



# UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PALERMO

AREA RICERCA E SVILUPPO  
UOA06 POLITICHE DI INTERNAZIONALIZZAZIONE PER LA MOBILITA'

## **ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT** **Overall strategy**

### *International (EU and non EU) strategy*

The University of Palermo (UNIPA), acknowledging the objectives and principles of the European modernisation and Internalization agenda in higher education intends to sustain and participate in the 2014-2020 EU programme for Education, Training, fully respecting the principles of non-discrimination and ensuring equal access and opportunities to participants from all backgrounds. UNIPA is fully engaged to organize the selections of mobile staff and students and the award of grants in a fair, transparent coherent and documented way. To ensure equal opportunities to all participants as regards both inbound and outbound mobility UNIPA will provide facilities in order to implement the number of those groups who are generally underrepresented in mobility programmes; as far as outgoing students are concerned, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds can take advantage of the opportunity of a "honour loan" or of cash advance on a pre-paid card issued from banks on the basis of a joint agreement; on the other hand, also incoming students out of the LLP Programme will not be charged any fee for tuition, registration, examination and/or any other facility available to local students. The actual accommodation system run by ERSU (the regional authority in charge of services concerning university students' right to study) already providing special low fares for students and staff people coming from developing countries will be implemented thanks to an agreement concluded between UNIPA and the Cooperation and Development Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To be mentioned are the several actions undertaken by UNIPA as regards the learning of the Italian language: ITASTRA (Italian school for foreign people) is fully engaged in promoting courses of different levels not only addressed to incoming students and staff people but also aimed to involve foreign workpeople in Palermo in order to support their social integration upon a better knowledge of the Italian language. The University Medical Clinic (AMU) is a recent initiative of the University of Palermo in partnership with the University Hospital to offer a free service of multidisciplinary outpatient medical assistance to students, PhD students, postgraduate students, fellows and University Scholars, as well as to all foreign students attending the University according to specific agreements and programs.

On the ground of the previous experiences the University of Palermo aims to increase the number of agreements and to expand the cooperation with strategic partners like enterprises. Partner institutions are recognized mainly among accredited public Universities on the ground of common sustainable principles, compatibility of academic profiles and full sharing of credit recognizing system. As regards the geographic criteria driving the choice of partners, special consideration is paid to the Mediterranean area with the aim of supporting, by means of the development of joint programmes, the ever increasing integration among young people of countries of different cultural and religious extraction in order to strengthen the capacity of building relationships with neighbouring countries; another strong geographical indication is to establish relationships and partnership with Institutions of non-EU countries with a strong presence of inhabitants of Italian origin (Argentina); moreover on the way of the already existing joint courses with several developing countries (Vietnam, Cambodia,) training programmes also in collaboration with enterprises will be implemented in order to spread Sicily skills and culture. This kind of actions is pursued by means of the Consortium ARCA



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(Consortium for the Application of Research and the creation of innovative enterprises) whose aim is to foster the development of spin-off enterprise initiatives so to enhance the research results obtained from the Sicilian research centres and facilitate innovation and technologic transfer from and to the productive system and the Sicilian society. UNIPA outgoing and incoming mobility activity is targeted to students of first and second cycle (Master, Bachelor) and third cycle (Doctorate) both for studies and traineeship in enterprises based on the full recognition of credits through the application of an academic credit transfer system (ECTS) and to Higher Education Institution academic and non-academic staff to teach and/or to be trained. The development of double/joint degrees is one of the strategic objectives of UNIPA and it is expected to become part of the educational offer with an ever increasing number of courses taught in English. The double/joint degree will mainly involve Master courses due to the lower number of ECTS required (120) what makes easier the arrangement of compatible didactic profiles. On the ground of an integrated study programme, the student will follow courses in both UNIPA and partner Institution (at least 50/120 ECTS)- At the end of the course the student will achieve a title released by both Institutions.

*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 program*

The implementation of cooperation projects in teaching and training common didactic programmes will be undertaken under trans-national framework agreements (Italo-French, Italo-Egyptian, Italo-Lybic, Italo-Turkish Universities). The organisation of international courses taught in foreign language, like English or French, in different new and trendy sectors like Economics, Biotechnology and Bioscience, represents a key-point of this action in order to arrange an international offer which can be published and promoted mainly across the countries of Mediterranean and Balkan areas. This organisation will be functional to the increase of the number of foreign students enrolling to UNIPA master courses.

Such study courses will be addressed also to UNIPA students with the advantage of improving the specialistic knowledge of more languages that becomes of crucial importance with special reference to the modern knowledge-based society that must be able of meeting the needs of the global labour market.

*Expected impact of participation in the program on the modernisation of the Institution*

As regards the expected impact of UNIPA participation in the modernisation of the Institution the main policy objectives are:

- The development of integrated study courses with EU and non-EU partner Universities, joint degree courses with EU and non-EU partner Universities and joint educational courses with EU and non-EU partner Universities in order to realize double or joint degree courses, coherently with the 2007/2013 LLP Programme fostering student and staff exchanges, mobility and cooperation among EU HEIs.
- The strengthening and increasing of the international networks with EU and non-EU Universities and other HEIs in order to facilitate new scientific aggregations and joint research projects and aggregations of international doctorates.
- The increasing of the number of English taught courses (from the actual six to at least twelve in different scientific areas).



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According to the main areas for reform identified in the modernization agenda, the strategy of the University of Palermo includes the creation of International Doctorates so to guarantee the internationalization of the third educational cycle considered a bridge between Higher Education Area, Research Area and labour market and also expected to strengthen the "knowledge triangle", linking education, research and business. As regards the possibility of creating effective governance and funding mechanisms in support of excellence, UNIPA is involved in the project of Regione Sicilia named "Sovvenzione Globale Sicilia Futuro " (Sicily Future Global Support) aimed to supply instruments and resources in order to invest in skill and talent of young people.

Moreover UNIPA will increase didactic agreements able to foster student credit mobility at least for a semester according to a specific programme regarding the number of students and the full transfer and recognition of credits.

In details, on the basis of an agreement concluded with the Brazilian Universities of Ouro Preto, Patos de Minas, Minas Gerais- Belo Horizonte and with the Polytecnic School of the University of San Paolo, in the next three years a higher number of foreign graduates in the sectors of Electric Engineering, Mechanics and Law along with the beginning of a reciprocal mobility project for our students is expected.

The Institution from the academic year 2011/2012 of a chair of Italian language and Dialectology in the University of Rosario (Argentina) in close cooperation with UNIPA Humanities Faculty is expected to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and, in the frame of research activities, the common will of realizing networks in several fields like Vegetable Biotechnologies, Management Systemic Dynamics, renewable energetic sources and environment , metallic materials, Junction Technologies, is expected to provide more opportunities for students to gain additional skills through study or training abroad, and to encourage cross-border co-operation to boost higher education performance.

Palermo, 14/05/2013

Prof. Roberto Lagalla, Rector

