

**UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA – ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT – ERASMUS+ 2014/2021****D. Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)**

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees. (max. 5000 characters)

The University of Rijeka was founded in 1973. It presently comprises of 9 faculties, 4 University departments, an Academy of Applied Arts, a University Library and a Student Centre.

UNIRI has embodied its aspiration towards internationalisation into its Strategic Plan 2007-2013 by outlining a strategic goal by which UNIRI will become "a dynamic university actively involved in the European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area, which systematically and in an organised manner fosters internal and external scientist and student mobility". At the moment a new Strategic Plan for 2014-2020 is under preparation.

In order to increase general mobility of its members, UNIRI actively pursues bilateral and multilateral agreements with HEIs all over the world. Up until now, UNIRI has signed 160 Erasmus bilateral agreements with European HE institutions and 56 bilateral/multilateral cooperation agreements with institutions worldwide. Strengthening of international cooperation, mobility in particular continuously raises the general standard of education at UNIRI and encourages the development of international qualification, language proficiency and intercultural competence among students and staff members, promotes scientific activities and facilitates development and harmonization of curricula. Furthermore, UNIRI considers student and staff mobility an excellent opportunity to initiate joint research projects, double, multiple and joint degree programmes and networking.

When choosing partners, UNIRI focuses on HE institutions with similar curricula, in order to facilitate the mobility of students/staff. Currently UNIRI has the strongest cross-border cooperation with Slovenia, Austria, and Italy but tries to broaden the partnerships with HE institutions all around the world, in order to get acquainted with different systems of education and exchange experiences. Given a numerous diaspora, there is high demand for both incoming/outgoing mobilities. Many excellent researchers returned after they developed their careers abroad, thus promoting other forms of collaboration after the mobility period.

Exchange of teachers, scientists and students of the University of Rijeka with foreign institutions provides opportunity for critical evaluation of one's own goals and realizations. This paves the way for successful participation in bilateral and multilateral research programmes, exchange programmes of teachers, students and young researchers.

Thus the University encourages international collaborations in all possible ways, shapes and forms. It especially strives to create conditions for the advancement of international collaboration particularly in those areas where international relations were non-existent before.

UNIRI has participated in Erasmus programme since 2009/10 and over the last 4 years student and staff mobility numbers grew quite fast, aiming to reach the 10% of UNIRI staff and students in first, second and third cycles, to be involved in Erasmus exchanges. The further promotional measures are foreseen to promote Erasmus mobility program, with particular attention paid to best practice. The University closely cooperates with the Erasmus Student Network Rijeka, which, at the moment, chairs all ESN sections in Croatia. ESN Rijeka and IRO provide support activities to incoming students in order to include them in Rijeka's everyday life (finding accommodation, dealing with administrative formalities, health insurance, organising outside-university time) trying to make UNIRI a popular destination for the Erasmus mobility. Being aware of the fact that foreign students can only be attracted by quality of study programmes and by offering courses in foreign languages, UNIRI has been working on the development of study programmes in English. Today more than 400 courses at UNIRI are held in English or other foreign languages.

Presently, UNIRI offers work placement for incoming students at the University Departments, some at the faculties, as well as at certain offices at the Science and Technology Park.

Several student associations at UNIRI organize student placements in Croatia and abroad and University plans to extend those existing collaborations through Erasmus programme, since work placement will surely enhance students' future career development.

UNIRI has always promoted equal opportunities for all of its students and staff, and it tries to eliminate discrimination in all aspects of education. The Office for Students with Disabilities has been established at UNIRI with the aim to deal with issues such as: providing disabled students with the information they need, helping them to remove obstacles, to acquire necessary literature and to provide adequate transportation.

**If applicable, please describe your institution's 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 Programme. (max. 2000 characters)**

The University of Rijeka aims to become one of those European universities recognized by quality in terms of organisation, teaching and research. Consequently, all study programmes are already harmonised with Bologna process. As a part of EU accession process, the Republic of Croatia has decided to adapt the all social processes to be compatible with similar processes in European community. Likewise, Croatia has made the decision to participate in European policies in the area of research and education, to adjust its science and higher education system to those policies, as well as to participate in the EU programmes. Thus, the University of Rijeka is well aware of its public accountability and is ready to actively participate in all processes in European Research Area as well as in the education. In addition, it is a part of the University institutional strategy to assume its social responsibilities regarding knowledge transfer. Those processes have significantly marked now ending 7-year strategic period 2007-2013.

It is well-recognized fact that processes which will be carried out in forthcoming period, present not only a challenge for all institutions that are expected to meet new criteria, but also offer numerous opportunities. The University is willing and ready to utilize these opportunities for its own development and the development society it belongs. The University has already participated in many EU R&D programmes and in substantial number of cooperation projects in teaching and training with partner institutions from around Europe. Such cooperative projects, both in the R&D and in education, remain in the focus of the University even in the upcoming years.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda\*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)

UNIRI is highly active in a wide range of EU-funded activities and will try to enhance its involvement even more in the period 2014-2020.

UNIRI deems extremely important the EU's modernisation and internationalisation agenda in HE. By signing this Charter, UNIRI obliges itself to contribute to all five priorities hereby:

1 - Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs

UNIRI developed and implement a set of measures aiming to attract young people from surrounding regions to join University; all being in line with respective government policy and UNIRI strategy.

2 – In order to improve the quality and relevance of HE, UNIRI systematically implements a set of measures aiming to improve employability, especially in respect of ICTs. The most demanding area is redesign of doctoral training that has to produce more researchers in less time than it presently does.

3 - Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

The UNIRI strategic requirements insist on mobility and cross border cooperation for every individual (professor, assistant professor, administrator and student). For certain categories it is set up as a necessary requirement. Participating in the program supports such approach and is fully in line with strategic decisions.

4 - Linking HE, research and business for excellence and regional development



UNIRI is a HE institution aiming to become a research-intensive university. It established a number of links with other research institutions and business. Participation in the Programme will improve the knowledge transfer from the institution toward business and ease cooperation and joint activities with the business sector. It has to stress importance of partnerships for community development, and thus improve UNIRI public accountability and its contribution to sociocultural transition into a knowledge-based society.

5 - Improving governance and funding

UNIRI is aware that the existing funds are not sufficient for successful competition in the international arena. Thus, it is important to increase the budget through influx and income outside the national budget, by increasing investment in research for the benefits of society, by technology transfer and by increasing finances from international cooperation projects. Hence, participation in the Programme will further improve the relations with business stakeholders.

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and the Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS) will be available in English via a link from the UNIRI's web site. A reference to ECHE will be made in public relations materials; a summary of EPS will be handed out to prospective students/staff at workshops and seminars. Having the honour of receiving the ECHE will, among other benefits, significantly develop intercultural understanding and better exchange of knowledge among students, teaching/non-teaching staff from various societies, improving mutual understanding and culture of cooperation.

Rector



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