



## **ERASMUS+**

Erasmus: Key action 1: Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

EACEA-03-2020 ECHE-LP-2020

LIBERA UNIVERSITA DI LINGUE E COMUNICAZIONE

ECHE Reference Code

29351-EPP-1-2014-1-IT-EPPKA3-ECHE

Institution Code

I MILANO05

## 1. ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

### 1.1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

#### Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff

#### Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Partnerships for Innovation

#### Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation:

### 1.2 Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

What would you like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does your participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into your institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the goal of building a European Education Area<sup>1</sup> and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

IULM University feels called to play a dual role concerning its communities and contexts for the next seven years. If on the one hand, it continues to play its traditional role as an international "Academy" at the service of Research and Higher Education,

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en)

on the other hand, it wants to become a space for dialogue, confrontation, development and growth at the service of the local community. Therefore, the university - understood as a "place", both physical and virtual - must integrate itself into its area and, at the same time, be visible and well-positioned in the international academic context, to create and nurture a continuous cycle of cultural osmosis between the local area and the "world".

Following the path indicated by the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the system of sustainable development goals (SDGs), IULM University is, therefore, structuring its modernisation and internationalisation strategy by paying the utmost attention both to the strengthening of its international network and to the desired positive effects of its work on its area; in our case, this is the city of Milan (specifically the former industrial district "Barona") and the Lombardy Region. We aim to take on an identity that allows the university to operate and be recognised both as a platform of culture and knowledge and a place for the development of creativity and critical thinking. We will achieve this through targeted offerings for students, aimed at their professional training in the international field and the organisation of numerous events open to the local community.

Founded in 1968 as the University of Modern Languages, later specialising in Communication (linguistics, business, culture, multimedia), IULM over the years has shifted the focus of its academic activity, embodied in the Faculties and Departments, to the Creative and Cultural Industries. This development of skills, projects and interdisciplinary teaching has involved degree courses, research agreements, inter-university relations, seminars open to citizens and international webinars. It is the full expression of the [University's Strategic Plan](#).

The strengthening of the pre-existing cultural and professional heritage has been achieved by rationalising processes and exploiting internal synergies (see also box below), as well as through significant reorganisations of the administrative offices. At the same time, the expansion of the network of international collaborations and participation in EU programmes such as Erasmus have provided fertile ground for learning and experimentation for procedural and management innovation, as well as raising the level and quality of the services offered to international standards. In addition to the expected benefits for all participants in the Erasmus+ Programme (intercultural expertise, language learning, open-mindedness, European citizenship, and so on), the University considers its participation in the programme an indispensable tool for internal innovation that will allow it to actively participate in the construction of the European Education Area.

The founding values of IULM, set out in the Three-Year Strategic Plan, find a natural correspondence with the core principles of the European Education Area. In emphasising the importance of a university education that first of all invites every student to identify his or her attitudes and aspirations and helps him or her to develop them in a long-term professional and personal perspective, IULM University identifies among its primary objectives:

- bring students back to the centre of the university experience;
- represent for all categories of users a fundamental crossroads between knowledge and experience;
- combat all forms of discrimination through good practices and dedicated cultural initiatives.

To this end, IULM has undertaken several targeted actions in recent years (described in the boxes below) aimed at:

- encouraging students to approach culture in its broadest sense; stimulating the aptitude for critical thinking; breaking down mental barriers that constitute a limit to the integration of the self in different contexts and the acceptance of the other in one's own;
- strengthening language skills, already a key reference point of the University since its foundation, by expanding the offer of teaching in languages other than Italian and by activating specific courses for the learning of languages other than English.
- integrating digital and data analysis competences in its humanistic paths, also through its laboratories and research centres on [Artificial Intelligence](#) and [Neuromarketing](#);
- encouraging the development of transversal skills and aptitude for entrepreneurship, thanks to its Career Service;
- stimulating reflection on participatory themes of social life with cycles of meetings, events, occasions;
- monitoring and promptly implementing innovative methodologies, techniques and technological supports that help to ensure equal opportunities for the entire community, through the strengthening of services dedicated to users with special needs.

Thanks to the participation in the new Erasmus+ 2021-27 Programme, the "IULM System" - understood as an organic set of structures, academy, students, professionals, technical-administrative staff and area - intends to continue to absorb and implement knowledge, best practices, contacts, operational tools, collaborations of various kinds, organisational methods and innovative ideas for the achievement of its central institutional objectives, among which we mention:

- 1) Increase in the level of internationalisation of the educational offering and the number of specific Bilateral Agreements for student mobility, teachers and technical-administrative staff (see also box below). In the seven-year period 2014-20, eight new English language courses have already been activated (one Bachelor's degree course, two Master's degree courses and five University Master's degrees) which, attracting an increasing number of international students (both degree-seeking and exchange), have at the same time increased the number of agreements. Thanks to the growth in reputation resulting from the development of partnerships, we expect to increase the University's potential to attract people, to increase the percentage of international teaching staff and visiting professors, also taking advantage of blended, distance and in-presence mobility opportunities.
- 2) Increase and diversification of opportunities to take part in international experiences, especially for students, teachers and technical-administrative staff with disabilities, with special needs and in conditions of economic or social hardship, also through the programme of experimentation with non-traditional forms of mobility such as Virtual Exchanges or modules that promote any relationship and confrontation with otherness - Internationalisation at Home, as well as through the exchange of best practices with partners.
- 3) Consolidation and expansion of partnerships with international universities specifically for collaborative projects in the field of teaching and intercultural dialogue.

The actions aimed at consolidating existing European partnerships have the declared objective of developing a joint strategy on issues relevant to our University, in particular, the formation of a European Universities consortium with IULM at its head, focused on the theme of the social impact of cultural and creative production as much in its entrepreneurial dimensions as in its cultural involvement and active citizenship: Cultural and Creative Production for Economic and Social Impact. At the same time, we are strengthening extra-European contacts with particular attention to emerging areas of the world chessboard, such as the Far East, CIS countries, India, Latin America (also for reasons of linguistic proximity to Italian) and Africa. We are also

continuing our commitment to research and formalisation of new partnerships in the Mediterranean basin (in addition to those already existing in Lebanon, Egypt and Tunisia) aimed at the setting up of exchanges of teachers and students and research projects in the field of learning and teaching Arabic language and culture.

With all our partners, we are committed to the exchange of best practices and the sharing of international standards that promote learning, job opportunities, well-being and psycho-physical development of all individuals. Our commitment is also to managing regular exchange opportunities for students, teachers and technical-administrative staff, as well as contacts for research) In this regard, we mention the collaborations carried out and in progress on innovative capacity building programs (e.g. the [URBiNAT](#) and [PAqES](#) projects).

- 4) Consolidation and expansion of relations with international, multilateral and bilateral bodies, with industry and companies abroad, with not-for-profit organisations and Italian Diplomatic Representatives.

The process undertaken is to establish framework agreements that can be specifically tailored to the needs that arise between IULM and its partners, in a flexible and resilient way that creates specific value for the individual and science. In addition to the numerous agreements with entrepreneurial and productive companies, the partnerships that the University has established with the Institute of Foreign Trade, with numerous Italian Chambers of Commerce abroad, with supranational organisations such as FAO and the Council of Europe and non-governmental organisations such as Transparency International and the Sustainable Development School are also part of this framework.

- 5) Continuation and development of ongoing cooperation projects

Thanks to the collaboration with the Italian Embassy in Conakry (Guinea), in 2019 IULM started a free online learning course (40 hours) for students of the four universities of Conakry for learning Italian, communication and journalism ([link](#)). We intend to continue with the implementation of similar models to create a stable network of knowledge on these topics in other West African countries. Similarly, the collaboration with the Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce in India has allowed IULM to join the [Minerva Education Hub](#): an educational project for the spread of the Italian academic offering in India delivered both in virtual and frontal form.

Thanks to the implementation of these actions and the participation in the Erasmus programme, IULM University hopes to consolidate its international presence and reputation in the next seven years and to further increase its positive impact on the Milan and Lombardy area. In this way, it will contribute effectively to community dialogue, to the development of a European cultural identity and the transmission of the principles, priorities and best practices promoted by the European Commission through its programmes.

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

**ACTIONS: KA1** - Learning mobility. KA1 represents for IULM one of the main cornerstones of participation in the Erasmus+ Programme. International experiences, in all forms, (study, internship or virtual mobility, Internationalisation at Home) are considered by IULM as the priority learning channel of the winning mindset of modernity - flexibility, resilience, open-mindedness, ability to move in multicultural contexts - as well as promoting the learning of different languages and digital skills. The aim is to provide students, through mobility, with real opportunities for personal growth, in addition to the technical and mental tools to adapt as well as possible to a fast-changing situation moving in opposing directions (globalisation - nationalism - internationalisation - isolationism). Consistent with the distinctive characteristics of its courses of study, IULM intends to train young professionals who can take advantage of the opportunities offered by global markets, but who are also people aware of their responsibility and their role as active citizens. IULM is actively aware that full inclusiveness in international activities is achieved not only through "physical" travel but also through the exchange of knowledge between different cultures. For this reason, it will soon implement new opportunities for virtual mobility promoted by the programme, which are entirely accepted by the university as a valid alternative to traditional mobility. The will apply to cases where health, geopolitical, security or other personal, economic or social obstacles limit or make it impossible for people to move physically. Moreover, as already explained, the Erasmus+ Programme represents for IULM a vital tool for modernisation and internationalisation.

**In order to implement its internationalisation strategy and to adequately manage participation in European programmes and international projects, since 2018 IULM University has undertaken a long and complicated phase of administrative reorganisation aimed at rationalising the network of offices dedicated to students in terms functional to their needs and strategies and increasing synergies between them.** The previous structure, although functioning, was still designed to manage international students in parallel but separate from the one dedicated to IULM students, with duplication of services and lack of connectivity. To this end, the University has also implemented a staff recruitment policy very attentive to language skills, requiring an excellent level of English plus a second foreign language. To this was added a very articulated staff training plan focused on the acquisition of language skills (where lacking), digital skills, interpersonal communication, stress management and of which Staff Exchange experiences are also an integral part.

The international operational structure is made up of three cornerstones: **1) International Affairs Office**: strategic role, it collects requests and proposals for Teaching, Research and Student Services; **2) Mobility Office**: operational role, closely related to the Orientation, Tutoring and Counselling Office, which is also responsible for the DiversaMente service for "special needs" students; **3) Careers Service Office**: operational role, follows both national and international internships and traineeships. The International Affairs Office and the Mobility Office liaise and collaborate with the Rector's delegates - Dr Francesco Galli (Internationalization) and Prof Pierluigi Sacco (European Projects and International Networks) - and with the Faculties (Faculty Deans, Degree Course Coordinators, Department Directors and individual lecturers) for the monitoring and development of the internationalisation process.

**International Affairs Office** (4 employees): plays a vital role in the definition and implementation of the University's internationalisation policies, working in close collaboration with the academic leadership and the Rectorate in the field of institutional relations and the development of the global network. It follows the strategic planning, ranking and reputation aspects of the University. It oversees the creation of networks of international agreements with Universities, Bodies and Institutions, formalising them in Memoranda of Understanding. From these networks and agreements come the concrete projects, which are divided into different activities (research, mobility, European/extra-European planning, internationalisation of teaching).

**Mobility Office** (seven employees, five of whom are in Mobility and two in International Recruitment): it is part of the "Student Services" area and acts in concert with the other offices in the area (Tutoring, Counselling, Orientation and Support Services for people with disabilities); it follows both the operational aspects of mobility programmes (incoming and outgoing) and the development of partnerships aimed at mobility itself.

The Mobility Office, thanks to the recent integration with the International Recruitment and Orientation Service, naturally plays the valuable role of "intermediary" between the support and assistance needs emerging from foreign students (both degree-seeking and exchange) and the already existing support activities for Italian students. This reorganisation has made it possible to eliminate duplication of services and procedures for the different target groups of students, also improving synergies with the Registrar's Office. Similar synergies have been activated with the Accommodation Service, the Financial Aid Service and the Careers Service, which already actively collaborated with the Orientation Service and are now constantly involved in managing the needs of international students. In 2019-20, for example, several joint innovation projects were implemented: a support service for the search for accommodation for international students, the dematerialisation of certificates in English, the allocation of specific funds to support mobility and the enrolment of international students, a counselling service in English with specific activities for students in mobility. The Mobility Office is also responsible for spreading the "Erasmus culture" in all other offices and Faculties and urges the application of the quality principles expressed in the ECHE guidelines everywhere. In this sense, over the years the Mobility Office has represented the main gateway of the "Erasmus spirit" that it has been able to spread throughout the University, achieving remarkable qualitative results expressed by the high scores obtained in the final reports of recent years (92 in 2018-19). The Mobility Office also solicits from the other offices or services the implementation of any corrections suggested by the Erasmus+ Italy National Agency in the closing letter of the Annual Final Report. It is currently working with colleagues from the Registrar's Office on improving the usability of the Course Catalogue for an international audience and on the recognition of credits for Thesis Research, not yet feasible due to technical problems related to the career management system.

The entire administrative management of **KA103 and KA107** is under the responsibility of the Mobility Office, as well as the operational management of the other credit mobility programmes and assistance to incoming and outgoing students. As far as traineeships are concerned, the office manages only the contractual and financial part of the traineeships financed by Erasmus Traineeship Grants, while the Career Service Office manages the operational part. Thanks to the objective expressed in EPS to further expand the overall training offer in English, the office expects to increase significantly in the coming years the number of incoming students, the number of agreements aimed at the exchange and, consequently, also the number of outgoing students. International agreements aimed at mobility only are also managed by the Mobility Office. As far as the European context is concerned, the aim is to strengthen relations with our main partners and to expand collaboration with other institutions both on the basis of the coherence or complementarity of the educational offer and on the ability of the partner to ensure a wide-ranging educational experience. In the non-European area, we intend to re-apply for KA 107 with our already established partners on the southern shore of the Mediterranean (Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia) for the development of collaborations in the field of Arabic language learning. Applications will also include other priority areas (India, Asia, Latin America) with which relations have become closer over the last two years.

**Careers Service** (three employees in international internships), follows the activation of professional internships in Italy and abroad (both funded by Erasmus Traineeship grant and self-financed). This office too has recently faced deep restructuring, absorbing the internships abroad previously merged with mobility. This reorganisation has been successful, allowing the activation of essential synergies between internships in Italy and abroad in terms of functional affinity. The results are already very positive: at the end of April 2020, despite the blockage of recent months, 70 internships abroad had already been activated and the forecast at the end of the year, considering the high summer season, is to consolidate around 210 internships, compared to 184 in 2019. The office has considerably expanded its range of services offered to candidates: Business coaching and career guidance, Counselling and Job Fitness, multilingual CV Check with simulated language interview. After a few years, the Career Service Office has obtained an entirely satisfactory assessment from students in the most recent University Customer Survey.

**Visiting professors and research fellows:** the aim is to create a new network of visiting professors and fellows, aimed at achieving the strategic interests and the development of the University's research lines, to make the most of collaborative and exchange relationships with research centres and groups of excellence at a global level. The visiting professors and research fellows will be recruited both through international calls and through the relational network of the most active IULM researchers in the international research scene. The recruitment policy will address both established researchers, especially for visiting professor positions, and promising young researchers in IULM areas of interest. Visiting professors and fellows will have the opportunity to interact with IULM students both through didactics and dedicated seminars, thus contributing to the internationalisation of their training and the possibility of access to the most recent and innovative developments in the areas of strategic interest of IULM.

**KA2 – Cooperation for innovation:** IULM is developing a consortium to participate in the 2022 call of the European Universities programme to firmly consolidate its specialisation in the field of cultural and creative production, both from the point of view of cultural and creative industries and the dimensions of social impact as outlined by the New European Agenda for Culture. Moreover, in the IULM vision, the primary interest is not only on the structure and functioning of cultural production sectors but also considers how culture decisively contributes to the achievement of social quality objectives such as social cohesion and intercultural dialogue, attention to marginal communities, the relationship between culture, psychological well-being and health. For this reason, **the theme of the consortium will be "Cultural and Creative Production for Economic and Social Impact"**. In its study and research programmes, IULM covers the themes of professions and cultural and creative entrepreneurship extensively and therefore has all the necessary skills and experience to develop a strategic and organisational leadership role within the consortium, of which it is the leading promoter. At the same time, IULM is fully aware that the current pandemic crisis will profoundly change the scenario of cultural and creative production in Europe, putting

existing companies and organisations under intense pressure. The project that will be presented for the **European Universities** will explore in an innovative way these new challenges of sustainability, and how culture can widen its margins of economic and social impact in the new areas of social relations and health, opening new paths of professional development and business creation. A partnership has already been finalised with Södertörn University in Stockholm, whose profile strongly complements IULM's, and covers social cohesion and communication issues in a significant way. Several other partnerships are currently being finalised, including through active dialogue with European networks such as **ELIA - European League of Institutes of the Arts**. The aim is to create a consortium with 5-7 partners representing the main geo-cultural fields and the variety of European cultural ecosystems to a large extent. At the same time, IULM is establishing contacts with other consortia already selected for the European University programme in order to benefit both from the wealth of experience acquired by the winning consortia and to establish strategic relationships that could give rise to beneficial synergies in areas of mutual interest if the proposed project is approved. Various university resources are already working on the project but, given its complexity, *ad hoc* resources will soon be assigned to the project accompanied by adequate advisory support as suggested by the case studies of the winning consortia in previous calls.

In addition to the strategic partnerships related to the PAgES and URBiNAT projects, IULM applied as project leader on the H2020-SC6-GOVERNANCE21-2020 call with the **RECONSIDER** project (REthinking the CONnections between cultural valueS, political participation and democracy in the moDErn eRa), of high strategic interest for the University. The project aims to explore how cultural participation can promote forms of aggregation and social cohesion that reaffirm European values by creating European cooperation networks with the experimentation of some innovative participatory formats by a selected group of European city-workshops. IULM is preparing for participation in the **Horizon Europe** programme calls, in which the themes of the economic and social impact of culture will, as far as it is possible to say at the current state of knowledge, be significantly represented. Based on the same order of considerations, IULM is preparing to present innovative projects also in the next cycle of the **Creative Europe** programme.

IULM presents, on average, about ten projects per year in the European calls. However, it aims to further increase its participation, through a targeted work of project development and establishment of stable partnership networks well in advance of the publication of the calls, also thanks to a careful and timely study of the respective Work Programmes. The aim is to involve a growing number of teachers, including those who do not yet have extensive experience of participating in European projects but who, in light of their scientific productivity and technical-professional experience, can offer an essential contribution to the development of IULM's positioning in the field. This placement will also be facilitated through appropriate training programmes and technical development workshops, some of which have already been carried out in previous years but are being further strengthened. The support will be requested from stable consultants with extensive experience and an excellent track record of design success that can accompany the establishment of a dedicated internal unit.

It is also intended to increase cooperation with supranational institutions whose mission is particularly in line with the strategic objectives of the University. In particular, significant contacts are already underway with **OECD and WHO**, in addition to the already established ones such as with **FAO and UNESCO**.

**The Research Office** is constantly active both in supporting its teachers' project activities and in developing proposals for European programmes and other national and international calls. Actions dedicated to attracting international researchers interested in developing projects in IULM related to calls for excellence such as ERC, Marie Curie, and so on have recently been undertaken.

What is the envisaged impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on your institution?

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

The expected impact of IULM's participation in the Erasmus+ Programme has been partly described in the previous boxes and can be summarised as: encouragement and further evolution of the University's modernisation process; fundamental contribution to the internationalisation of teaching; implementation of best practices on international standards; acquisition of new skills by students, teachers and technical-administrative staff.

From a quantitative point of view, the IULM student population increased by more than 55% during the previous Erasmus+ Programme, from 4300 in 2014 to almost 6800 in 2019, and this involved a considerable organisational and personal effort of the staff to maintain a high level of services. Despite this, the percentage of students benefiting from study mobility has remained constant between 3.2% and 3.4% and the scores obtained by the National Agency in the Final Report have risen steadily (92/100 in 2018-19). The objective for the next seven-year period is to reach at least 4% of students who carry out mobility programs while maintaining the same standards of service and increasing variety (both geographically and in terms of type).

From a qualitative point of view, the primary tool for analysing the results obtained for Erasmus mobility remains the Final Report, of which all aspects are punctually analysed, and any corrective actions suggested in the closing letter are taken. In addition to this, there are Customer Satisfaction Surveys regularly promoted by the University to its users. Student representation is continuously involved in the Quality Analysis and takes part in all the University's governing bodies; the relatively small size of IULM means that there is a very high level of responsiveness on the part of top management to students'

requests. As far as traineeships are concerned, the Career Service Office organises regular meetings with companies to verify the quality of the internships carried out.

Currently, the number of staff in mobility is around ten units per year; the intermediate objective is to double it and involve, by the end of the programme, at least 30 teachers and administrative staff in international experiences, also taking advantage of virtual mobility opportunities.

As far as financial support to participants is concerned, in addition to the normal Erasmus and Regional grants, IULM has established an increase in the share of contributions which is reserved for services for students. This increase will allow us to devote more resources to the economic support of students in mobility.

As an indicative timeline for the first years of the new programme, we envisage:

- In the immediate future: forms of virtual mobility with experimentation that has already partly started in spring 2020 due to the Covid-19 emergency. The online teaching, implemented in the present emergency, will complement and enhance the face-to-face teaching, without replacing it.
- In 2021 participation in calls for tenders for International Credit Mobility outside Europe; implementation of International Week (incoming lecturers, see 2.2) and International Days (increased visibility of internationalisation activities, see 2.3).
- In 2022: Application for European University programme.
- 2022-23: Increased participation in applications for strategic partnerships.
- 2023-24: Doubling of the number of teachers and technical-administrative staff in mobility.

All time targets have been included without taking into account the COVID health emergency, which will have a significant impact not only in the immediate future but probably at least for the next three years.

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

### 2.1 Implementation of the new principles

Please explain the measures taken in your institution to respect the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and inclusion of students and staff. Describe how your institution ensures full and equitable access to participants from all backgrounds, paying particular attention to the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities.

The principles of inclusion and non-discrimination, founding elements of the Code of Ethics of the University and in place since 2008, are reaffirmed in the current Strategic Plan ("at the basis of the development of the strategic plan 2019-2021 there are two fundamental meta values: the centrality of the student and merit; [...] inclusion, equity and respect for diversity") and confirm IULM's commitment to the application of these issues. IULM is in fact among the founding members of the Interuniversity Research Centre "Gender Cultures" (<http://www.culturedigenere.it/>), born in 2013, which aims to carry out research activities on the theme of gender cultures, thus contributing to the spread of respect for female dignity and skills.

Particular attention is also paid to the needs of students with disabilities, specific learning difficulty (SpLD) or special needs. The "[DiversaMENTE](#)" service, active since 2010, aims to actively support students throughout their studies, to promote their full autonomy, inclusion in academic life and facilitate their integration into the world of work. The University is also active in research in this area: in January 2018 the EURESIS Research Centre for Diagnosis, Intervention and Research on Specific Learning Difficulty was established.

The IULM [Tutoring & Counseling](#) service deals with the psychological well-being of students, especially in cases of stress brought on by study or other causes, performance anxiety, and difficulties of integration into the university social context. The service makes use of the collaboration of psychologists who offer individual meetings in Italian or English both in-person and online. Regular seminars are organised on the method of study, stress management, group coaching meetings (social dates, mindfulness). The service was particularly appreciated in the initial phase of the COVID-19 emergency during which the psychologist, Dr Bellantonio, organised an online psychological counselling session to support both Italian and international students.

IULM Financial Aid Service offers various forms of financial support through national, regional or university scholarships to students from **disadvantaged backgrounds**. The University has recently approved a 7% increase in the amount taken from fees for the student contribution to it. Additional funds are reserved to support the enrolment of international students from emerging countries, and for mobility projects for study and internship, including thesis research abroad.

In order to promote the **inclusion** of international students, in addition to the ESN activities and the Welcome Week we will talk about later, an "Italian Crash Course" is organised for two weeks at the beginning of each semester to introduce all foreign students to a basic knowledge of our language that allows them to interface not only with teachers and fellow students but also with the context outside the university community. Starting from the academic year 2020-2021, IULM will activate the Italian language course for foreigners as a year-long course. As far as its **outgoing** students are concerned, IULM pays great attention to the selection process and to the linguistic preparation of the candidates to allow them not only full success in their studies but also effective integration into the host society. Whereas students have English-medium mobility in non-English-speaking countries, they are encouraged by the Office and Academic Coordinators to attend local language courses offered by the host universities, or OLS courses.

In order to support disadvantaged students in finding affordable accommodation, IULM has recently created the function of the Accommodation Manager who, in addition to managing the availability in the two university residences, will also guarantee complete and personalised assistance on the private market, evaluating alternative solutions and stipulating specific agreements with external providers and collaborating with YES Milano, which is the reception system promoted by the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce of Milan. The university is also evaluating some opportunities for the acquisition and renovation of buildings as student residences, which already happened in 2017 with the opening of the "Cascina Moncucco" Residence, a project also realised thanks to the collaboration with the Municipality of Milan.

IULM, taking on board the European Commission guidelines, has envisaged the design and development of **teaching in virtual** or **blended** form in the University Strategic Plan. This is to allow access to higher education for all categories of students (Italians, international, exchange or degree-seeking, disabled or disadvantaged workers) thus overcoming many forms of physical, spatial or economic impediments. The current health emergency has further accelerated the process of digitisation of educational activities which, a few days after the lockdown, have been delivered entirely online. At the same time, we expect a significant increase in requests and opportunities for inbound and outbound virtual mobility, with consequent positive repercussions in terms of inclusiveness and access for the less advantaged categories. The University as a whole is ready to take up this challenge, and a first phase of teacher training on **Transnational Virtual Exchange Projects** is already underway.

Finally, IULM is very careful to ensure that all selection procedures for mobility activities, for the assignment of scholarships and places in residences, are based on the concepts of fairness and clarity, as well as supported by appropriate explanatory documentation (calls for proposals) containing the evaluation criteria and composition of the rankings, always available online and in the offices; in addition, all the data provided by candidates are managed in agreement with the GDPR to ensure respect for everyone's privacy.



Please explain what measures your institution will put in place to implement the European Student Card Initiative, and promote the use of the programme's Erasmus+ mobile App to students. Please refer to the timeline indicated on the European Student Card Initiative website<sup>2</sup>.

IULM University confirms its commitment for the next seven years to adhere to all European initiatives aimed at making the university experience free from bureaucratic burdens and to implement the necessary changes to existing procedures in order to implement the IT tools within the deadlines set by the program. Already in the previous seven years, IULM took the first steps in this direction by joining the Eduroam network, which allows all IULM users to access the Wi-Fi service in over 100 countries with their university account. In recent years we have closely followed the developments of the Erasmus Without Paper initiative, taking part in some test phases promoted by the Erasmus+ National Agency.

For the academic year 2020-2021, we will start testing the nomination and drafting procedures of the online learning agreement (OLA) with a small group of students and some selected partner universities (Rouen and CEU Madrid); the renewal of the inter-institutional agreements, envisaged from mid-2020, will also be done through the use of the Erasmus Dashboard.

As far as the adoption of the European Student Card is concerned, we will undertake to study all the necessary mechanisms to make it available to our students according to the terms and deadlines set by the European Union. At the moment IULM students are provided with an identification badge, called IULM Card, which is associated with a bank IBAN through which all economic transactions between the student and the University take place (payment of tuition fees, scholarships...) and also functions as a means of electronic payment. We intend to undertake a technical feasibility study to see if it will be possible to integrate the features of the European Student Card into the IULM Card by 2025 or, if necessary, keep the two cards separate. For incoming students already in possession of ESC, we will check with our technicians if and how it will be possible to use the data contained in the Card as a recognition tool to access the University and its services (canteen, library).

Please explain how your institutions will implement and promote environmentally friendly practices in the context of the Erasmus+ programme.

Thanks to the recent establishment by the Rector of a specific Delegation of Sustainability to Prof. Stefania Romenti, IULM University is committed to also pursuing in the next seven years the implementation of ecological tools and systems, as well as the dissemination of eco-friendly practices to all its users: teachers, students, technical-administrative staff and members of the public. The plan is based on the following crucial points:

- **Reduction of plastic (plastic-free campus):** free drinking water distribution points have been installed on all floors and water bottles distributed free of charge to all students; recently signed agreements with catering suppliers (canteen and vending machines) for the replacement of disposable material with compostable supplies.
- **Separate waste collection:** bins have already been positioned in all the spaces open to the public; a campaign is being planned to make users aware of their correct use, to make separate waste collection more widespread. Circular economy partnerships are also being studied.
- **Energy efficiency plan:** currently in the design phase, to intervene on energy inefficiencies through the use of innovative technologies. Some examples: LED systems for detecting the presence/absence of people in spaces (with automatic light and heating modification), renewable energy systems, charging columns for electric vehicles.
- **Administrative digitisation:** IULM has been undertaking progressive administrative digitisation for some years now to streamline and facilitate internal and external procedures and drastically reducing the use of paper. Undoubtedly this trend has received a dramatic boost in response to the temporary closure of the University caused by the COVID-19 crisis, which will undoubtedly be exploited in the near future towards the complete dematerialisation of procedures and certificates.

Several internal and external communication actions will be implemented to support the plan:

- inform and involve the entire university community on the actions taken to collect observations and proposals, and to increase the awareness and commitment of individuals on these issues
- to produce a report on the university's environmental, economic and social sustainability
- to enhance the University's commitment through participation in national initiatives (Sustainability Week); on the international level IULM is evaluating the organisation of a conference on sustainability communication; it intends to renew its participation in THE Impact Rankings, and to consider its participation in the Greenmetric ranking.

**Pedestrianisation and road network:** thanks to the collaboration with the Municipality of Milan, a radical overhaul of the district's car network was started. In 2019 this allowed the pedestrianisation of Via Carlo Bo, which had divided the campus in two. A large pedestrian area inside the campus was then created, and the green spaces dedicated to users' social activities were expanded. The entrance to the IULM underground car park has been moved outside the campus, thus ensuring a marked increase in pedestrian safety levels and better air quality in common areas. The possibility of offering all incoming students a subscription to the bike-sharing services of the city of Milan is also being studied to encourage the use of sustainable means of transport.

**Health and lifestyles:** in 2019 a special Delegation for Sport was created, entrusted to Dr Grazia Murtarelli, for the spread of sports culture and practice, embodied in the IULM Sports programme that we will talk about in the next box.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-student-card-initiative\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-student-card-initiative_en)

Please explain how you will promote civic engagement and active citizenship amongst your outgoing and incoming students before, after and during mobility.

IULM University organises a wide range of initiatives aimed at stimulating the involvement and active participation of students and external users in the most relevant issues of contemporary society. Some of them are mentioned below:

**Masterclass cycles** with speeches by leading figures of Milanese, national and international culture such as thinkers, philosophers, economists, legal figures. Of particular importance is the "Laboratory of Ideas" project, in which the guests reflect on a central theme of the historical, political and cultural moment that is chosen through a vote on the IULM website. In 2019 the theme "Money" was proposed, and in 2020 the topic "Border".

**Group workshops** for the creation of free social, educational and cultural content such as websites, documentaries, multimedia productions. These activities are incredibly absorbing, especially for international students, and involve total immersion in the social and cultural fabric being studied.

**Welcome week** for international students: in addition to the Italian course, include from the academic year 2019-20 guided tours with IULM lecturers or professional guides to cultural institutions or companies in Milan particularly relevant to the past and present history of the city. These visits aim to create an initial moment of socialisation among students through total immersion in the spirit of the city and an understanding of its social fabric. In the **coming years, we would like to extend the moments of meeting and cultural outings throughout the academic year.**

**Cultural events** in the IULM Auditorium, free of charge and open to the public. Concerts, theatre performances, film festivals, artistic performances, presentations of books, films or famous directors: all these activities fully embody the spirit of the "Third Mission" and represent the concrete way in which IULM makes its contribution, encouraging the integration of the University into the urban fabric of the Barona district where the University is located, which until a few years ago was considered peripheral, popular and less attractive than others.

**Sporting events.** "IULM Sports", together with the representation of CUS (University Sport Centre) Milan, play a fundamental role in the active involvement of students in the sporting life of the University and the city and promote all activities aimed at improving the physical fitness and well-being of the individual. Every year the "IULM Sports Day" is organised, during which the campus is transformed into an outdoor sports centre and matches of various disciplines take place. IULM takes part with the University teams, involving both Italian and international students, in national and international university tournaments and charity events such as Stramilano and the Milan Marathon. In order to further encourage the practice of sports, a gym integrated into the IULM campus is being studied, in the belief that sports activities represent an essential aspect of personal growth. In 2019 IULM participated in the FISU University World Cup Football tournament in China.

**Prevention Space.** IULM intends to continue its traditional collaboration with LILT (Italian League against Cancer) which has been taking place in the University since 2016 with training, screening and free visits for cancer prevention.

## 2.2 When participating in Mobility Activities - After mobility

Please demonstrate your commitment to implement full automatic recognition in your Higher Education Institution.<sup>3</sup>

Please describe the concrete steps you will take to ensure the full automatic recognition of all credits gained for learning outcomes achieved during a mobility period abroad/ blended mobility, according to the Council Recommendation on Automatic Mutual Recognition

IULM University has been implementing for years the **full and automatic recognition** of credits acquired abroad by students in mobility for study and internship through a clear, rapid and transparent process of prior approval of equivalences (in close collaboration with the Academic Coordinators) and subsequent conversion of disciplines, grades and credits acquired by the Mobility Office, in the first instance, and the Faculty Council for final ratification. The activities acquired abroad, both exams and internships, are indicated in the Diploma Supplement. Both for the current year and the future, the same process, as well as the same guarantees, will also be applied to students who have returned early due to the health emergency and are attending some courses in virtual mode at the host universities, without any discrimination to those who are continuing their physical mobility abroad, albeit in virtual form.

**Administrative process:** the tables of equivalence between foreign courses and IULM courses are updated every year by the Mobility Office in collaboration with the academic coordinators and provided to students before the learning agreement is drawn up. The pre-departure learning agreements issued are therefore very reliable, as they are based on the highest levels of updating of the training offer of both universities. During the mobility, students have ample opportunity to modify their learning agreement, proposing alternative courses to their Academic Coordinators, whose opinion is unquestionable and cannot be revised or added to by any colleague upon return. The grades are converted according to the official conversion tables published on the IULM Community and therefore always available for consultation by interested parties. The administrative procedures are always available in the Community, and the Grant Agreement are delivered before departure, always to ensure transparency and clarity in the entire process. This complex organisation has allowed us to achieve excellent levels of achievement over the years: data from the latest Erasmus+ Final Report 2018-19 indicate that, for study mobility, 3227 ECTS out of 3243 certificates in Transcript of Records have been recognised. The Mobility Office initiates **the recognition practice**

<sup>3</sup> The text of the Council Recommendation on Automatic Mutual Recognition may be found at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1568891859235&uri=CELEX:32018H1210\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1568891859235&uri=CELEX:32018H1210(01))

upon receipt of the Transcript of Records, signed by the student and ratified by a subsequent transfer to the Faculty. At the end of this process, the Student Office will update the student's online career. Thanks to the implementation of the "Erasmus Without Papers" programme, on which we are already working, we believe that the process will be further simplified. The Transcript of Records for incoming students is issued and sent electronically to students within three weeks of the end of the exam session. Every mobility experience abroad, both for study and internship, is considered a merit qualification by definition of the presentation grade at the graduation session.

Please describe your institution's measures to support, promote and recognise staff mobility:

**Outgoing staff.** The IULM Mobility Office acts both as promoter and operational centre for all activities related to staff mobility. Teaching mobility proposals received from partners (both individual and International Weeks) are forwarded to the Faculty Office and distributed to potential candidates-teachers, identified by the Faculties themselves based on academic affinity with the received proposal. Afterwards, the Office collects expressions of interest from the teaching staff and, if the applications received are greater than the available positions, the Dean will choose from the candidates of the Faculty in line with both the University's internationalisation strategies and the pre-eminent academic research areas. In order to ensure maximum transparency, this process is also codified by a special internal regulation. The Office provides the selected teachers with full administrative support in carrying out bureaucratic procedures, from the application to the reporting and final reporting, also issuing certificates of participation in the Erasmus+ Programme. If the Erasmus funds for the Staff Mobility for teaching have been used up and cannot be increased in the interim report, the Office supports the project regardless, financing the mobility with internal funds and applying the same reporting and reimbursement parameters of the Erasmus+ Programme.

A similar, albeit leaner, mechanism is implemented for administrative staff: training proposals are forwarded to the Heads of the Services potentially concerned, who identify the candidate(s) among their staff. The Staff Mobility for training (outgoing and incoming), at the moment, is still concentrated towards the services directly involved in the management of internationalisation processes. However, we intend to increase its spread (both in terms of numbers and relevant fields) thanks also to the current Staff Training Plan, which for some years now has focused on language training, allowing a higher number of colleagues to take part. The mobility of administrative staff is also included in the University's Training Plan.

Until now, no automatic mechanism for the recognition (economic or in career terms) of the activities carried out abroad by the staff has been implemented. This, however, has never been an element of dissatisfaction for the participants who have always appreciated the advantages and knowledge derived from these experiences. With the new programme, the office intends to propose a new *modus operandi* to the Governing Bodies that includes mobility activities among staff reward indicators.

**Incoming staff.** For the academic year 2020-21, we are planning the "International Week" of the three-year degree course in Corporate Communication and Public Relations. This will welcome international teachers and professionals, mainly from Erasmus partner universities, and that we hope it will be replicated in the following years also for other academic areas. We also intend to structure in an organic way the reception of the technical-administrative staff coming from the partner universities by organising a Staff week, presumably in 2021-2022. This initiative aims to involve all (or almost all) of the University's services at the same time and thus increase, exponentially, the visibility of the programme in the entire university community. A further stimulus to staff mobility will take place through the design and integration of totally online or blended experiences also for the staff.

### 2.3 For the Purposes of Visibility

Please provide the web link where you will host the Erasmus Policy statement in the future. Please to regularly promote the activities supported by the Programme.

The Erasmus Policy Statement will be published on the IULM website - Study Abroad section at the following links  
<https://www.iulm.it/it/internazionale/mobilita-internazionale/programma-Erasmus> (Italian)  
<https://www.iulm.it/en/internazionale/mobilita-internazionale/programma-Erasmus> (English)  
made available on the IULM Community (Moodle learning platform) and distributed to all relevant offices.

**Promotion:** as far as KA1 is concerned, all calls for mobility for study and traineeship are regularly promoted through institutional communication channels (IULM website; social media, digital bulletin boards, institutional bulletin boards, counter, Infopoint, ESN); specific information sessions are also organised when calls for proposals or particular deadlines are published and made available in the Community. In the future, we would like to integrate the information activity with online webinars dedicated to students who, for whatever reason, cannot "physically" participate in the information sessions and we would also like to organise a virtual info-desk. As far as traineeships abroad are concerned, offers are quickly and massively communicated through social networks, student associations, targeted mailing lists and direct reports to potentially interested parties. Students are also stimulated and assisted in their own search through internship providers, *ad hoc* search engines, platforms and specialised sites that are updated continuously. **Recruiting Days** and **Information Days** are also organised with companies and organisations that promote opportunities abroad and internship offers.

**ESN and Tutoring:** IULM University is fully aware of the vital role played by former Erasmus students both in promoting the programme and in mentoring future outgoing students. For many years now, Erasmus students have been invited to enrol in ESN IULM, or at least to fill in special "Tutor InfoForms" to describe their mobility experience from an academic, but above all, social and personal point of view. These forms are published (subject to authorisation) on the IULM Community and made available to all students, including those who have not yet applied. The ex-Erasmus students, by authorising the publication of their form, also make themselves available as online tutors to answer the questions and curiosities of their fellow students. All candidates are asked by the Mobility Office to contact the tutors as a source of up-to-date information, but also of enthusiasm

for the experience they have just had. In this sense, we share the principle that the role of Programme Ambassadors played by former Erasmus students is irreplaceable. Some of them start working with ESN IULM and continue their collaboration for several years. The University supports the ESN association by offering a specific space, funding part of the ESN activities through dedicated calls for proposals, involving them in joint initiatives (such as the organisation of the seminar on Mobility and Employability in Autumn 2019) and, finally, always consulting those in charge of planning new activities.

**IULM International Days:** during this event, also dedicated to fostering the integration of international students, the first edition of which should take place in the academic year 2020-21, there will be specific information desks on international mobility opportunities, on partner universities (with the usual involvement of incoming, former outgoing and ESN students) and the illustration of ongoing international projects in the field of research and cooperation. There will also be a conference on internationalisation issues and some international teaching modules (with the presence of foreign guest lecturers), as well as a film showcase in the original language, a special menu in the canteen and specific Radio IULM programming.

**Cooperation projects:** IULM University's Research Office continuously monitors calls relating to centralised projects and distributes them among the teaching staff in the various departments. The funded projects are then published with abstracts in the research section of the IULM website.

Please describe how you will ensure that the principles of this Charter will be well communicated and applied by staff at all levels of the institution.

From the very beginning of the participation in the Erasmus+ Programme, the offices for the operational implementation of the programme have played a key role in disseminating to both academic and administrative colleagues the founding principles set out by ECHE, encouraging the university as a whole to put these principles into practice, whenever a new path of technological, educational and procedural innovation was undertaken.

Thanks to the critical work of rationalisation of services and office restructuring carried out in recent years (described in Box 1.2.1), the internal dialogue channel between the "frontline" offices on internationalisation and the rest of the university is continuously active and the sharing of issues, best practices, indications and community objectives is almost daily. The IULM community has acquired the "Erasmus spirit", and there is a widespread awareness that Community guidelines must be absorbed into its structure and applied in all its actions, both strategic and procedural. The size of our university makes us a very cohesive community, with high levels of daily interaction.

After the renewal, we plan to provide a copy of ECHE 2021-2027 to all the offices of the university and an information session on the ECHE principles will be organised for the sector representatives - but also open to all those who wish to take part - which will be recorded and made available for future consultations.

In conclusion, we can say that the sharing of the founding principles of ECHE and their possible applications in daily work will happen (as has already happened in the recent past) very naturally, directly and effectively. This will happen thanks to the activation of new flows and channels of communication between strategic offices and operational offices, and between Educational and Administrative Departments and the related Educational and Administrative Support Offices.