

ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY

2021-2027 ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

1.1 Erasmus activities included in EPS

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility

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

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

1.2 ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS): ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGY

With reference to its mission, vision and strategic goals, Istanbul Aydın University (IAU) has grown rapidly in recent years, with commitment to all dimensions of higher education, teaching, research and service to society.

As holder of Turquality labe(the national program whose goal is to facilitate and support the success of Turkish brands in the international arena), IAU has always put a strong emphasis on internationalization, which appears extensively in the new Strategic Plan of the University and is active in academic collaborations, Erasmus+ program mobilities, short-term international courses, international marketing, international student and support services with 450+ cooperation protocols with worldwide partners, participating also in international quality assurance efforts, such as EUA IEP and QS.

IAU, identifying Erasmus+ as one of the main cores of its internationalization strategy, has been awarded ever since its foundation in 2007 with the LLP-Erasmus Charter for HE and as of 2014 with the Erasmus+ ECHE allowing different mobilities under KA1 with partner and programme countries and participation in several KA2,HORIZON2020 projects.

Through the new programme, IAU expects to reach its internationalization goals and to contribute to creating a more integrated and inclusive European society. Apart from BAP, TUBITAK and ISKA funding sources, Erasmus+ funding will help IAU increase its number of mobile participants in KA1, KA2 and KA3 projects to %5 of its graduates by 2027.

By signing the new ECHE, IAU undertakes to:

- Respect in full the principles of non-discrimination set out in the Programme and ensure equal access and opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds, with particular attention given to the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities, regardless of one's sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation
- Ensure full automatic recognition for all completed activities of study mobility and, where possible, traineeships in terms of credits awarded (ECTS or compatible system), including during blended mobility. Ensure the inclusion of satisfactorily completed study and / or traineeship/ blended mobility activities in the final record of student achievements (Diploma Supplement or equivalent).

- Charge no fees, in the case of credit mobility, to incoming mobile students for tuition, registration, examinations or access to laboratory and library facilities.
- Ensure the quality of the mobility activities and of the cooperation projects throughout the application and implementation phases
- Support the EU's renewed agenda for HE and contribute towards a European Education Area, implementing the priorities of the Programme:
 1. By undertaking the necessary steps to implement digital mobility management in line with the technical standards of the European Student Card Initiative.
 2. By promoting environmentally friendly practices in all activities related to the Programme.
 3. By encouraging the participation of individuals with fewer opportunities in the Programme.
 4. By promoting civic engagement and encouraging students and staff to get involved as active citizens before, during and after their participation in a mobility or project.

Istanbul Aydın University adopts an understanding of excellence in education. Our vision is to become a higher education institution where sustainable innovation prevails and individuals who will be beneficial to humanity are educated by gaining vocational competences in education programs keeping up with the changes. IAU strongly encourages cooperation, mobility based also on the Magna Charta Universitarium principles and lifelong learning. Eventually, our aim is to build human potential resources by preparing young academic specialists for taking up jobs at any time and in any EU country. For this purpose, we intend to keep concluding active Erasmus+ partnerships with EU and non-EU HEI, and to participate actively in the international student exchange programs that enable students to gain additional soft and hard skills, as well as prepare them for more mobilities into the European labor market.

IAU's research objectives are focused on serving the industry both in local and global scale by giving great importance to professional training. To achieve both objectives of research and graduates with internationally acknowledged professional competence, IAU took measures to enhance the quality and the standards of both education and the research facilities within the institution. By hiring internationally recognized academicians, IAU aims to strengthen academic staff, reach higher quality in education and promote a competition based research. A substantial budget is in place to award international projects and publications. In addition, IAU has been investing in state of the art laboratories and latest technologies in education both to train competent and up to date professionals and to attract international researchers to its campuses. IAU believes that its leadership in higher education is and will make an example for Turkey and the World.

IAU selects its international cooperation partners among institutions which have a clear mission toward internationalization and a clear intent towards academic research that will support and shape the formation of today's world for the generations to come.

Owning an already extensive cooperation network with 450+ worldwide HEI, IAU aims until 2027 for new partnerships with HEIs which treasure the same values for diversity, cooperation and modernity and focus on academic research, committing themselves to implement national/international cooperation policies, to contribute to the implementation of the Bologna process and Erasmus+ Programme's and EU values in within programme and partner countries.

One of our objectives in international cooperation is to enhance the quality of education via mobility of student and staff while providing the world as an open ended field for our students to find their specific interest and passion which will direct them towards their leadership positions in the future.

To realize such an objective, IAU provides its academic staff with the opportunity to keep an up to date agenda of research and academic refinement through international cooperation. This is also an essential argument for the determination of partners for each academic field. That is, needs describes the partners as they will make the establishment of healthy bridges between educational and research aspects of functional and up to date curriculums.

IAU aims to be a leader in Life-long learning and give special attention to the organization of international and national short cycle courses and summer schools. Our partners are major actors and play a big role in organizing such courses and such programs are expected to be further developed within the following years of this EU funded project.

Additionally, within the framework of the Turkish Higher Education Council's authorization, double / multiple and Joint degrees are created from within the academic units and with priority and special attention given on the part of International Relations Directorate (DIR)- the department supporting and encouraging students, academic and administrative staff to participate in international programs.

As integral part of DIR, IAU Erasmus+ Office's main goal is to support and encourage students, academic and administrative staff to participate in different international programs under the umbrella of the Erasmus+ Programme. IAU Erasmus+ Team holds monthly meetings with each Faculty where agreements, exchange program possibilities, research projects, organization of international scientific and cultural meetings and conferences, enhancement of Erasmus and other bilateral agreements are discussed. These meetings trigger potentials for more international activities and/or help the development of each other. IAU Erasmus Office supports also the Erasmus+ Mentors Club responsible for the integration of mobile participants at IAU.

Each Faculty has an Erasmus+ Coordinator under which Erasmus+ departmental coordinators work on the organization and implementation of international activities within the Erasmus+ Programme, on disseminating information about the Erasmus+ Program and other international activities and on supporting the academic life of students abroad and the orientation of Erasmus+ incoming students.

This is the prevailing organizational structure that may and will be modified according to developing academic and logistical needs throughout the internationalisation progress of IAU.

Through promoting the Erasmus+ Programme among students, IAU aims to introduce its graduates to an international agenda long before they start their professional life. Students that have previously attended mobility return with a changed perspective on higher education. By giving students opportunities that the programme provides, IAU expects to direct students to a modern experience of higher education as aware and motivated professionals of the future.

IAU has substantial amount of industry partners and recognizes the significance of linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development. Since its foundation in 2003, IAU's persistent goal has been to raise professionals according to regional needs as well as international change. IAU expects the Programme to further support and prize this objective. The programme will also give an opportunity to use partnerships in international platforms, contribute to the modernization of the institution and to the implementation of digital mobilities management, to an extensive raise in the number of participants with better foreign language skills and employability, and to further foster and raise awareness not only on the institution itself but to a greater extend to

digitalization, environment and civic engagement in line with IAU's strategy for internationalization, the national strategic plans for HE and EU's renewed agenda for HE 2021-2027 and the European Education Area.

1.3 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

IAU has always put a strong emphasis on internationalization, which appears extensively in the new Strategic Plan of the University and is active in academic collaborations, Erasmus+ program mobilities, short-term international courses, international marketing, international student and support services with 450+ cooperation protocols with worldwide partners, participating also in international quality assurance efforts, such as Turquality and EUA IEP. IAU, identifying Erasmus+ as one of the main cores of its internationalization strategy, has been awarded ever since its foundation in 2007 with the LLP-Erasmus Charter for HE and as of 2014 with the Erasmus+ ECHE allowing different mobilities under KA1 with partner and programme countries and participation in several KA2,KA3 and HORIZON2020 projects. By signing the new ECHE charter, IAU not only undertakes to respect and implement all its principles but it also expects to provide more funding for international projects and research while increasing the number of mobile participants in KA1, KA2 and KA3 projects to 5% of its graduates by 2027, fulfilling its internationalization goals and participating in creating a more integrated and inclusive European society. As mentioned in the EPS, the central role for the implementation of the ECHE and the KA1, KA2 and KA3 projects is given to the Erasmus+ Office as main contact in terms of communication with IAU's stakeholders referring to the Erasmus Programme, applying for funding, organizing the selection of mobile participants, monitoring the mobilities and reporting back to both the internal upper management of the institution as well as the relevant national and international authorities. In its quest to increasing the level of internationalization of the University by increasing the number of mobilities, increasing the level of crucial competences and skills of students and staff as well as graduates by allowing them taking part in international mobilities for study and traineeship, increasing the quality of education and management processes by staff mobilities for teaching and training as well as increasing the EU funded research projects, not only IAU Erasmus+ Office plays an important role but also the Erasmus+ Faculty/Department coordinators. IAU Erasmus+ Team holds monthly meetings with each Faculty where agreements, exchange program possibilities, research projects, organization of international scientific and cultural meetings and conferences, enhancement of Erasmus and other bilateral agreements are discussed. These meetings trigger potentials for more international activities and/or help the development of each other. Each Faculty has an Erasmus+ Coordinator under which departmental coordinators work on the organization and implementation of international activities within the Erasmus+ Programme framework, on disseminating information about the Erasmus+ Program and other international activities as well as supporting the academic life of students abroad and the orientation of Erasmus+ incoming students. IAU Erasmus+ Office is the main responsible for launching the calls for application via the university's students and staff management electronic platform, via its website and social media as well as through periodic info sessions and orientation programmes for both staff and students. In terms of decision-making, the Office collaborates with a Decision board containing our vice rector for international relations, our DIR director, Erasmus+ institutional coordinator and faculty members. These commissions, before publishing of results, must approve all decisions related to the participation in the programme. In the aftermath, the Erasmus+ Office together with the Erasmus+ Coordinators supervise the implementation of these mobilities and offer complete information to participants in terms of course offer, visa/insurance, travel arrangements, orientation before mobility and reintegration through IAU Erasmus+ mentors group, but towards the full recognition of the mobilities the Erasmus+ Coordinators

play a crucial role as they are supervising the procedure in their respective departments. As central office, IAU Erasmus+ Office is contributing to the process of broadening international education and training by concluding Erasmus agreements with world-wide universities having in mind the strategic directions of the institution in terms of increasing student and staff mobilities through participation in KA1, KA2 and KA3 projects.

1.4 What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

In support of EU's updated agenda, the national strategies in HE and the internationalization goals of IAU as well as based on the vast experience accumulated by the office in terms of managing LLP, Erasmus+ and Horizon2020 projects, IAU's participation in the new round of the Erasmus+ programme until 2027, will contribute to increasing numbers of mobilities in for the institution and overall for the country, to strengthening our bilateral agreements and universities' capacities to improve the quality of educational processes and accomplish international experiences. Our Erasmus+ Programme outcomes and dissemination will create a positive impact on the involved students and staff, the population of students and other staff at the level of the departments involved and create opportunities for research, curriculum development and further exchanges of staff and students. Institutions/stakeholders affiliated to IAU (industry partners, local authorities and to a greater extend the country's economies) will also benefit. Specifically, upon completing their mobilities, students will return to their home university with improved field-specific theoretical knowledge, foreign language and social skills like adaptability, flexibility, innovativeness, productivity, motivation, problem-solving abilities, developed intercultural competences and intercultural communication skills as well as a more developed sense of civic engagement being more aware of the environmental problems faced by our world. Their mobility will increase their employability and facilitate access to the labor market at home and abroad which will be for the benefit of the national labor market. IAU will measure students' mobility success and the development of their skills through the means of two questionnaires before and after the mobility and through a written testimonial/travelogue as part of an incentives based Erasmus+ competition organized for all mobile students. Moreover, upon returning from their mobility they can become part of IAU Erasmus mentors group, attending different student-to-student meetings/workshops where they can share their Erasmus experience for the benefit of their peers. Even after the end of the project, we envision an IAU Erasmus alumni network to follow up on mobile participants and create more exchange, education and internship opportunities for future generations. At the level of the involved staff and their faculties and departments we also anticipate a positive impact measured by further discussions on curriculum development, know how transfer, up to the industry needs content of the study programmes, further international co-operations in developing joint study programmes and the implementation of innovative teaching techniques, increased joint research papers. Moreover, we expect a willingness to join cooperation in terms of students and staff exchanges, joint papers, seminars, conferences from the other departments/faculties not initially involved. At the university level, IAU expect a favorable impact on our institution' international reputation as Erasmus mobilities will further support international research cooperation and will activate the other departments, students and staff to become mobile and make use of Erasmus opportunities. IAU will also make use of Erasmus+ Project Results Platform and raise further awareness about the positive impact of managing and participating in different Erasmus actions as part of its internationalization strategy. A wider dissemination plan including meeting with external stakeholders, attendance to international panels and conferences as well as press releases and an active use of the social media is envisioned by IAU to boost the visibility of Erasmus+ Programme at local, regional and international level. Specifically, until 2027, for IAU's participation under Erasmus+ Programme under

KA1, KA2 and KA3 actions we envision: **STUDENT MOBILITIES:** Achieving a rate of 5% of all IAU students taking part in mobilities for studies and practice abroad from all areas of studies of the institution and keeping a high level of satisfaction (to at least 80% of all participants) from institutional support from IAU, measured with the Mobility Tool. Moreover, full automatic recognition of learning outcomes achieved by students during the KA 103/KA107 mobility is expected to continue, supervised carefully by IAU Erasmus+ Office and each of the Faculty/Departmental Erasmus+ Coordinators. **STAFF MOBILITIES:** Achieving a rate of 3% of all IAU academic and non-academics taking part in mobilities for teaching and training abroad from all departments of the institution and keeping a high level of satisfaction (to at least 80% of all participants) from institutional support from IAU, measured with the Mobility Tool. **COOPERATION AGREEMENTS:** Consolidating and extending to new areas the current agreements in an effort to maintaining them active and increasing the number of foreign active partners by 50 preferably within the less accessed areas of studies, with which we could further develop not just KA103, KA107 activities but also focus on joint research and jointly organize conferences/seminars in all common areas of study of the signed IIAs. **RESEARCH:** Publishing jointly with our partners at least 3 high impact factor articles in the major areas of engineering, medical and social sciences with the help of already existing IAU Technology and Transfer Office coordinating KA2, KA3, Capacity Building and Horizon 2020 funded projects. **CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTION/department through digitalization:** IAU has already put the basis for digitalization making most of its internal correspondence through electronic papers. Moreover, with the new programme we envision adhering to the online platforms for the management of the Erasmus+ Programme by 2021 promoting among students the Erasmus+ mobile app and platform for LAs as well as integrating the use of online IIAs and a continued used of the already existing Mobility tool reporting system. For IAU, the added value of participating in Erasmus+ until 2027, is that the programme will plant the seeds to the development of new learning/teaching approaches and competences based curriculums (contributing to the Internationalization of the curriculum (IoC) and to Internationalization at home of the universities) in all departments of the agreement, to collaborative research projects in fundamental study areas of study of the institution, to a better employability of the students/staff directly involved, to the creation of a multicultural understanding, trust and strength of the partnership that will further encourage extensive student exchanges and overall to a raise in the quality of professional education and the adjustment of professional competences to market demands, all in accordance with IAU`s strategy for internationalization and the EU`s updated agenda for development of the European Education Area.