



## **UNIVERSITY OF DUBROVNIK'S ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)**

### **I.**

International cooperation has always been of particular interest for UNIDU's development and affirmation, where the mobility of students and staff has been considered as the imperative in its internationalization process. UNIDU has participated in the Erasmus Program since 2010, which had strongly been encouraged by its former International Development Strategy (2009 – 2015). The results of numerous activities over the last years are visible in the following segments: continuous increase in the number of realized mobility, continuous growth of English-taught courses at all its departments, increase in the number of inter-institutional agreements with European partners, but also with numerous partner countries, increase in the number of events hosting international participants, launching 3 double degree master programs with our partner from Italy (first of this kind in the field of Economics in Croatia), development of strong support mechanisms for mobility participants, and many other. All of the above mentioned has already had a huge impact on UNIDU's modernisation, not only in terms of adjusting its curricula, but also in terms of implementing and upgrading the infrastructural resources to support international cooperation.

By further participation in the Program, UNIDU expects to deploy networks with higher education institutions worldwide in order to develop new, modern study programs with flexible and innovative learning approaches, which will contribute to establishment of the European Education Area, where young people from all over the world will have the opportunity to benefit from the best education and training. Our education systems, as well as our graduates need to be responsive to the fast-changing labour market. Therefore, UNIDU will further support closer cooperation between the higher education institutions and the labour market, it will strive to connect education and entrepreneurship, but it will also promote civic engagement of its students and encourage them to be active European citizens.

UNIDU will continue to strongly support and promote mobility activities ensuring fair and equitable opportunities, while respecting the full automatic recognition of all credits gained abroad. It will undertake and follow all necessary steps to implement digital mobility management, so the European Student Card can become its customary technical

standard, which will enable simplification of administrative procedures in all mobility processes.

To follow-up these international plans, UNIDU adopted another important strategic document – “International and Inter - institutional Cooperation Strategy 2019 – 2025”, which has been developed in line with the relevant national and international strategic documents in which international recognition is emphasized as one of the most important objectives for future development, while strongly encouraging the mobility of students and staff. Pursuant to the aforementioned document, international and inter-university cooperation must be a permanent focus of the University to enable mobility to its students and staff, the launch of joint and/or double degree study programs, scientific and other projects, and inclusion in the European programs and associations. All this fits perfectly into the Erasmus program objectives so UNIDU declares its willingness to fully support and implement these objectives in its internationalisation path.

## II.

In the UNIDU’s International Strategy (2019 – 2025) it is clearly stated that UNIDU should launch new initiatives and be the partner to local community and economy in finding solutions to many challenges we face today and hence contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the City, the County and the Republic of Croatia.

Against that background, it is of outmost importance that with its knowledge and expertise UNIDU contributes to creating new and improving current policies, at both national and European level. By participating in KA3 Actions we will try to stimulate policy dialogue between authorities and education. We plan to engage in different Civil Society Cooperation projects by organising different educational workshops on different topics related to the European policies by which we aim to provide support to local and regional NGOs. Our scientists can provide surveys and analysis to public bodies with the aim to increase knowledge in the field of education and youth, which can result in developing new innovative policies in these fields.

By cooperating with other organisations within the KA2 Actions, UNIDU will constantly promote the attractiveness of the European Higher Education area to different partner countries, but it will also offer its expertise in numerous areas. Currently, UNIDU is participating in several Strategic Partnerships and Capacity Building Projects under the Erasmus+ Program by which it will engage in educating students in partner countries with entrepreneurial and digital skills, it will develop E-learning open platform to strengthen transversal skills of students and staff and it will develop innovative learning materials for students in different fields. UNIDU will continue to tackle modern challenges



by fostering cooperation with international partners worldwide. Special accent will be given to cooperation Projects which strengthen skills necessary for increasing employability of students and staff, encourage design of new curricula and innovative teaching and training methods, knowledge transfer to partner countries. UNIDU will initiate Knowledge Alliance Projects by offering its expertise in different fields (Management, Entrepreneurship, IT Tools, E-Learning Methods etc.), which would be implemented by organizing educational programs with companies, jointly developing solutions for process innovation (which will include students, teachers and entrepreneurs), involvement of company staff into teaching and research, introducing more entrepreneurship courses into curricula etc.

Being aware that engaging in different university networks and associations is important for UNIDU's global positioning, special effort will be invested in becoming a part of at least one European Universities alliance. Such networks focused on excellence and European values will enable UNIDU to offer new diverse programs in English in which students can create their own curricula and experience mobility at all levels of study, but also to strengthen cooperation with recognised European higher education institutions and offer them its expertise in the following fields: maritime, heritage, tourism, water protection and ecology, ICT Tools etc. Recognizing the importance of being a part of such alliance, UNIDU has already submitted a joint proposal. Dubrovnik is a successful tourism destination, as well as a town rich in Cultural Heritage, therefore UNIDU will contribute to this network with its expertise in these 2 areas. It will offer interesting courses to students and researchers will be able to conduct surveys and analysis focusing on Tourism and Heritage preservation, which could finally affect policy makers in developing new policies in heritage preservation, as well as in the field of tourism sustainability policies in such areas.

The above mentioned fields of expertise are of particular interest to UNIDU for initiating Joint Master Degrees via Erasmus Mundus action. We have already established 3 double degree master programs with a partner institution from Italy. Our experience in this segment would help in successful creation of Erasmus Mundus program with diverse partners, which will provide students with top quality education with innovative learning methods.

Last but not least, the Learning Mobility Action in which UNIDU has successfully participated for 10 years now. In the new Program we will continue to strongly support and encourage mobility of inbound and outbound students and staff, but also to continually work on removing any obstacles which might occur. Special attention will be given to inclusion of those with fewer opportunities in the mobility activities and to



blended mobility, particularly in raising awareness of all stakeholders included in this new concept of mobility, which will ensure flexibility and better access to the Program possibilities.

### III.

Participation in programs such as Erasmus significantly influences the development of any higher education institution and each participant - both in personal and professional aspect. Participation in mobility activities and other projects results in a number of benefits for students and staff: increased employability, personal growth, enhancement of social and interpersonal skills, foreign language learning etc. UNIDU recognizes the importance of being active in promoting all these benefits among its students and staff, and is constantly encouraging and supporting participation in different activities. This is also stated in its main strategic document for internationalization “International and Inter - institutional Cooperation Strategy 2019-2025”, in which we have set the objectives of achieving a level of 15% of domicile students participating in mobility programs by 2025, and employee participation rate of 25% on a yearly basis by 2025.

Another important objective set in the Strategy is to launch at least one foreign language study program on each of the UNIDU departments by the end of the Strategy period. This objective fits perfectly with possibilities available within Erasmus KA2 actions, in which UNIDU plans to intensify its involvement in the next period. Such study programs will have an important long term benefit for UNIDU, not only in terms of constant improvement of the quality of its curricula, adopting new innovative teaching methods, but it will attract full time students from all over the world which would strongly contribute to European vision towards the European Education Area. Opening of the first Student Dormitory in Dubrovnik (September 2020) will support achieving this objective as it will offer high standard accommodation for students and many additional services, which will have a positive impact on sustainability of such quality study programs offered in English.

Cooperation with international partners in Projects within KA2 Actions of the Program contributed to developing and sharing best practices and innovative approaches in different fields. UNIDU will continue to encourage cooperation with institutions that are ahead of us in terms of quality, research development and study activities (for the sake of acquiring new knowledge and innovative methods), but also associate with those that lag behind us (for the sake of dissemination of our own knowledge). Projects which UNIDU will continue to initiate are aimed at fostering cooperation between education sector and business and at acquiring skills necessary for better position at the labour market. With these projects UNIDU will strive to build digital entrepreneurship skills and new



innovative digital platforms. Since such topics are crucial for economic growth, creation of jobs and social cohesion, it is clear they will have a long term impact not only on UNIDU, but also on local, regional and national level. As indicated in its Strategy, UNIDU will therefore strive to increase its active participation in KA2 Projects with partners from program and partner countries.

In order to meet the goals set in its international Strategy, UNIDU will not only continue to invest effort in providing a strong support to all mobility and Project participants, but it will continue to monitor the impact of targets set in the Strategy as well as the Program targets. This would be accomplished by continuous Reports presented to the University Management and National Agency, by different questionnaires specially created for different groups of participants (and people involved in the management of activities), and by using different on-line Tools, such as ECHE Self- Assessment Tool.

