

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff

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

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Partnerships for Innovation

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

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

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)

¹ For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website:

https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en

OsloMet has, as a Norwegian public higher education institution, responsibilities to society as expressed in our Strategy 2024: OsloMet is an urban university with a diverse academic profile and a clear international orientation. Through the research we conduct and the students we educate, OsloMet seeks to respond to the needs of society and the labour market. OsloMet is forward-thinking and committed to adopting new technologies and innovative solutions that improve the way the university is run.

The strategy encompasses four main goals with underpinning actions covering among others internationalisation, diversity, modernization and enhancing quality in education. Action plans and budgets have been or are developed to implement the four main goals further, one example being the Action plan for education 2018-2021 focusing on working together with the labour market, research based education and a holistic approach to the learning environment. The latest addition is an action plan on sustainability – how OsloMet will prioritise and implement UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The plan is expected to be finalised in June 2020.

In addition to the overarching strategy with its underlying action plans, OsloMet has developed a more detailed strategy for digital transformation 2018-2024 called the Digital University of the future. This strategy sets goals for digital infrastructure, digital administrative systems and work processes, as well as for digital teaching and learning. This strategy clearly links to the goal of building a European Education Area (EEA) through digitalization.

Through our participation in an application for a European University Initiative and the planned application for a Centre of Vocational Excellence, we work towards the very essence of the EEA-goals.

However, we see clear links between many more of our goals and those of the EEA and hence of the new Erasmus+ programme. Some of the goals and targets taken from our strategies and action plans that highlights these links are:

Digitalisation

- Make digital and technological expertise an integral part of our study programmes and academic environment
- Develop our position as a provider of decentralized teaching using digital teaching methods

Cultural understanding/internationalization/ diversity

- Develop interaction between students, alumni, staff, employers, Norwegian, and international knowledge communities
- Increase participation in international cooperation relating to education and research, particularly linked to EU programmes.
- Increase our numbers of Erasmus+ students.
- Develop knowledge about the international situation and about global challenges that are relevant to our study programmes and our research.
- We will promote equality and understanding—in society in general and among our students and staff in particular.
- Integrate students with a refugee background in the student community and in our study programmes.
- Follow up and further develop the action plan for diversity in cooperation with relevant stakeholders in the region.

Labour market skills

- Offer relevant practical training of high quality in our study programmes
- Develop the teacher and nursing education programmes to become the best in Norway.

Climate Change

- An educational portfolio that contributes to increased awareness of and action for a sustainable welfare society
- Develop a mandatory course on sustainability for all students.
- Prioritise infrastructure solutions that reduce our ecological footprint

Innovation and entrepreneurship

- Establish innovation, value creation and entrepreneurship as key elements of education and research

Lifelong learning

- Adapt the further and continuing education programmes to meet the needs of the employment market.

For OsloMet the Erasmus+ programme gives plenty of opportunities that will help us reach these and other objectives in cooperation with our partner institutions.

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. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

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We will build on the experiences gained during our participation in the actions KA1, KA2 and KA3 under Erasmus+ 2014-2020 and we plan to expand both in terms of numbers of projects within the actions and also in the number of actions.

Many of our objectives will be achieved through several of the actions. One good example is our objectives within digitalisation. Here both student mobility (studies, blended and practice placements) and staff mobility (teaching and training) will cover the objectives on a more individual level, but participation in these actions will also help us achieve our goals on a more institutional level through sharing of best practices and peer learning, particularly among our staff. The different objectives within our digitalisation strategy will also be achieved through particularly Partnerships for Cooperation and Exchanges of Practices and Partnership for Innovation.

As OsloMet educate a lot of professionals for the welfare state where practical training is an integral part of our study programmes, particularly the student mobility for practice placement gives us the mean to reach our objective of offering relevant practical training of high quality. Practical training abroad is a very good way of preparing our future nurses, teachers, social workers, social educators, midwives and more for a work life where they will interact with patients, users, parents and pupils from many different backgrounds.

In regards to our teacher education we also use student mobility to ensure our future language teachers are able to immerse themselves in tailor-made one-year-language training with our partner institutions in Spain and Germany, and now more recently a new agreement has been made with a partner institution in France. Through this scheme which has so far been popular among our students, and which gives our future language teachers a solid education that will in turn result in better language education in schools.

We are very keen to explore the possibilities that Blended mobility will bring as we have several study programmes, particularly the bachelor degree programmes within vocational teacher education, where we have mature students with responsibilities that makes it very difficult for them to engage in a regular Erasmus+ mobility. Also, these study programmes are relatively unique to Norway in that it is placed at HEI-level, making it difficult to find partner HEIs that can offer relevant studies for longer periods. We also believe that Blended mobility can be the key to inclusion of other students that find it difficult to go abroad for more than three months. By participating in Blended mobility, we hope to be able to reach our objective of an increase in the number of students for Erasmus+ mobility through inclusion of more students.

We need to step up on innovation and entrepreneurial skills. OsloMet has been working towards increased focus on this, but it has taken time, different models of implementation and support have been tried out with only sporadic success. With the current situation and the increase in unemployment rates not seen in Norway since right after WWII, we see an increase in the interest in and need for innovation and entrepreneurship as part of our study programmes. Norway solves the rise in unemployment particularly by offering more young people the chance to study, and we see that this is somewhere where we might benefit from the Erasmus+ programme to reach our objective of establishing innovation, value creation and entrepreneurship as key elements in education and research. It is an area that we really have something to gain by cooperating with partners in Europe. This can be achieved through particularly staff training and incoming staff mobility on a lesser scale, but especially through Partnership for Innovation.

The planned participation in the Centre of Vocational Excellence-call will be a means to reach our goal of being an urban university with regional and national responsibilities and with a clearly international character. The Department of Vocational Teacher Education started the process with the first call in 2018 and will build on experiences gained through Erasmus+ Sector Alliances and Strategic Partnerships to build a center of excellence with regional and international partners.

OsloMet embraces the priority of climate change and although we are still in our early stages as regards our full action plan on SDGs, we are already discussing the way forward, both relating to physical mobility in a world where we need to see some radical changes taking place, and relating to the way we educate our students. We will use the Erasmus+ programme to reach our objectives whether through the use of top up grants to students and staff for traveling greener or through the participation in projects to improve on a larger scale giving our students the competencies and skills needed to work in a changing world.

OsloMet has a network of Erasmus+ coordinators. This network consists of the institutional coordinator team and administrative coordinators working in close connection with academic coordinators for each study programme. This

network meet six times annually to learn about new calls, new regulations, new possibilities etc and also to discuss different issues that arise in relation the use of the Erasmus+ programme as well as the annual report on the mobility grants.

We will use this network to implement the new programme too. We have, for several years, had an informal and person-to-person type of cooperation with the Horizon 2020-team in the R&D administration both at central level and at faculty/department level. We started to formalise this in 2019 through meetings to discuss where we could cooperate better to improve the links between Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+, and especially how we could work together to inform and support staff at all levels better of the different possibilities. This is particularly important for information and support to PhD candidates (students) that are regarded as academic staff in Norway and therefore come under the administration of R&D, yet have many opportunities within the Erasmus+ programme. We have already seen an increase in the interest from them in the Erasmus+ programme. Lately, innovation has also been placed under R&D, so we will continue to work together, also at faculty/department level to improve and streamline information and support to staff at all levels. As we are part of a consortium that has applied for the European University Initiative, this cooperation will of course be fundamental if we prove successful.

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

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

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The quantitative targets (cf attachment) are in line with our strategy to increase participation in the Erasmus+ overall and also in line with the recommendations of our National Agency on commission from the Ministry of Higher Education. We have settled for a timeline indicating targets for each year during the next Erasmus+ programme period. There are however, differences. Some of the actions are limited by the Erasmus+ framework both in numbers and budgets, others are of a size that makes it very demanding on resources, hence the participation and success rate makes it difficult to participate in several at the same time.

As OsloMet is a fairly large institution, covering a variety of study programmes, the quantitative targets are on an overall level, i.e. some targets will be more valid for some study programmes than for others. For example student mobility for practice placements are more easily integrated into study programmes where this kind of experience is part of the national curricula set. This does not mean that we do not try to integrate this kind of learning experience into other study programmes, and we have seen an overall increase in the numbers over the last few years.

The number of student and staff mobility (studies, practical placement, training and teaching) has been set to increase year by year with a smaller increase in the practical placement mobilities as this takes more time to increase. With the current situation leading to almost no mobility at all for the autumn 2020, it is difficult to set targets for the next seven years. Also, the uncertainty of UK's participation in Erasmus+ 2021-2027 will have a bearing on the results as we send quite a lot of students and staff to the UK at present. On the other hand, and as indicated above, Blended mobility is something that we believe will increase our numbers, but it will take some time to build good partnerships to support high quality Blended mobilities. We also plan to participate in the global (international) mobility during the new programme period as we have seen signs that makes it easier to use (longer contracts being one of them). This will give us the opportunity of offering more balanced partnerships with partners in particular in African countries where we send a lot of our students, but where their students do not have the funding to come to us.

We have a very good track record regarding Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships (runner up in Norway). We will continue participating in the Partnership for Cooperation that replaces it as we see this as a huge stepping stone for staff that have no previous experience of participating in EU programmes, possibly giving them the experience towards bigger Erasmus+ projects or Horizon Europe-projects further down the line, but also being the means to direct results from Horizon 2020 and future Horizon Europe-projects, or other EU-funded projects, into improving education. We also see these projects as particularly relevant to our Teacher Education-faculty as we can contribute towards lifelong learning of teachers as well as prepare our teacher students for their profession. Even so, we have only planned for a limited number of these projects with no annual increase. The reason being that with the experience we have gained through the Strategic Partnerships, we would like to move into bigger projects such as Partnership for Innovation and KA3



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actions as these will contribute to our objectives in different and complementary ways than the Partnership for Cooperation projects will.

We have set the target at two Erasmus Mundus projects for the whole period, one being part of the hopefully, future European University Initiative that we have applied for with our consortium U!reka. The second Erasmus Mundus project is still not decided upon, but we do have several candidates that are eager to pursue this kind of collaboration. We will use the Mundus action to underpin our objective of offering study programmes that lead to employability and thus meets the needs of the labour market.

Qualitative indicators and indeed targets are by far the more challenging as they need to make use of other kinds of means. The number of students and staff, both incoming and outgoing, will of course have impact on OsloMet, but it is more difficult to find out what it means other than in terms of numbers. One could argue that the percentage of students reporting that they are happy with the academic mentoring and administrative support can be said to be a qualitative as well as a quantitative indicator. They measure impact on a more individual level but this will hopefully lead to a sharing of good experiences that might in turn lead to more students and staff choosing to go abroad.

We have chosen some indicators where we presently score very well, and it is important for us to keep those high scores. They are therefore included among the indicators and targets.

Qualitative indicators (cf attachment) are often mapped rather than measured, usually through more in depth questions through interviews either individually or in groups, or through surveys. We have, both on institutional level and on national level, student surveys which map among other things how soon after graduation our students find work, and even relevant work, but it is very difficult to measure to what extent this is due to the Erasmus+ action they have participated in.

We have therefore chosen to set qualitative questions related to the impact of KA2 projects in our plan. So far it has been difficult to evaluate the long term impact of KA2 projects. Our national agency wrote a report on national level, the downside to this report, being that it happened before many of the projects had had any results yet. We would therefore like to know more about the qualitative results of our participation in projects to see if we have reached the intended impact, or even other types of impact than the ones intended. We have therefore selected a number of qualitative indicators that we would like to explore and possibly expand upon through surveys and possibly interviews with staff, students and participants from outside OsloMet participating in these projects.