**ERASMUS+ POLICY STATEMENT 2021-2027**

Participation in Erasmus+ will be an **important contributor** to the realization of Tilburg University’s ambition to educate young people to be responsible and entrepreneurial thinkers, prepared to lead society into a new era, conduct research, which is recognizable for its quality, integrity, and impact on society.

Tilburg University is a research-based university with a strong academic profile of economics, business and entrepreneurship, social and behavioral sciences, law and governance, humanities and digital sciences, and theology.

Under the motto of ‘Understanding society’, we develop knowledge, transfer it to others, and bring people from various disciplines and organizations together. We want to contribute to solving complex social issues.

Our university is becoming ever more connected to the world. Globalization and increasing international integration are affecting the whole of society and are inextricably linked to contemporary societal issues in our fields. We aim at realizing our mission by including an international perspective that takes account of qualitative and quantitative changes in the current complex, inherently globalized and diverse world.

International dimensions are addressed in the way we educate, research and generate impact. Supporting instruments such as international mobility and participation in European cooperation projects are central elements of our internationalization strategy. It is in this way that Tilburg University assures its own ability to participate in the global knowledge society and to contribute to finding solutions to today’s societal questions.

In response to the rapidly changing society, and building on its core values of student centricity, academic integrity, internationalization and sustainability, the university formulated the following objectives for the current strategic plan:

* To offer **excellent, innovative education** which aims at preparing students to become the leaders of the future by focusing on knowledge, skills, and character building. All our curricula include **labor market orientation** and **cross-cultural skills**. We will innovate our teaching methods with a focus on digital education. Building on the strengths of our Schools, we expand our professional and lifelong learning programs.
* To increase research cooperation through **participation in international collaboration and consortia**. We are a science-driven research university operating in a changing societal context. Major societal issues can be resolved only by working together across the boundaries of disciplines, institutions, and geography.
* To advance society by **building strong connections with society and its citizens**, so that knowledge can achieve impact and add value. We seek to create a structure and culture that stimulates collaboration and co-creation at local, regional, national, and international levels.

Our internationalization strategy contributes to the realization of the overall institutional objectives. The following three central areas are the main elements of this strategy:

**1. Mobility of students and staff**

We promote international mobility of students and staff. Outgoing mobility helps students to enhance their professional, cross-cultural skills as well as their employability. Through mobility, staff can acquire new teaching methods and build up international networks for further cooperation in research and teaching.

Incoming mobility of students, teachers and researchers strengthens the international perspective of our research and education. The presence of international students maximizes the chance of personal interactions and cross-cultural learning for all students, including those who do not go abroad.

1. **Internationalization of the curriculum and campus**

We further integrate international, intercultural and global dimensions into curricula and our teaching and learning practise (including use of digital learning). Internationalization of the campus takes place by involving our diverse student and staff population in ‘out-of-class’ or outreach activities, as well as an equal participation in governance and decision-making processes.

1. **Strengthen international cooperation**

We strengthen international cooperation in research and teaching by deepening existing institutional collaborations with partner universities. A special focus is given to the participation in networks, which create additional interaction opportunities to enrich our education and research.

**OBJECTIVES OF PARTICIPATION**

Participation in Erasmus+ contributes to the achievement of our internationalization objectives. It supports international exchanges for students, academic staff and researchers, as well as structured cooperation between higher education institutions in different countries.

The **specific objectives** pursued by participation in the Erasmus+ Programme are to:

* Improve the level of key competences and skills of students through opportunities for learning mobility.
* Enhance the international dimension of education through international cooperation with higher education institutions in and outside Europe.
* Enable academics to develop their skills and innovate teaching practice to better assist and guide students in their learning processes through opportunities for mobility.
* Improve learning of languages and promote the EU's broad linguistic diversity and intercultural awareness.
* Support the modernization of education support systems, in particular through enhanced policy cooperation, better use of EU transparency and recognition tools and the dissemination of good practices;

**Contribution to a European Education Area**

In response to the rapidly changing society, Tilburg University has formulated a compelling strategy to educate young people to be responsible and entrepreneurial thinkers, prepared to lead society into a new era. Our education profile, which focuses on **knowledge, (digital) skills, and character building**, and includes **labor market orientation** and **cross-cultural skills**, echoes the European vision to harness the full potential of education and culture as drivers for job creation, economic growth and social fairness as well as a means to experience European identity in all its diversity. Elements such as mobility for all, language learning, life-long learning and teacher development are addressed in supporting strategies and implementation activities.

**PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ KEY ACTIONS AT TILBURG UNIVERSITY**

Tilburg University plans to participate in the following actions:

*Key action 1: Learning mobility of individuals*

* Mobility is a main element of Tilburg University’s internationalization strategy. It contributes to realizing the objectives as set out in our strategy in both education, research and impact. Implementation of student and staff mobility within the Erasmus + Programme will be coordinated by the International Office, servicing all Schools and divisions of the university. Specific thematic projects will be initiated at School or division level with support from the International Office.

*Key action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practises*

* Innovation is vital to enriching our education. We therefore stimulate and support the exploration, usage and sharing of innovative education methods. We aim to expand our international partnerships and networks to strengthen strategic collaboration in both education and research. For the development and/or implementation of innovative practices, we will participate in key action 2 projects. The implementation approach will depend on the scope of the project.

*Key action 3: Policy reform*

* Tilburg University aims to connect to advance society. The university is open to participation in key action 3 projects. This allows us to contribute from our experience to activities targeted at the achievement of the goals of the European policy agendas.

**IMPACT**

**The envisaged impact of participation in the Erasmus + Programme**

Participation in the Erasmus + Programme is of strategic importance to realize the mission of the university. It provides a unique international setting to modernize and develop innovations connected to our key areas and ambitions. It will enhance the quality of our work and assure our ability to play a role in finding solutions to today’s societal questions. Impact of participation in Erasmus + is envisaged for different target groups and different levels with the institution:

* Our **graduates** will acquire an improved level of (cross cultural or transversal) skills and competences through participation in learning mobility. This will enhance their employability. Non-mobile students benefit from incoming international students, who broaden their perspectives on learning and life as well as virtual mobility.

Indicators

* Number of teaching staff participating in intercultural training to implement the concept of international classroom
* Minimum of 25% of bachelor students go abroad for a full semester.
* Number of blended or online options to allow students to study abroad virtually.
* Participation of international students in student- and study associations.
* An international mindset is strongly linked to the experience of mobility itself. Mobile **staff** will impact the institution through their gain in knowledge of good practices and new skills abroad. It will have important beneficial effects on the quality of teaching, multidisciplinary and cross-organisational cooperation. Mobility of staff will enhance international collaboration and participation in consortia, which strengthens our work as a science-driven research university operating in a changing societal context.

Indicators

* 100% utilization of Erasmus+ staff budget
* Participants reports show increase of intercultural skills
* Increase of international collaborations and joint publications
* Participation in Erasmus + will impact the modernisation of our **institution**. We wish to be an excellent university, visible and active in the areas of education, research, and societal impact. We strive to be enterprising and proactive, operating on the principle of student centricity: Students are central to our policy-making and decision-making processes, including the way in which new policy initiatives and educational programs help to improve the quality of education and affect the service level for students. The envisaged impact of participation in Erasmus + lies in the joint development of innovative approaches addressing the specific needs of target groups and the use of EU transparency and recognition tools.

Indicators

* Full alignment with European Student Card Initiative by 2023
* Participation in key action 2 projects, such as European University initiative by 2021