



# ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

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## ► UPF STRATEGY AND ERASMUS

Since its foundation in 1990, Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) has a good track of record showing its high commitment to internationalisation of higher education. This is reflected in world university rankings, where UPF stands out particularly in those indicators measuring its research and international dimension. They evaluate, on the one hand, the ability of a University to attract students and teaching staff on a global scale and, on the other, the percentage of articles that the faculty of an institution produces with at least, with one lecturer from a foreign institution.

Earlier participant in Erasmus, UPF has engaged in all activities under the different programme periods with outstanding results in student mobility. Today, with 42% of its graduates who can claim a study abroad experience, UPF has doubled the target set by the European Commission to reach the 20% in 2020. A broad and quality portfolio of international agreements to choose from, together with full guaranties of academic recognition through automatic mechanisms and mobility windows, are the keys behind these results. Erasmus has endorsed and provided the right incentives for the mobility of students to flourish and, according to the 2014-2020 Erasmus Policy Statement, the UPF mobility scholarship policy has been particularly sensitive to the socio-economic background of students, giving priority and more generous funds to break down barriers for disadvantaged.

In the later years, there has been a deliberate attempt to promote a more active engagement of teaching and research staff leading to participation in higher added-value and transformative projects for innovating and internationalising education. UPF has gained more qualitative experience by taking part in Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees in the social sciences fields and by leading cooperation projects, particularly in some niche areas like the Jean Monnet programme and technology-enhanced learning in KA2.

The active role of UPF in Erasmus as a university with a distinct European and global vocation has culminated with a successful project of European Universities: EUTOPIA, whose pilot phase is currently under way. It is UPF intention to continue contributing to the European Education Area through Erasmus mobility and cooperation projects, not only in terms of adapting higher education for the next generations but as a proof of UPF's commitment to the idea of Europe.

These strengths and beliefs are at the basis of the **UPF internationalisation strategy**, which is currently being redefined to update it and adapt it to the current times. The strategy introduces a

more comprehensive approach that places internationalisation at the core of the university, as leverage for transformation and modernisation, in line with the European Universities ambition. UPF stands for a European-based university open to the world, with a duty to equip students who can thrive in a diverse global environment, and who can apply critical thinking and creativity to respond with responsibility to the present and future challenges. This is a shared vision and mission within EUTOPIA 2050, where students are engaged in co-creation processes.

Therefore, the UPF internationalisation strategy goes hand in hand with its teaching and learning model and its institutional strategy, while it ensures the necessary organisational and communication resources to underpin it.

As far as the teaching and learning model is concerned, internationalisation at home becomes a priority together with quality and diversity in recruitment and mobility experiences. When it comes to institutional relations, internationalisation is enacted through priority alliances and networks where education and research mutually reinforce each other. In terms of operations, it becomes critical to adapt the information and services to international students and staff needs and expectations.

While mobility stands and will always remain an identity print of UPF and a unique experience to provide students with, UPF has gone beyond the milestone and the new agenda calls for a shift from quantity towards quality, equity and sustainability. This shift is not only coherent with UPF's institutional maturity point, but is also driven by a more responsible and responsive approach to current environmental concerns regarding mobility and factors in a still under-construction new global reality rising from the COVID-19 crisis.

With its participation in Erasmus, UPF is building on its internationalisation strategy by privileging those areas where there is room for improvement. In particular:

- Piloting and expanding blended-mobility to maximize the opportunities for students and staff under KA103, with KA2 and EUTOPIA spin-off projects.
- Proactively supporting professors to engage in Erasmus Mundus and joint degree initiatives that upgrade the quality and competitiveness of the European higher education area and UPF programmes catalogue in all disciplines.
- Profiling the international mobility under KA107 to match the high reputation of other programmes like Horizon Europe, creating synergies between them with the involvement of teaching and research staff at UPF and in partner countries.

The UPF internationalisation strategy meets with and is backed by the **EUTOPIA** project when it combines both global internationalism and internationalisation at home. This two-folded approach is fully aligned with the new Erasmus programme and UPF is looking forward to maximizing the new opportunities: a more flexible approach to international credit mobility, innovative blended-mobility schemes and new avenues for European degree recognition. It will be an advantage to be able to do so by sharing and by mutual learning with EUTOPIA and other partners in European networks UPF belongs to.

## ERASMUS ACTIONS TOWARDS STRATEGIC GOALS

UPF participation in the Erasmus actions supports its strategic aims in the following ways:

- 1 Foster and diversify mobility of both students and staff so that more people can have access to a quality experience abroad, according to their needs and means.**

Through an extensive quality network of agreements worldwide (+300), UPF is in a privileged position to promote mobility and has built a solid academic reputation that now attracts international students as degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate students. UPF shall remain committed to

global internationalism through learning mobility, particularly in troubled times like nowadays with the COVID-19 and in a context where environmental and social responsibility awareness is rising and challenging mobility as we know it.

■ UPF plans to combine at an optimal point the flexibility for funding European and international mobility, based on the good track of records in KA103 and the extra potential in KA107. The target for students is to grant scholarships to 100% of mobilities, paying particular attention to inclusion issues and prioritising those groups with special needs or difficult backgrounds. Whereas the goal for staff mobility is about impact and reputation. This is why in the extra-European alliances (KA107) UPF participates both from a faculty-led project perspective and an institutional strategic approach with consortium projects jointly promoted by the Alliance 4 Universities in countries with emerging and promising relationships, having Africa in the horizon for the coming years.

■ UPF will be intensifying internship mobility as a way into employment. UPF is participating in KA2 projects bringing universities and companies together to design project-based and internship-based training modules, as well as and KA1 consortia facilitating channels and opportunities for UPF students. Moreover, in EUTOPIA, UPF is leading a work-package on “Place-making” that has set as a deliverable to create a pool of partners operating in all sectors. This pool of partners in Europe will be a platform to further explore internship opportunities and joint supervision schemes.

■ UPF intends to apply to blended-mobility initiatives at undergraduate and graduate level and to try the full range of PhD mobility durations in order to create new opportunities for short-term mobility, aiming at increasing to 50% the percentage of graduates with an international mobility, while engaging a wider part of UPF teaching and research staff in Erasmus.

■ UPF is testing new formats of mobility under the EUTOPIA alliance (undergraduate research, challenge-based events, virtual student conferences, co-creation modules) that can be further conceptualized and scaled up in KA2 projects jointly promoted with EUTOPIA and other trusted partners.

## **2 Create internationalisation at home opportunities to expose as many students and staff as possible to a global experience.**

With over 40% of UPF graduates who can claim to have studied abroad, there is an acknowledgment that only through internationalisation at home all students will be able to achieve the global mind- and skills-set that distinguishes UPF graduates. In that regard and in the last few years, new curricula have developed in the field of Global Studies, International Business Economics, Translation in Global Languages and European and Global Law. In a step further, international programmes (like the Barcelona International Summer School or a new International Cross-disciplinary Programme) are opening up as a space for UPF students to share with international mobile students that account to 20% of UPF undergraduate community. These are all measures to work towards a real integration of internationalisation as an experience that can also be gained at home and make it more inclusive to students of all backgrounds.

■ UPF will continue to develop new international immersive programmes open also to domestic students, with a broader catalogue of new courses particularly conceived with a global approach and interdisciplinary methodology. Among others, these programmes can be the anchor to host blended-mobility and by these means, an extra 100 UPF students per year could claim to have been internationally exposed at home.

■ UPF is assessing its own catalogue against criteria of internationalisation of the curriculum in a comparative perspective, as well as co-creating modules, with its EUTOPIA partners. The results of these exercises will inform and facilitate further advancement in internationalising the curriculum at UPF for the benefit of students and with the involvement of academics. Courses in all and across fields are targeted to reach out to students in different degrees.

■ UPF will encourage participation at institutional and faculties level in KA2 projects for developing internationalisation at home and in KA1 for creating blended-mobility opportunities, providing the project management support to submit successful proposals.

### **3 Attract a diverse group of high-quality students to internationally-competitive master and bachelor programmes at UPF.**

A majority of postgraduate programmes and a few globally-oriented bachelor programmes at UPF are fully taught in English and build up on a strong academic reputation, which makes them attractive to international students. They represent 40% of master students and 50% of PhD students at UPF. At bachelor level, a selection of degrees is also English-taught and has the potential to host more international students, thus raising the profile without compromising the local mission of UPF. UPF is open to international and domestic students alike.

■ UPF participates and will continue to privilege double and joint degrees with preferred partners in Europe, as it has proved to be an effective strategy to offer highly-competitive programmes with the capacity to recruit worldwide. Erasmus Mundus provides the perfect framework to do so at Master level and programme coordinators get project management support for applying.

■ UPF through EUTOPIA will test new avenues for a European degree that eases access from EU and non-EU students to its bachelor degrees and facilitates recognition. AQU (University Quality Agency) in Catalonia has already approved the conditions for the recognition of joint programmes accreditations using the European Approach Framework.

### **4 Exchange and innovate through priority alliances and networks.**

UPF has engaged with different European networks to promote long-term cooperation both in research and education. These networks provide an ecosystem for the UPF community to expand and deepen its linkages abroad, but also platforms to share and innovate in solutions to common challenges in higher education. This is particularly the case of EUTOPIA as the European University consortium UPF belongs to.

■ UPF will facilitate mobilities of all profiles and levels under KA1 with the partners of its alliances and networks in Europe, so that meaningful exchanges can take place from different perspectives: academic, research and management.

■ UPF will encourage participation in KA2 and KA3 projects with the partners of its alliances and networks as testing beds of new ideas for advancing and democratising education.

### **5 Adapt and improve information and services to international students and staff.**

The international commitment of UPF takes on the ECHE principles at the heart of its operations, taking measures to grant accessibility, inclusiveness, recognition and quality not only in the Erasmus projects but in all its internationalisation and mobility initiatives within and beyond Europe. Further details about organisation and procedures will be provided in section 2, while strategic objectives are developed here.

■ UPF is assessing the portfolio of services provided to international students and staff with an aim to provide the best possible assistance to address their specific needs, by joining efforts between the different units at central and decentralised level.

■ UPF will be improving the information available about international agreements, mobility scholarships and EU grants, for dissemination and transparency purposes.

## EXPECTED IMPACT

By the end of the Erasmus programme in 2027 and by aligning its participation to strategy, UPF intends to create an Erasmus imprint in all UPF schools, with increased staff and student involvement in mobility and projects.

In numbers, UPF defines quantitative targets in terms of mobility and diversification of participation:

■ **UPF sets itself a target of 50% mobility among its graduates**, as a result of KA103, including blended mobility and increasing internships, as well as KA107. Students will receive the advice and support to apply to the most suitable mobility path according to their interests and circumstances, so that no one is left behind. UPF has been monitoring participation of disadvantaged backgrounds students in Erasmus, which represents 20% of current mobilities.

■ **All UPF students regardless of their degree should be able to follow a blended mobility integrated in the curriculum.** As a greener and more inclusive opportunity, this new format is expected to benefit +100 students a year and is also a change-driver in terms of internationalising the curriculum. To get there, blended-mobility will be promoted to raise awareness among faculty, who will get programme-design support to apply and build it in their own courses and in collaboration with other partners in Europe. EUTOPIA pilot project will be a great asset in that regard.

■ **UPF expects an exponential increase (doubling) in staff mobility for both teaching and training**, which is not yet comparable to student mobility rates, by combining KA103, opportunities for exchanges in European networks and a more project-based approach to KA107. A direct involvement of staff in the application and definition has proven to be successful in terms of sustainability and long-term impact, generating new projects from an initial exchange.

■ UPF has already 4 Erasmus Mundus Masters (EMJMD) in the field of Social Sciences, together with several double and joint degrees with other European universities. This is an experience to be shared with other departments, so as to promote a more diversified participation mirroring the whole range of disciplines at UPF and the university-wide priority of Planetary Wellbeing. **At least 4 new EMJMD or international degrees participated or led by UPF should reflect its areas of excellence and academic reputation**, enhancing global competitiveness and attractiveness. EUTOPIA partners are already exploring possible matches and complementarities. Shall there be a facilitating regulatory European framework; UPF is willing to develop new international degrees.

UPF has been particularly successful in Jean Monnet and KA2 projects on Educational Technologies. These are niche areas that will continue to receive full support and will transfer their know-how to faculty from different Departments and disciplines. **To double its participation in KA2 and KA3 projects, UPF is targeting the internal champions in educational innovation, youth inclusion and university-labour market transitions**, to proactively support them in applying for Erasmus (bid-discovery workshops, consultation and advice). It is through cooperation projects that they can bring in and share their expertise to further advance practice at UPF and in the European Higher Education Area. EUTOPIA spin-off projects are already opening up the participation of new faculty in KA2 projects.

Beyond numbers, UPF commits to improve and monitor qualitative indicators linked to the satisfaction of beneficiaries and the sustainability of projects:

■ UPF outgoing students show greater levels of satisfaction than incoming students to UPF. The weak points are well-known thanks to the EU-survey results: namely, the course catalogue (level of information, timely availability and updating) and to a lesser extent the information services (accommodation and visas). The internationalisation strategy responds to this diagnostic and takes on the challenge to raise satisfaction indicators of incoming students to no less than 75%.

■ UPF participation in KA107 has been uneven, due to very different success rates in the yearly calls, which has compromised the sustainability of collaborations. Within the new Erasmus programme, UPF intends to create a continuous flow with those countries relevant to its strategic and academic interests to ensure wider impact in the long term. **KA107 will follow a seed-funds**



**scheme looking for sustainability**, with projects and initiatives that spring from teaching staff mobility exchanges closely monitored and supported with extra project manager staff.

■ The new Erasmus blended-mobility approach will serve well the UPF's priority of internationalisation at home and the right mechanisms will be put in place to make sure **blended mobility is integrated into UPF courses**, so that it becomes a building-block of an internationalised curriculum. EUTOPIA co-created modules will be already platforms for experimenting and testing.

These are targets to be tackled step by step and to be achieved as a full deployment of the programme. Moreover, given the current situation created by the COVID-19 and the foreseeable long-term economic and social impact it will have in Spain, UPF is approaching the next Erasmus programme in a timeline that takes into account this crisis context, alongside with its strategy.

