

Erasmus+ 2021-2027

Erasmus Policy Statement

Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the goal of building a European Education Area¹ and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Mid Sweden University (MIUN) is a global university with a regional commitment where we research and educate for life. Our aim is to foster academic environments that are strong and take on global challenges, and to engage in activities on the global arena that fuel and contribute to the development of the region. We also aim to make knowledge accessible to more people, throughout life, through our research and education, and we want to create a study and work environment, which attracts students and employees who contribute to both global and regional development.

For higher education institutions (HEI), as well as for society as a whole, we see an increase in the importance of internationalisation and international cooperation. Whether we choose to actively define activities as “international” or not, most of them are. We have also reached the point where internationalisation is no longer the goal we strive to achieve as much as it has become a means to reach other goals.

Over the last decade, Swedish HEIs have started to think of international cooperation and mobility as means to enhance the quality of our education, research and societal interaction. It is standard practise for many HEIs today to operate on a global arena when it comes to the recruitment of researchers and students, attracting funding and collaboration partners. Beyond this, MIUN believes that purposeful internationalisation leads to increased quality, sustainable development and increased attractiveness in the eyes of prospective students and employees as well as external partners. Internationalisation at

the University helps ensure that our education and research remains relevant in an increasingly globalised world.

In 2018, as part of a proposal for a national strategic agenda for internationalisation 2018, Swedish HEIs have come to adopt a new concept of internationalisation, that of “*integrated*” or “*comprehensive*” internationalisation. This means that we see internationalisation as not only an “intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural and global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of [our] postsecondary education” as defined by Hans de Wit et al in 2015, but also a “commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research and service missions of higher education” as articulated by John Hudzik the same year. In 2020, MIUN embarks on a journey towards a new action plan for internationalisation. In that plan the new concept serves as the foundation for our road forward, for internationalisation in general but also in our participation in the Erasmus Programme specifically.

The basis for MIUN’s internationalisation is its collaborations within Europe and the Erasmus Programme. Here we see strong development of strategic partnerships and in-depth collaborations which have developed over a long time. The absolute majority of our collaborations within education can be found here and therefore our participation in the Programme is of vital importance to us on our path forward, just as it has been in the past.

As a part of the Erasmus Programme of 2021-2027 our focus will be on the role of the Programme in the realisation of the university’s vision and goals. Our indicators of success are the values stated in our overall strategy for 2023: quality, relevance, and sustainability as well as how well we manage to be an attractive study- and work environment or partner.

In the previous programme period, 2014-2020, MIUN’s goals were, in short, to develop and maintain strategic international partnerships, to ensure we were well aware of why we entered into an agreement with a given partner and to ensure mutual interest and meaning, but also to enable student and staff mobility at all levels. These goals are still relevant and we aim to develop them further by drawing on our experience of the previous Programme and the lessons we have learned.

The strategic partnerships that we have developed thus far are limited to a few specific subject areas. We will now strive to expand this practise to other subject areas. Through internal benchmarking we will find paths forward within our academic and geographical setting. We will work to further enhance our quality assurance of inter-institutional agreements with a view to making our existing agreements, as well as new ones, more strategic. We also want to explore how we can work more with double degrees and what role they can play in our internationalisation of the curriculum. Furthermore, we will explore how we can expand collaboration within our existing European networks to different key actions. Having previously focused on quality assurance of mobility processes, we will now focus on the added value international mobility can generate for our students and staff. As part of this work we want to explore new forms of recognition for students and staff engaged in internationalisation activities. As a university that aims to be global with a regional commitment we also want to push forward and see what further value we can create through internationalisation at home both for students, staff, the surrounding society and our two campus regions, Jämtland and Västernorrland. We also want to deepen existing partnerships and networks and move beyond student and staff mobility to also create value for our research and societal interactions. All these activities aim to allow MIUN to take an active part in the further development of the European Education Area.

MIUN has a long history of distance and online learning as a means to make education accessible more broadly. So far, we have not used this capacity and experience extensively in our international collaborations. During the upcoming programme period, we will look for opportunities to use this strength to enhance our work with internationalisation at home – to also make internationalisation available for those students and staff who find physical mobility inaccessible or daunting. It is also a means for us to enable our vast group of distance and part-time students to gain international experience. By working with internationalisation at home we hope to inspire more students and staff to spend time abroad. The digitalisation of internationalisation is also a means to allow for environmentally sustainable access to internationalisation beyond a single mobility experience also for those who do participate in mobility activities. In addition, we believe digitalisation is the sustainable solution to developing and maintaining long-lasting inter-institutional collaboration by lessening our dependence on physical meetings, instead allowing for physical meetings to be the qualitative part of a more comprehensive exchange, on site as well as online.

Internationalisation is no longer a goal in itself but a means to reach the goals we define in our vision and strategies. The Erasmus Programme will play an integral part in MIUN's journey towards becoming an integral part of not only the European Education Area but also a champion for the new principles of the Charter.