

Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)

In order to complete this section, please refer to the instructions given below. Please note that your EPS shall be given wide visibility in your institution and must be published on the web page of your institution. The EPS should set out the overall Erasmus co-operation strategy of your institution in relation with its mission statement, underlying its Erasmus cooperation plan as well as any other activities to be proposed in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

a) Please describe briefly your institution's strategy, objectives and priorities for its Erasmus activities (mobility, multilateral projects and thematic networks, etc.) and any other actions in the context of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013).

b) Please also provide information on the following points:

What specific actions are planned to give visibility to Erasmus activities and what type of publicity will be given to the Erasmus University Charter and the EPS?

What kind of arrangements, if any, does the Institution ensure to comply with non-discrimination objectives (e.g. actions related to gender equality, integration of disabled students and staff, enhancement of social and economic cohesion and combating of xenophobia and racism)?

As a higher education and research institution dedicated to the advancement of basic and applied sciences, ITU's mission is to educate the technological leaders and entrepreneurs of the future in a rich intellectual environment sensitive to both local and global issues. Dated back to 1998, the above mentioned mission has inherently included the employability of the graduates, before the Lisbon Strategy in 2000. Offering its students the possibility of taking part in industrial projects within the Technocity, ITU creates a favourable environment for employability.

Among the six main strategies determined to achieve ITU's mission, the first and crucial one is the collaboration with the world. This is enough evidence given by ITU to internationalization. LLP/Erasmus programme is extremely valued within this framework and ITU's active involvement in mobility is noteworthy of its willingness on close collaboration with its European partners as well as other partners from the world. To increase visibility in Erasmus activities, the Institutional ECTS/DS Coordinator and the Erasmus Office Head visited all the faculties to promote especially teaching staff mobility, in summer 2006. These kinds of activities are planned to continue in the future. The decision of displaying Erasmus Policy Statement and the Erasmus University Charter on the web is considered as an additional support of information dissemination.

ITU has also the required infrastructure to increase virtual mobility as a complement to physical mobility. Distance Learning Centre within the campus provides technical support for that kind of activities. Although degree programmes are not offered due to lack of legal arrangements yet, several lectures and thesis defences have been held through virtual sessions.

Despite high performance in mobility activities, ITU did not participate yet in Centralized Actions except as partners in a few. Still efforts will continue to encourage ITU staff to participate in IPs, CDs and TNs.

In compliance with ITU's strategy related to its social responsibility, measures are taken for giving priority to the socially excluded. Several actions have been taken regarding the integration of disabled students and staff. Building and constructing the campus in accordance with the needs of disabled is one of the priorities of ITU. The library is equipped with the necessary materials for students and staff having visual and hearing disabilities. The Audiovisual Centre serves for this aim. Regarding the xenophobia and racism, no actions needed to be taken as these concepts are not embedded in Turkish culture. Hospitality is the main character of Turkish people, and ITU, as part of this society, welcomes all people from different origins. As to gender equality, the nationwide university admission exam itself is an assurance for non-discrimination. The high ratio of female students is an evidence of gender equality and non-discrimination.

Quality of academic mobility activities:

What kind of specific measures are implemented in the institution to ensure high quality in academic mobility activities?

Details should be provided on: recognition and credit systems, the provision of information on curricula, information and counselling of outgoing students, tutoring and integration of incoming students, provision of student services (in particular accommodation), preparatory and refresher language courses, support and acknowledgement of staff mobility.

Involved in Erasmus Programme since 2003-2004, ITU's high performance in mobility activities (highest Erasmus grant usage for student mobility among Turkish universities) is achieved by:

- Establishment of European Union Centre for Erasmus and Research
- Engagement of two full professors (Erasmus Head and Institutional Coordinator) and recruitment of qualified officers for Erasmus activities
- Recognition prior to departure by ITU Senate decision
- Usage of ECTS in Erasmus mobility
- Provision of Diploma Supplement free of charge, since 2005
- Web announcement/update of curricula, course contents and academic calendar at the end of Fall for the following year
- Participation to EAIE exhibition since 2001
- Establishment of Erasmus Club by former Erasmus students

In addition to those general, special measures are taken by EU Centre for creating a favourable environment to mobility, for outgoing students

- weekly Info Days
- counselling
- regular meetings with ECTS department coordinators
- first language course to be organised by a Turkish university (Italian course in collaboration with Sannio University open also to Marmara University students)

incoming students

- orientation day
- Peer Student Programme
- accommodation in ITU dorms
- provision of ITU student ID number, ID card upon registration, ensuring free access to library and PC Labs, access to all ITU facilities, credit loading for refectory, web access to Student Affairs Office services

teaching staff(TS)

- Faculty meetings
- e-mail and web services
- extra credit in academic promotion is awarded by ITU's Senate decision to faculty members with Erasmus.

Despite above mentioned achievements, still needed and in progress improvements are :

- ECTS Course catalogue of all the 1st and 2nd cycle programmes via web
- increasing involvement of faculty in TS mobility.

Quality of student placement activities:

What kind of specific measures are implemented to ensure high quality in student placements? Give details on how the work-programme and the placement agreement are prepared and implemented. Please describe the practical arrangements agreed between the parties. Please specify also the monitoring and evaluation of the placement period as well as its recognition in the curriculum.

Istanbul Technical University is the official representative of The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) for Turkey since 1955. As being the initiator of IAESTE membership, ITU was given the privilege of hosting the IAESTE central office at its campus. The experience accumulated through this membership is easily transferable to LLP placement activities in coming years.

As stated earlier, collaboration with the world and provision of a productive environment for cooperation with enterprises are matters of priority in ITU's strategical plan. Comparing to high performance displayed in mobility activities mentioned in second part of EPS , ITU's performance in placement activities within the framework of Leonardo da Vinci programme was not satisfactory as only one project was accomplished successfully. However, the new scheme of placement activities within the LLP is considered as a good opportunity for focusing on the matter. Located in the heart of industry, history and culture, ITU has the easy access to cooperation with private enterprises. Still, the reluctance of Turkish enterprises to recruit placement students was the main reason of low Leonardo performance of ITU. This situation is expected to change rapidly, considering the rapid increase of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Turkish economy. The raising number of international and multinational enterprises is foreseen to affect positively the reluctant behaviour of companies to placement because the newcomers have already a large experience of placement in their home countries and will tend to share it with the local ones. This is why ITU thinks that its performance in LLP placement activities will also compete with its student mobility performance in the near future.