



UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

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Erasmus Policy Statement

Ever since the University of Belgrade first took part in the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window Program, the goal of our Internationalization Strategy was able to receive its first outlines. Over the years, the University has continued to participate in various mobility programs and projects supported by the European Commission, which have ultimately lead to further inclusion of the University of Belgrade into the mainstream of academic cooperation in the region, Europe and the world, as aimed by the Strategy, which was formally adopted in 2014 (<http://bg.ac.rs/files/en/international/Strategy-Internationalisation.pdf>). Today, following its tradition of openness and mindful of its international reputation, geographical position and potential, the University of Belgrade continues to invest efforts to promote the policy of establishing amicable and productive academic relations with universities worldwide, as well as to promote international student, faculty and non-faculty exchange.

By fulfilling the above aims identified by the Strategy, the University of Belgrade was able to receive its first Charter in 2019, in this way obtaining a stronger incentive to become a part of the European Education Area, even though Serbia is not yet an EU Member State.

By being able to offer our students and staff the possibility to take part in one of the Erasmus+ mobility programs, thus encouraging the students to spending a part of their study program abroad, where they can benefit from a different learning environment and the possibility of learning another foreign language and experiencing a different cultural background, students have been able to benefit not only from the mobility experience as such, but also be prepared to work on a global labour market subject to varying economic and social conditions, and to work in culturally diverse environments. Also, experiences brought back by teachers from an exchange will help in the process towards achieving that goal. Creating ample opportunities for faculty and student exchange and employing foreign faculty in order to add an international perspective to study programs and their implementation, the University of Belgrade is yet another step closer to fulfilling the vision of the European Education Area.

As a result of the support to outgoing teaching mobility and strengthening home capacity to teach in English, as well as to further develop those study programs offered in English, the University of Belgrade increased the number of its study programs in English by 45% in the period 2016-2018.

The Erasmus + mobility program will undoubtedly strengthen and enrich the quality and overall performance of the University and expand the opportunities for students and staff for accessing specialized training, as well as for acquiring experiences and additional skills for lecturers that go in line with changes of the labour market, and therefore we can expect a positive impact on the employability.

As a leading higher education institution in the region, the University of Belgrade needs to invest further efforts into not only maintaining, but improving this position in order to make our presence continuously felt on both national, cross-border and international levels. In order for this to be achieved, further participation of the University of Belgrade not only in the Erasmus+ Program, but other EU initiatives will play a key role.

Namely, following the European Commission's launch of the European Universities initiative, a group of research intensive universities has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the intention of establishing a new university alliance: Aarhus University, Humboldt University of Berlin, King's College London, UCLouvain, University of Oslo, Université de Paris and the University of Belgrade, respectively. The EUI is one of the flagship initiatives of the EU's ambitions to build a European Education Area. According to the European Commission, these transnational alliances will be the European universities of the future, promoting European values and identity, and revolutionizing the quality and competitiveness of European higher education.

Keeping the above in mind, it can clearly be seen that the aspects of UB's Mobility Strategy related to modernization of the curricula offered at the UB, increased the number of study programs in foreign languages and improved the quality of education and training offered to the students of the UB and incoming mobility students have been fulfilled for the UB to receive the invitation to take part in this EUI. It is crucial to mention that some of the key contacts among future partners within this EUI have been established through participation in the Erasmus+ Program, for which reason UB's further participation in this program is without a question still our main priority.

Ivanka Popović
RECTOR