University of Zurich
Global Student Experience
Rämistrasse 71
8006 Zurich
www.int.uzh.ch

Erasmus Policy Statement

24.09.2026

Participation in E+

International cooperation is a foundational value of the University of Zurich (UZH) and an integral part of its mission statement (https://www.uzh.ch/en/explore/basics/mission.html). This includes fostering international collaboration in research and teaching, as well as promoting student exchange. To these ends, the University of Zurich is making full use of the different forms of international cooperation that are open to us under the Programme designed to support mobility of students and staff in Switzerland (Swiss-European Mobility Programme, abbr. SEMP) and as a partner country in the Erasmus+ Programme, which has resulted in increasing numbers of mobile students and staff in recent years.

UZH is already engaged in several Erasmus+ activities or their SEMP equivalent and has well-established structures to administer student and staff mobility at scale (KA1). To meet diverse needs of students and staff from all backgrounds, we will continue to extend the range of exchange formats – physical, blended and virtual – in which UZH participates, and to expand our mobility cooperations with higher education institutions (HEIs) in Erasmus+ Programme countries and beyond.

International cooperation with other HEIs is a key driver of institutional development at UZH. Accordingly, UZH is an active participant in Cooperation Projects under KA2, including:

— Una.Futura project for the Una Europa alliance (Partnership for Excellence): as associated partner, UZH has actively contributed to the development of multilateral teaching and R&I formats across the alliance, including two Joint Bachelors in Sustainability Studies (BASUS) and European Studies (BAES), the Doctoral Programme in Cultural Heritage (Una-Her-Doc) and a Module Exchange in Data Science and AI. These initiatives have provided invaluable experience in multilateral cooperation and have advanced the internationalization of the student body of all participating HEIs.
— Sustainable Erasmus+ Travel (SET; Cooperation Partnership): this project advances sustainable student mobility e.g. by encouraging low-carbon travel and identifying green skills one can gain through environmentally friendly journeys. The project's outputs are being directly integrated into UZH's information and awareness-raising measures for sustainable travel.

Participation on KA3 activities has so far not been a possibility for UZH as an HEI in a partner country. UZH has welcomed the opportunity to participate in some Jean Monnet Actions in the past on the initiative of individual faculty members.

Erasmus+ provides the necessary framework for UZH and like-minded institutions to cooperate on the development of research and teaching structures that distinguish themselves through their commitment to excellence, social responsibility and sustainability, while empowering students and staff to experience themselves as European citizens. For the remainder of the current Erasmus+ Programme generation (2021-2027), UZH's main priority is to ensure the seamless continuation of current Erasmus+ activities (physical and hybrid mobility, as well as Cooperation Projects, as outlined above), while implementing the administrative changes required for participation in the Programme.

Switzerland's reassociation with the Erasmus+ Programme provides a singular opportunity for UZH to consolidate and expand its cooperation and mobility activities with HEIs in Europe and around the world. UZH is committed to leverage the full potential of the Programme in the coming years.

Strategy, Objectives, Impact

Founded in 1833 as the first university established by a democratic political body, the University of Zurich has shown a commitment to equitable access early on. Shortly after UZH began to admit women in the early 1860s, the Russian Nadezhda Suslova made history at UZH in 1867 by being the first woman in Europe to earn a doctoral degree. Accessibility and internationalization are thus deeply rooted in UZH's identity and remain central to our mission.

Anchored in the understanding that we live in an interconnected world with shared challenges that transcend borders, UZH's Global Strategy 2030 sets out a comprehensive vision for internationalization across five thematic areas:

(1) Fostering a diverse and culturally rich environment in which a diverse community can study, teach, work, and conduct research.
(2) Maintaining strong global and European partnerships that advance high-quality education and research within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
(3) Encouraging students and staff to be internationally mobile and gain experience in new contexts.
(4) Promoting exchange and collaboration between science, technology, business and wider society to address global challenges.
(5) Strengthening UZH's international visibility and reputation through excellence, strategic partnerships, outreach and communication.

As the framework within which all HEIs in our neighboring countries and the wider region operate, the Erasmus+ Programme is key to achieving these objectives.

First, Erasmus+ provides robust and well-tested mechanisms for organizing student and staff mobility. A diverse university environment at UZH (1) is only achievable if we can host international students and staff from a broad range of backgrounds – a goal substantially supported by the Programme's commitment to equal and equitable access. Similarly, encouraging all members of the UZH community to gain international experience (3) depends on fair opportunities for mobility. Accordingly, UZH applies principles of non-discrimination, transparency, and inclusion when selecting participants for mobility and awarding grants. Equitable access is ensured by:

— Fair, transparent and documented selection procedures
— UZH-financed grants to supplement SEMP/Erasmus+ grants for students with strict financial constraints
— The continuing expansion of mobility offers available to UZH members, with a particular emphasis on blended mobility formats to widen participation

Second, the Programme provides effective frameworks for the Cooperation Projects that are essential for areas (2), (4) and (5). Fostering exchange and collaboration between science, technology, business and wider society to tackle the (global) challenges we face (4) can be achieved with much greater effect when HEIs work together closely, learn from each other's success and failures, pool resources, and share networks – as UZH is experiencing as full member of Una Europa. Experiences gained in the alliance and other KA2 partnerships have supported UZH's modernization by fostering innovative teaching methods, digital collaboration, and cross-border curriculum development, which is essential for global competitiveness in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

Third, the Programme provides further opportunities for UZH to contribute to a cohesive, inclusive, and forward-looking EHEA (2). Building on its strong engagement through SEMP and Erasmus+, and its membership in networks such as the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and the European University Foundation (EUF), UZH aims to deepen its involvement by:

— Facilitating seamless educational pathways across the EHEA, with particular attention to learners with fewer opportunities
— Strengthening mutual trust and quality assurance through the automatic recognition of learning outcomes and ECTS credits gained abroad (including blended mobility)
— Ensuring the quality of mobility activities and Cooperation Projects throughout all stages
— Implementing the priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme in full

All of the above aligns with UZH's mission and values and is foundational to the final area of the Global Strategy: cultivating international visibility and reputation through excellence, strategic partnerships, outreach and communication (5).

UZH's commitment to internationalization is further reflected in our contribution to European and global networks, such as LERU, EUF and Universitas21 (U21) and close collaboration with our Strategic Partner Universities. Internally, UZH has established a range of mechanisms to fund and promote innovations in teaching (ULF) and research (UFO). While not limited to internationalization efforts, these instruments can be and have been used to support international cooperations. Specifically for international initiatives consistent with the Global Strategy, UZH has instituted the Global Funding Scheme, which provides faculties, departments and professional service units with the funding to pursue joint collaborations with UZH's Network and Priority Partners (https://www.global.uzh.ch/en/global_university/funding-instruments/partnerships-fund.html). Further, UZH has been mandated by Switzerland's State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) to be the Leading House for the bilateral science and technology cooperation program of Switzerland with the Asia-Pacific region (https://www.global.uzh.ch/en/Leading-House-Asia-Pacific.html).

With regard to teaching, UZH has defined internationalization as one of the key pillars of the UZH Curriculum, a set of university-wide quality standards for all academic programs (https://www.teaching.uzh.ch/en/initiative/uzhcurriculum.html). The Curriculum posits that successful interpersonal communication between people with different cultural backgrounds is becoming increasingly important in our increasingly globalized world and that having a wide variety of international touchpoints in teaching, combined with new forms of student mobility, serves to expand students' horizons and their personal networks.

As a university that recognizes that we all share one world marked by diversity and complexity at local, national and international levels, UZH sees the Erasmus+ Programme as the essential framework for international collaboration, which is indispensable for securing our common future. By participating in the Programme, UZH contributes to building a Europe where knowledge flows freely, diverse perspectives are valued, and collaborative approaches to complex challenges become the norm.

Indicators

While participation in the Erasmus+ Programme is important for UZH as an institution, it is primarily meant to benefit Bachelor and Master students, PhD candidates, teaching staff across all seven faculties and all administrative staff – particularly those from underrepresented groups or with fewer opportunities.

In alignment with its Global Strategy and the Erasmus+ agenda, UZH aims to maintain the quality of implementation and the current growth rate of mobile students and staff, while adapting the mobility program from the SEMP to the Erasmus+ framework. In the near-term, UZH will focus on intensifying and expanding cooperation with Una Europa's 10 other member universities. Specific targets and indicators for the remainder of the Programme generation 2020-2027 are:

Mobility of Students and Staff (KA1)

- Increasing the number of outgoing and incoming students, UZH is working toward the EHEA targets of 20% and 23% mobile students, respectively, among graduates
- Targets for the Call 2027:
  - Increase SMS/SMP outgoing and incoming numbers by 10%
  - Increase STA and STT numbers to the extent financially feasible
- To provide UZH members with a wide variety of mobility options, increase blended mobility activity:
  - Coordinate an additional 2-3 BIPs
  - Participate in 10 BIP consortia
- Increase mobility within Una Europa by fully participating in and promoting joint mobility initiatives in the alliance
- UZH's mobility participants reflect a balanced representation of faculties, disciplines and individual characteristics (gender, socio-economic background, etc.)

Support for Mobility Participants

- Mobility grants are paid out to students prior to the commencement of the mobility stay
- Maintain support services for outgoing and incoming students and staff
- Further foster awareness for sustainable travel options and continue to provide UZH funds to incentivize green travel to the maximum extent possible
- Continue to ensure the accuracy of information on mobility programs for all students and staff
- Maintain automatic credit recognition

Quality of Implementation

- Administer all Inter-Institutional Agreements (IIAs), Learning Agreements (LAs) and Nominations through EWP network (if technically feasible for partner institutions)
- Identify how European Student Card and Erasmus+ App can be integrated in existing processes
- Maintain appropriate response to complaints from mobile students and staff, and ensure that participant feedback informs changes to the mobility program administration

Involvement in Cooperation Projects (KA2+3)

- Extend participation in Cooperation Projects in the context of Una Europa
- Specifically: participate in 1-2 (successful) Cooperation Project consortia
- Further build the capacity and services to support the participation in and implementation of KA2 and KA3 projects through exchange of experiences with Una Europa, Strategic Partner Universities and network partners

Long-Term Impact of Erasmus+ Participation

- Individual mobility participants (especially students) develop a range of skills that are relevant for personal development and employability (intercultural competencies, multilingualism, resilience, sense of civic responsibility, problem solving skills, application/project management skills, etc.) in line with the European Skills Agenda
- Support the continued development of Una Europa with an engaged UZH community that contributes high-quality administrative support for teaching and R&I in the alliance
- Application and implementation of results and learnings from Cooperation Projects that are relevant to UZH's goals
- Members of UZH who participate in Erasmus+ activities cultivate a sense of Switzerland as part of Europe and bring this to bear in their communities

In addition to these particular targets, UZH is committed to support further activities and developments. Especially, additional potential is expected to be unlocked by bottom-up initiatives, which UZH is prepared to support and foster.

We are convinced that the full potential of participating in the Erasmus+ Programme will unfold over multiple years and accordingly aim to balance achievability and ambition in the targets for each period. UZH commits to updating the Erasmus Policy Statement on the website whenever significant changes to activities or objectives occur, and to informing our national agency of such changes.