



## Erasmus Policy statement (EPS)

The University of Gdansk aspires to be a modern, multidisciplinary institution which by sustainable and reflective development strategy creates the friendly environment to develop scientific thought, conduct innovative research and provides the best academic basis for development of every individuals (students, teachers, researchers) involved.

The participation in the Erasmus Programme is an important part of our internationalization strategy. The international exchange contributes to broadening academic experience, understanding different cultural perspective, based on mutual respect, trust equality policy, and building the modern academic thriving institution.

The opportunities included in Erasmus perfectly matches the UG's goals. In perspective of mutual benefits, by implementation of Erasmus mobilities UG:

- constantly expanding the scope of its capabilities throughout cooperation with the institutions from other countries, especially from EU area;
- creates the space/platform to strengthen the competitiveness, attractiveness and accessibility;
- builds connections and initiates the cooperation with other academic and non-academic institutions all over the Europe;
- increases the number of students and staff, who through participation in European educational mobility programmes improve their professional, social and intercultural skills;
- the skills acquired by individuals have overestimated impact on the university environment. The added values of implemented mobilities contribute to taking on a new challenges on the field of science and research, leading to introducing innovations and further international projects;
- the Erasmus mobilities (inbound, outbound) between UG and other HEIs from all over the Europe contributes to raising and unifying teaching standards, oblige to create a broader English language offer and leading to continuous modernization of recognition system;
- supports the university's efforts to create opportunities gain international experience for people from disadvantaged environments.

In a natural way, due to UG's geographical location, the university concentrates on these subjects, which include either the Baltic Sea or the maritime issues in general. This approach is important when the University looks for their international partners. UG finds it extremely important and valuable to create close cooperation with those focusing on maritime issues.

Becoming a part of The European University of the Seas (SEA-EU) (University of Cádiz (UCA, Spain), University of Western Brittany (UBO, France), Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel (CAU, Germany), University of Gdansk (UG, Poland) and University of Malta (UM, Malta) alliance is the strategic response to the economic and social challenges and it currently represents the highest level of internationalization in the higher education area. Key commitments of The European University of the Seas (SEA-EU), which can be mirrored to our internationalization policy in general, include:

- increase the level of knowledge and integration between the partner universities through deep analysis of our educational offers, research strategies, services, databases and infrastructures, sharing resources and good practices;
- develop models for quality assured automatic academic recognition of foreign qualifications and periods of learning;
- internationalise our curricula, our students and our staff;
- craft joint study programmes to facilitate the mobility of our students – at undergraduate, masters and doctoral level;
- develop measures to overcome the identified mobility obstacles;
- improve the linguistic competences of our students and staff and foster multilingualism;
- strengthen and promote the European identity through cultural and social dimension, respecting non-discrimination policies;
- increase the number of joint research projects and boost the scientific productivity;
- reinforce the Erasmus traineeships in companies;
- increase University-industry cooperation.

According to UG's policy it is important to develop cooperation among other HEIs from our geographical region (Pomorskie province). A long-term cooperation project called "Study in Pomorskie" enables our University along with other leading HEIs from the region: Gdansk University of Technology, Medical University of Gdansk and Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk to present all our assets and strong points altogether and thus strengthen our international recognition in order to attract potential students from across the world.

The cooperation's further aim is to draw other institutions' attention to our project which shall result in cooperating with partners from abroad: not only education and research institutions, but also enterprises or social partners. The universities unite their efforts to effectively support international students who intend to visit the region.

There are two actions in Erasmus which the UG is interested. It is "The mobility of higher education students and staff" action and "Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities" action. These two components complement each other.

Before the implementation of individual mobilities the Inter-institutional agreements are signed. The procedure of signing is preceded by matching educational offers and consulting the conditions conducted between Erasmus Coordinators from institutions involved. Recruitment is provided on the faculties according to the field of sciences and guarantees equal access and takes into account the disadvantage groups. Consulted and approved Learning Agreement before the mobility is mandatory. After the mobility full recognition for satisfactorily completed program abroad is guaranteed. The UG Erasmus Office supports administratively both incoming and outgoing students throughout the whole process: before, during and after the mobility. The possibility of short term studies abroad gives the students different perspectives, improve self confidence and encourage them for taking on new challenges. After the mobility, the new skills gained abroad by our students drive our institution to implement innovations on the field of educational methods, sciences and the structure. Hosting international Erasmus students integrating and engaging them in the university life is the opportunity to improve our "internationalisation at home". The possibility of Erasmus internship give the chance for students to apply theory and academic knowledge in real, day-to-day business situations and developing their entrepreneurial skills. The added value like improvement of the foreign language, and intercultural skills providing our students to be more successful, both at the local and international labour market. The UG attitude to Erasmus teaching staff mobility is to encourage especially these academics that have not had the opportunity yet to provide partner universities with lectures and with the exchange of ideas and good practice.

Our European University is a public space for transnational collaboration between universities, professional training centres and businesses, an integrated European campus with strengthened mobility and continuous education of university students and staff. As such, the SEA-EU alliance is fully committed to the European, 10-years objective of 50 % mobility, developing virtual mobility, increasing classical real mobility of students, but also staff and teachers. With this aim, SEA-EU members tend to put in place mechanisms to eliminate the barriers for mobility identified within the consortium. Mobility of students, teachers and staff in the European area is an essential facilitating factor for the integration of people around European values. Virtual and blended mobility shall support the physical mobility, which remains priority within our consortium. The creation of the SEA-EU hosting platform for lodging students at host families will make mobility process more inclusive, collaboration with associated partners and stakeholders will enhance traineeships and the development of the family mobility will minimize obstacles to staff mobility.

For many years already the different editions of Erasmus Programme have become an integral part of the University. The Programme is one of the main driving forces for the development of the University. The further participation in the Program will significantly contribute to fulfil our objectives for the upcoming years on.

It will expand our educational offer by giving the students the opportunity to study abroad in wide range of our partner institutions. Experienced with mobility students shall be able to exchange their thoughts with the rest of the university community, e.g. sharing knowledge, skills and competences acquired during mobility abroad and transfer the different approach to their field of study presented by HEIs hosting them.

The Erasmus mobilities undertaken by the university staff will have severe influence on professional development of teachers and researchers and will be admitted as a quality improvement of the educational methods at home.

Capabilities provided by the Programme will be invaluable support in creation the new interdisciplinary, international partnerships and establish cross-border co-operation on the field of education, innovation and research, either on the university or the faculty level.

Quantitative indicators for students and staff mobility:

-Students mobility (traditional) – increasing by min. 0,2% in relation to the total number of students in each subsequent year.

-Students mobility (blended) – new type of mobility - assessing the capacity of the university and estimating of demand, then implementation. On this stage the scale is unpredictable.

-Staff mobility (teaching and non-academic staff) - increasing by around. 0,5% in relation to the total number of staff in each subsequent year. The goal is to equalize the level of mobility among different structures of the university and involvement of individuals from less active departments.

Within the scope of our European University alliance, the impact should be visible in two stages. Along with a three-year “action plan” that is closely linked to the implementation of The European University of the Seas (SEA-EU) project, this alliance also implies a ten-year vision that emphasizes the alliance’s sustainability. According to the long-term vision, the goal is to create a fully functional and maximally intertwined European University over the next ten years. A university sharing resources, networks experts, creates new joint projects, programmes, and develops as a whole. A university that is ready to respond to all modern challenges.