue is updated and published on the website every year. The catalogue includes detailed information on contents, language of instruction, semester, ECTS, assessment method. The course catalogue also provides information on the courses taught in English and courses “English Friendly” so that the incoming student and home institution has all information available at the time of preparing the LA.

-Incoming staff mobility: Each incoming staff member is assigned a “tutor” that will help the staff member with orientation and cultural issues. The teaching arrangements are organised by the corresponding hosting departments and the IRO provides information and support in practical matters. The Vice-rector supports these visits paying for campus lunch to incoming staff and their counterparts at UBU. Willing to encourage incoming mobility for Training, an Erasmus Staff Week is organised by the IRO every year. These staff weeks are published in the “I-Motion platform” the content includes, a Spanish course, workshops, and meetings with sister-departments, seminars and a cultural program in the evenings.

KA-107 Projects: UBU has coordinated some Erasmus International Credit Mobility projects. One of the objectives of our institution is to be active in more projects with involvement in new geographical areas. Mobility activities within these projects are implemented using the existing structure for KA 103 projects and with similar procedures.

As to the management of the projects, these are handled and coordinated by the IRO. Call for applications, selection of students and staff within these projects, are followed very closely by UBU as the project coordinator.

KA-108- Consortium: UBU is a partner in a consortium that manages student mobility for Traineeships within the consortium. It is expected that this consortium will have continuity. For the implementation of this mobility, similar arrangements and support is provided to students, but the consortium handles selection and grants.

Digital Mobility Management: steps have already been taken towards adapting the existing Mobility Platforms to the new Erasmus digital management. It is envisaged to implement the OLA, the Erasmus Card as soon as possible and to make students use regularly the Erasmus App.

Blended Mobility: UBU considers Blended Mobility as an opportunity to increase mobility at postgraduate level and to provide mobility options to students with fewer mobility opportunities; therefore, UBU will try to implement Blended mobility in a short period of time.

Erasmus Virtual Exchange: UBU also aims at exploring and being active in projects involving virtual mobility. UBU counts with some on-line degrees and some blended degrees and is interested in becoming involved in virtual exchange experiences. It is encouraged for teaching staff to attend to Erasmus Staff Mobility activities for innovative teaching experiences, namely: COILS and Online exchange experiences that will mean a significant contribution to internationalization of the curricula and to internationalization at home.

KA2 – Cooperation for Innovation and the exchange of good practises: UBU also aims at being active under KA2 projects and stablishing partnerships to cooperate, develop, and share practices and innovative approaches.

KA3: Support to policy development and cooperation: UBU has been coordinator and a partner in 2 KA3 projects. The objective in to continuing participation in these projects, supporting initiatives and encouraging participation and involvement of teachers and research groups.

Partnerships for Innovation and Partnership for Excellence: European Universities and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees: UBU aims at moving forward and plans to be part in a partnership for excellence and be active in the project of European Universities and to Erasmus Mundus Master. At this stage, UBU in the process of finding a suitable partnership, some steps have been taken and there are some options that need to be further discussed.

The “European Projects Unit”, will be in charge of implementing these actions. This unit is part of the Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) and is linked to the Research Management Department. This Unit has been successful in managing a number of projects in the fields of Education, Social sciences, sciences and Humanities.

The KTO is permanently fine tuned with the novelties of the Erasmus+ webpage and the National Agency releases. The KTO (European Project Office) has a frontline for: Attending Infodays. Subscription to Newsletters, Consulting on a regular basis the Erasmus+ webpage, Alert to open calls, Detection of alignments between capacities of the research teams and the priorities of the programme. With these actions the KTO promote and alert the academics of the opportunities offered by the cooperation projects.

The KTO has also a backline which supports the preparation of proposals and management of awarded projects as coordinators. To achieve these goals following tasks are developed: Dissemination of the calls; organization of internal Infodays and workshops (special focus on guidelines for drafting proposals). Creation of Templates for concept notes and for budgets. Partner search and support in proposal draft elaboration, Submission of application form. Preparation of partnership agreements, Organization of kick off meetings, Drafting of templates for agendas, certificates and other documents to be used within the development of the Project, Monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of the content of the Project, Manage of platform of results and Mobility Tool, Contact with National Agency, Participation in Erasmus Days.

Each proposal or awarded Project has a Scientific coordinator and a Project manager so a constant evaluation and feedback bolster a correct implementation of the projects. Furthermore, the development of the projects and the back support to the principal investigator (coordinator

of the Project or a partner within the consortium) counts as well with the accounting follow-up of other units.

The objective is to encourage participation in further alliances and partnerships for Cooperation and the exchange of practices. These partnerships allow academics to share good practices and innovative approaches that contribute to further internationalize the curricula, to motivate the academic staff and from which, in the end, students will also benefit.

The envisaged impact of Erasmus+ is high. Erasmus remains one of the milestones of internationalization at university of Burgos and students and staff are aware of the international opportunities that provided by Erasmus.

Erasmus mobility of students for study has increased constantly at our institution, despite decreasing number of overall students. Circa 4% of the undergraduate students go on an Erasmus International mobility and ca. 90% of the students' applications are successful. Therefore the need work on having more students applying. The target is to reach a rate of 5% of students going on Erasmus mobility and we wish to maintain the 90% rate of successful applications. We expect that Blended Mobility will contribute to allowing student mobility to groups in disadvantaged positions.

The number of students going on Erasmus traineeships slowly increases every year but the objective is to give an impulse to this mobility; in this field, the goal is to reach an increase of 40% to 50 % in the numbers of outgoing students for Traineeships. We plan to give an impulse to this action for its significant contribution to the employability of our students and hope to gradually increase the numbers and double the number of mobilities over the next 7 years. The envisaged strategy is to agree on exchange of traineeships opportunities with European partners so as to facilitate more opportunities to our local students while providing placements to incoming students.

Increasing the number of incoming students is another target. For this purpose, we are working on providing more courses in English, since the language of instruction is a clear barrier to mobility. It is not an easy task for smaller institutions but we have been able to offer a number of courses in English of over 42 ECTS in a semester in 3 areas of knowledge. The list grows every year. The challenge is significant, since the courses we offer in English are always regular courses for local students and no specific programs for mobility students. Our realistic goal will be to increase incoming student mobility in a 25%

In addition, Staff mobility will also be encouraged. The aim is to gradually increase the number of outgoing staff, both teaching as administrative and for teaching as for training mobility in 40% to 50% over the next years. Also incoming staff mobility will be encouraged and it is desirable that an increase of 30% will be reached.

Participation in KA107 International Credit Mobility has been discrete, so far, a few projects with limited mobility rates. Our expectations are to give a big impulse to this action and implement KA107 with more countries and more mobilities, always according to our size and capacity. We believe that an increase of 75% over the next 7 years is realistic.

Erasmus Virtual Exchange, UBU is presently involved in initiatives such as COILS, a number of teachers have attended seminars on Virtual Exchange and Collaborative Teaching (within the

Erasmus Staff Training action) and are becoming more and more involved in this new concept. Staff from the International Office is also attending Seminars on Virtual Exchange. Therefore, we expect to continue with these initiatives and the target is that a 75% of the degrees at University will provide some type of Virtual Mobility or Virtual Exchange in the following years.

In order to achieve these goals, UBU will pursue working to reach quality levels as high as possible and will continue supporting participants and improve both aspects as much as possible. The annual reports and feedback received from students and staff are a very useful tool to evaluate quality and support provided.

The final goal in mobility by the end of the period, is that international mobility and internationalization at home will mean that at the end of a degree, at least 90% of the students have had one or more international experiences that will be reflected in their Transcript of Records and in their "Certificate of International Merits".

#### Participation in Projects:

As for Participation in Partnerships for Cooperation and in KA3 actions, where UBU has some successful experience, the goal is participation in more projects and involving new areas of study, searching successful partnerships. However, the biggest challenges are set in new projects where there was no previous participation but for which UBU now feels prepared and can contribute with new ideas and involvement. UBU has set the objective of participating in Partnerships for Excellence: European Universities and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degrees, and in Partnerships for Innovation for the first time. The aim is to join a partnership, being an active partner and allowing to further internationalization of university.

The KTO and Office for International Project (EUBU) has set an impulse to participation in projects as a mean to increase the number of researchers involved in European R+D activities by supporting their participation and achieving higher quality levels and, thus, bringing UBU success rate of the projects submitted to a better position. The strategic plans for Research defining the goals in the framework of participation in European projects, the tasks and goals for the next 7 years are well defined in different lines of action:

Line of action 1: Impulse and support to participation: The objective is increasing the number of researchers involved in projects and achieving higher rates of success.

Objective 1.1.: Diagnosis and positioning, stablishing strategies adapted to the different research profiles, to this purpose the task is providing information about programs and calls.

Objective 1.2: Providing added value to the proposals: the EUBU will assist research groups in preparation of projects adding value in the elaboration. The tasks here are to provide advice on participation requirements of applications and final review prior to submission, and advice on critical aspects, such as novelty or impact. Assistance in budgetary matters, provided by EUBU in collaboration with other administrative units.

Line of action 2: strategic national and regional aggregations: with the aim to encourage local enterprises to participation in the program.

Objective 2.1. Impulse to R+D collaboration with the companies of the region, in the framework of a regional strategy.

Objective 2.2. Reinforcement of relations with regional professionals in management of international projects aiming at pursuing cooperation, sharing information, finding opportunities, optimizing means and creating synergies.

Line of action 3: Management of approved project: a suitable management of R+D international projects meeting technical requirements and ensuring an optimized use of funds.

Objective 3.1. Launching of projects -Objective 3.2. Economic management and justification of funds

Further activities carried out in order to implement participation in projects, are Dissemination activities, preparation Workshops, where tips and advice on project preparation are discussed and individual assistance is provided.

In conclusion, the overall participation in all actions, mobility, virtual exchange, virtual mobility, internationalization of the curricula, participation in projects will contribute to a further internationalization and modernization of University of Burgos.