



Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine “ King Michael I of Romania” from Timișoara

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

The mission of the University is to provide a high level of learning, teaching, and research experience for all those who are studying and working into it, as well to ensure scientifically research, academic extension, and consultancy. The University is committed to respect in full the principles of the non-discrimination set out in the Programme and ensure equal access and opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds. The strategy of the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, aims at integration into the European higher and international education system, in terms of structural, quality and economic efficiency, modernization of training system and use of staff involved in the training and research process, affirming the scientific performances of its members in participating in international communities of specialists and interuniversity cooperation, continuous development of staff, promotion of study programs, scientific research, technological development, educational innovation, scientific creation and technique. USAMVBT's international strategy envisages openness to both the European space and partner countries, with a strong emphasis on the ERASMUS + Mobility Program, which it recognizes as a major means of increasing the university's visibility at an international level.

International strategy

The international strategy is oriented to strength the cooperation with partner institutions and to enrich this experience with universities from non-participating countries. The main goal of the University is to train specialists at a very high scientific and technological level which will help them to integrate as fast as possible on the current and future labour market and stay in a competitive environment due to a great capacity of adapting to competition, change, and innovation. BUAS is always concerned with finding strong and well-positioned partners in the university ranking of quality, open to dialogue and evolution. The strategy regarding BUAS's internationalization stipulates as main objective the increase of the number of mobilities by improving the Erasmus + Program, the recognition of qualifications and standards for the teaching and administrative staff. At local, regional and national level, Erasmus + mobility projects lead to the increase of professional insertion through individual development, to the improvement of linguistic competences, to the consolidation of economic, cultural and academic

realities with the institution and the partner country, to the awareness of the importance and understanding of new cultures and religions, eliminating ethnic prejudices. National and international visibility will give us a greater number of candidates for study programs in Romanian and in foreign languages (English and French), but also for the postgraduate program, and a better visibility on the labour market and a number of greater academic and research cooperation projects with universities and institutions in the country and from abroad. The creation of new interinstitutional agreements and partnerships, but also the consolidation of the existing ones will be basic elements in obtaining outstanding results at academic and scientific level, because developing E + mobility, is part of a strategy to create an environment where teachers and researchers can share experiences and bring an advantage with their expertise and experience. Cooperation between teachers and researchers will have a special impact for each partner university, it will improve research and current teaching quality, publish scientific papers with international impact, involvement in multidisciplinary research projects granting international visibility.

The University ensures that Erasmus activities are eligible for all students and staff, offering equal opportunities for study and teaching abroad. Full support services for disabled students and staffs are provided. Any individual or group will be treated equally, irrespective of their characteristics. Due to the positive social and cultural atmosphere in the University no discrimination “based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation” are in place. The main target group represents the students of the first and second cycle of study, as well the PhD students.

In addition to the Erasmus + ICM programs, BUAS has in implementation and evaluation outstanding projects, as a leader or partner, with partners from the Program and Partner countries, with which we started the collaboration through the E + ICM program, and through incoming and outgoing mobility exchanges. Thus, we extended the size of the E + KA1 program to other Key Actions, Key Action 2, (KA2) where we have submitted projects, under evaluation: CBHE- Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education, where we are a leader, European Universitiespartners, together by the leader – Univ. of Algarve, Portugal, Strategic Partnership, and other projects under Key Action 2, and in the next period, BUAS will develop partnerships for application with E + partners for other actions: Jean Monnet, Knowledge Alliances, Jean Monnet, Knowledge Alliances, Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices, Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, Partnerships for Innovation, (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation but also AUF actions, especially with partners in French-speaking African countries, and regarding the KA2 actions, starting this year, through the Students' League (which brings together several thousand students) we want to access the specific projects in the field of Youth but also the projects that can be submitted within the European Corps of Solidarity. Thus, we maintain a continuity in the development of mobility by creating new partnerships and reinforcing the existing ones. All the mobility carried out, students and staff, realized within the Erasmus + program represented a way to fulfil the internationalization

strategy of BUAS, offering the participants the possibility to know the best teaching / learning practices and to promote the BUAS image. In the case of students, these mobilities were a way to better adapt to the demands and challenges of the labour market, and for staff, the opportunity to bring teaching technology as close as possible to European standards.

Objectives

The strategic objectives of BUAS are: stimulating students to study and do internships abroad to increase their experience for an international work environment, encouraging students to develop their language, social and intercultural skills, to provide opportunities to continue academic interaction, improving their scientific and technological knowledge, increasing the profile and international perspectives of staff, developing program projects and international research partnerships and strengthening mobility and cooperation based on the Bologna process. An important goal is to develop cooperation with institutes in our region, Europe, but especially with countries in the North and other continents, BUAS being oriented to attract students and staff from non-EU countries, the Middle East, Asia, South America and Africa. We currently have 54 partner countries with 87 partner universities. An active presence of the university in the program will increase the quality and relevance of higher education. Teaching in an international context favours academic experience, generates flexible and innovative educational tools and approaches. The active involvement of employers in the design and delivery of education, through the development of internships in companies, will ensure employability and entrepreneurship. Internships performed directly on the labour market intensively use knowledge and motivate students and teachers. Better learning and teaching conditions, as well as better recognition and reward for excellence in teaching and research attract and retain high quality academic staff. Within the Erasmus + KA1 program, BUAS took the first steps towards its digitalization, by introducing the OLA and Dashboard platform, focusing on simplifying the current process, thus trying to follow the directives established at European level. The management of the Erasmus + project, within the Key Action 1, ICM, mobility projects, is provided by the Erasmus + Office, which is subordinated to the Office of the Vice President for International Relations, and which includes: Erasmus + institutional coordinator and E + departmental coordinators, Bureau secretariat, Accounting service, and E + volunteers. The activity of the Erasmus + Bureau carried out with the support of the Rector's Office, the Prorectorate of International Relations, the Faculties, the participants and other collaborators was based on the general principles of transparency, fairness and non-discrimination in the process of selecting participants. inter-institutional agreements, logistical support before and during mobility, timely completion of documents, monitoring of mobility, dissemination of benefits and results, reporting of results. The website of the Erasmus + Office (<https://erasmus.usab-tm.ro/>) on the university website is constantly updated to ensure full transparency of the activities carried out. The Erasmus + Office ensures permanent communication with partner institutions. Also, the management of the budget, the reporting to ANPCDEFP, the realization of the Financial Contracts with the participants and the transfer of the scholarships are in the responsibility of the

Erasmus + Office. The selection of candidates, the preparation of study / placement contracts, the recognition of the satisfactorily completed activities of the mobility period are the responsibility of the departmental coordinators, respectively of the specialized commissions at the faculty level (selection commissions, respectively equivalence commissions), being carried out accordingly with the Erasmus Regulation. The selection of candidates for Erasmus + mobility is made through a competition based on the cumulative academic results and the selection interview, the results being displayed very quickly, after the expiration of the contestation period. Transparency and equal opportunities are ensured, assumed by signing the ECHE, minutes of finding are made. To date, within BUAS there have been no cases of discrimination against any student or teaching / administrative staff regarding gender equality, religion, race or nationality. After displaying the final list of mobility results, the selected students are assisted by the E + departmental coordinator from the home university, in concluding the study contract, respectively in preparing the file that will reach the E + Office, then concluding the financial contract, and paying the first instalment. (80%). All the disciplines approved in the study contract by the Erasmus + Departmental Coordinator respect the following criteria: they belong to the curricular areas of the study program that the student follows, without being necessarily identical to those in the student's curriculum (it is appreciated in terms of competence, objectives, not content); have not been previously studied by the student. The successful conclusion of the study period and the observance of the obligations assumed by the study contract, leads to the automatic and integral recognition of the post mobility results.

Expected impact

The Erasmus + program is an important pillar of the internationalization strategy and the main objective of the SMS / SMP / STA / STT mobility is to achieve the goals proposed in the Strategy for Increasing International Visibility and the Human Resources Strategy of USAMVBT, and aims at the following aspects: Training teachers' skills to use modern teaching methods and appropriate tools for research and development of professional skills; Increasing the capacity of teachers to organize integrated teaching activities - interactive learning of different disciplines taught at partner universities; Encouraging cooperation between teachers who teach similar subjects and initiatives to organize interdisciplinary, cross-curricular educational approaches; Qualitative improvement, diversification and increasing the attractiveness of the curricular offer; Increasing the personal and professional capacity of human resources to communicate effectively and to interfere to eliminate cultural and religious barriers; Increasing the individual capacity of teachers to support the institutional effort to implement the reform in education, in the conditions of correct internalization of national and international policies and strategies that lead to economic well-being and increase education among the population. The participation of our students and staff in the Program will allow us to increase the levels of improvement based on the professional, social and intercultural skills acquired during the mobility. All this will allow participants to adapt and integrate to the needs of Europe. Due to the success of the program, the number of participants in accessing mobility, including participants

from disadvantaged backgrounds, who are strongly supported in integration into the academic environment, and those who are already on the labour market but want retraining, students from third countries and EU ones, is expected to grow. The curriculum is designed to be adapted to meet the requirements of the labour market, thus facilitating the transition to jobs. We know that for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Europe needs more competent graduates, true professionals. Erasmus + is helping us to provide them. Thus, we aimed to increase the number of participants in all types of E + mobility, which is also highlighted in the results of the latest E + projects, but also in the absorption of allocated funds. Romania has 4 universities in the field of Life Sciences, and one of them is ours, so we can estimate our national impact at about 25% - over 5 million inhabitants. The European scientific field with the highest level of funding is the same field, which takes over about 35% of FP7 funds. If the EC supports increasing higher education through various tools such as mobility and research funding, we can attract more students and researchers to the university through the number and the quality of projects implemented. Incoming students also ensure international visibility and recognition. The objective of BUAS is to offer incoming students a quality academic and social experience, to ensure a good cooperation with the partner and to increase in the future the number of Erasmus students, who choose our university. Mobility participants benefit from academic counselling - meetings with institutional and departmental coordinators, to discuss possible changes in the Learning agreement, the grading system, the teaching at the host university. Permanent support is granted in administrative issues: accommodation, public transportation cards, residence permits, visas, but also support in linguistic and cultural training, students being involved in organizing various activities together with various student associations, student's League, sports activities, intercultural evenings, BUAS volunteer actions, international events. In this sense, through the E + program with partner countries, we have identified, together with some partners from universities in Africa, students who will carry out SMS mobility and we will involve them in promoting the concept of "Erasmus + Ambassador", regarding various communications and international interactions of the E + and BUAS Bureau, once their mobility to BUAS begins. We intend to gradually increase the number of incoming and outgoing students, each year by 20% - 30% compared to the previous year.

In the same time, we have increased the number of partner universities in the Partner countries, currently reaching a number of 54 countries, 87 universities, and in a continuous development, covering all continents. BUAS's mission is to generate and transfer knowledge to society through scientific research, technological progress, capitalization and dissemination of scientific results, initial and continuing training at university and postgraduate level. Here the E + program supports this mission through its international expansion. Transnational mobility is part of the second priority, improving the quality and relevance of higher education, including through cooperation between higher education institutions and the labour market. Creating the knowledge triangle - the link between higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development - is another priority. One of the tools for encouraging partnership and cooperation with enterprises is to increase the number of internships (SMP mobility) students, to develop

skills required by potential employers, which refers to the mobility of the cross-sectoral factor and agricultural growth. The placements also stimulate entrepreneurial, creative and innovative skills and learning environments. Improving governance and funding needs to be developed through the mobility of administrative staff and teachers to improve strategic leadership and develop strategies to increase funding efficiency. Thus, in the last years we applied for a number almost double of SMP type mobilities.