

Erasmus Policy Statement - 2021-2027

Pegaso Online University

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Institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy

The internationalization strategy of our University is based on a mission of interculturalism and globalisation of knowledge. Thanks to the flexibility and innovation of its IT framework, Pegaso aims at growing in the international context as the University of interculturalism and of 'Made in Italy'. The E-learning platform is the tool that allows the University to bring education also in the less developed countries of the world and to offer the best educational opportunities to boost our graduates' CV and strengthen their chances for a rewarding career. In addition, Pegaso educational offer is tailored specifically to match the needs of its students and focuses on the empowerment of people, by responding to the growing need of professionalization and specialization of competences as requested by the European job market.

In this context, the participation in the Erasmus+ programme represents one of the key activities in Pegaso and is crucial in our international strategy. The Europeanization and globalization of the knowledge and labour market is achieved by Pegaso Online University and stated in our objectives of promoting the scientific cooperation and the transnational mobility of students and teaching staff. What also helps us in achieving our goals is the implementation of a vast network of academic agreements with public and private institutions as well as the participation in regional, national and EU research programmes.

Drawing up of new partnerships is, in fact, fostering the strategic positioning of the University in a network of collaboration and dialogue aimed at sharing best practices. The use of the ICT scheme in our education and scientific research is particularly beneficial and enables Pegaso to create a scalable model that ensures transferability of good practise in an international context.

The internationalization strategy of the University recently expanded into affiliations with large academic networks as Unimed and Emuni, which are concentrated in the Euro-Mediterranean region, Eucen, which involves the main academic institutions in Northern Europe, and Eden, that crosses the continents from the East to the West. These networks enclose institutions that operate in various scientific fields with the aim to promote research and training in order to contribute to the scientific, cultural, social and economic growth. The affiliation to these networks has fostered the signing of many Memorandum of Understanding with new partners in order to launch a mutual interest exchange of information and equipment, boost the mobility of students, teachers/tutors/lecturers/researchers and administrative staff. The partnerships encourage research activities and joint publications, as well as participation in seminars, events and professional growth opportunities and finally development of special academic programmes. Furthermore, these channels allowed Pegaso to recruit academics from the international academic panorama in order to set up courses with an international appeal.

Furthermore, in the past year alone, Pegaso has opened educational centres in Spain, Serbia, Switzerland, Albania, Singapore, Russia, UK, Peru, Portugal, Brazil, Turkey, Greece and Honduras, enabling cross continental penetration strategy which foresees the selection of centres that already have a strong background behind in the field of education. These centres, ones open and functional, subsequently follow the accreditation as Pegaso educational centres. They carry out orientation/support activities for foreign students, simplifying their contact with Pegaso e-learning methodology, and are always in compliance with the University policies.

With the aim to participate in Erasmus+, Pegaso aims to achieve the following objectives:

- increasing the incoming and outgoing mobility of students, lecturers and technical-administrative staff;
- activating joint or double degrees with other academic institutions, in particular in the area of the southern shore of the Mediterranean. This objective can be achieved by having mutual academic recognition as well as offering to students from those countries the possibility to obtain a further qualification that is valid on the EU labour market;
- qualifying and strengthening the cooperation agreements for research and education, in order to identify new development directions and the strengthening of agreements in specific areas, both disciplinary and based on location;
- promoting cooperation activities for cultural and scientific development with non-European countries,
- improving the quality of communications thanks to communication and welcome tools built into our website that are aimed at incoming foreign users, both teaching staff and students, also through the development and implementation of information dissemination tools in foreign language/s.

Our participation in Erasmus+ will also help us contribute to building a European education area, because as a University we are committed to work to ensure maximum comparability, compatibility and consistency between the education systems of member states that is also stated in the confirmation of adherence to the principles of the Bologna Process and to its subsequent progress. All the above is established with the ultimate aim to ensure mobility and mutual recognition between study courses, both completed and partial, in order to contribute to the growth and competitiveness of member states. By doing this we also follow and recognise the Lisbon Convention principles of sharing and recognition of educational qualifications related to higher education in Europe.

To conclude, the main objectives that the University intends to pursue concern, among others, the growth of prestige and international profile, the increase in international attractiveness for potential students, the mutual recognition of the academic qualifications issued.

Institutional strategy for the implementation of Erasmus action.

The University aims to further expand its participation in the Erasmus actions, from mobility programmes to the actions supported by KA2 and KA3 (such as, Strategic partnerships, Knowledge alliances and Capacity building), being in line with the fostering of the Strategic Plan 2016-2020

and the planning of the Internationalization Goals for the subsequent planning period. Special attention will be given to the investments envisaged in the field of: human resources and organization, sustainable progress in language skills, strengthening of international networks, increased offer of study courses in English, growth of mutually recognised agreements for qualifications.

Participation in the actions mentioned above shall contribute to the achievement of the objectives stated in our institutional strategy, since the Strategic Plan includes, among others, the following objectives:

- promoting the mode of delivery of courses and modules in foreign languages;
- strengthening of our planning within the Erasmus+ programme;
- the growth in the quantity of agreements, also reaching higher mobility of researchers and academic staff;
- promoting the general development of language skills held by teaching staff and researcher's;
- improving the quality of teaching of foreign languages for outgoing and incoming students;
- the implementation of international language certifications by supporting activities organised by the University Language Centre (CLA);
- launching a summer/winter face-to-face school that uses the CLIL methodology by integrating foreign languages as a tool for learning a non-linguistic discipline;
- providing supplementary foreign language modules through virtual classrooms in order to meet the needs of students who prepare to spend a period of time studying abroad;
- increasing managerial and operational strategic competences of researchers and the administrative staff in the search for future opportunities and in the planning phase;
- increasing partnerships, networks and applications to participate in consortiums;
- promoting international partnerships.

Expected impact of the institution participation in the Erasmus+ programme.

The participation in the Erasmus+ programme in the last years has undoubtedly added value to Pegaso Online University. The competitive advantages and the impact linked to its participation resulted in a strong increase of students outgoing mobility, in a significant growth of international partnerships and in a significant contribution to new educational policies. Particular attention must be paid to digital methods and technologies used in distance learning methodologies. In fact, it is not a coincidence that Pegaso Online University, thanks to the engagement of all its supporters, is committed to:

1. Contributing to the scientific, cultural and civil growth of the local, national and international communities in the field of research, pedagogy and higher education.

2. Offering a fully developed Quality Assurance System that assesses the performance of all activities carried out. Thanks to that system we can proudly say that the quality objectives are achieved. This demonstrates to the interested parties that the University has the capacity to meet the requirements, carry out high quality training services and respond to the training demand being requested;

3. Fostering development and healthy circulation of knowledge, technological progress and cultural/ professional growth of people. All this is enabled thanks to an environment inspired by dialogue, collaboration and openness to the scientific international community.

Anticipating a significant impact on the national and international community, Pegaso Online University is committed to inform and actively involve all stakeholders in the follow-up processes which are constant and happen throughout to all stages of a given project. The actions and the decisions resulting from the follow-up policies must be fair, transparent and directly transmitted to the stakeholders who will have the right to analyse and are obliged to contribute to:

1. the process of improving the policies activated in the field of mobility, creation and management of partnerships, especially those with an international value;
2. the evolution of a quality training process characterized by a strong interaction between needs, planning, provision and evaluation of the impact they have on the educational and training actions, with respect to the dynamics of any particular territorial developments;
3. any accompanying and supportive actions for land development programmes, aiming at increasing competitiveness and strengthening social cohesion;
4. to improve the impact assessment has on of the investments undertaken in education and training in regional policies.

In order to measure the impact of the participation, the University intends to implement constant monitoring of the proposed objectives, through the definition and fine-tuning of the following qualitative indicators:

- substantial increase of incoming and outgoing students' mobility;
- appeals, encouragement and support of administrative staff mobility;
- appeals, encouragement and support of lecturers' mobility;
- greater overall satisfaction with the quality of the services provided by students in mobility;
- encouraging the diversification of the European countries interested in student's mobility;
- further growth of in participation in European cooperation projects;
- Increase in the strategic, managerial and operational competences of researchers and administrative staff in the research of international cooperation projects opportunities and in the planning phase;
- a greater impact on teaching and research cooperation on European and non-European levels.

With reference to the quantitative indicators, the University aims at and is proposing to achieve the following targets, for each of them, an increase of 30% in 2024 and 50% by 2027:

- No. of students studying in mobility;
- No. of students in mobility submitted in apprenticeships;
- No. of staff in mobility doing training/teaching;
- No. of countries to choose from for study mobility;
- No. of countries to choose from for apprenticeships mobility options;
- No. of inter-institutional Agreements for Erasmus mobility;
- No. of people engaged in the design of European and non-European scientific cooperation agreements;
- No. of international research and educational cooperation projects.

In order to guarantee the necessary sustainability and the long-term impact of existing projects, the University aims at investing in multiple directions to give authoritative credibility and achieve our international ambitions. The investments that the University will undertake concern:

- Sharing of good practices on how to increase and measure the international competences of teaching staff and researchers;
- Development of administrative services to support lecturer's mobility, student's mobility and reception;
- Systematisation and internal coordination of strategies, creation of governance bodies;
- Collaboration in Higher Education Management projects;
- Students' possibilities to access study programmes not available in their institutions/countries;
- Possibility to partake in international networks in order to conduct research and benefit from the experience and knowledge of researchers from all over the world.