



Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

International cooperation to improve the quality of education, to expand the research profile, to strengthen research-based education and contribute positively to the regional development are the main strategic goals of University of Inland Norway (INN). This is also the overall goal of our European University alliance – EMERGE (Empowering the Margins of Europe through Regional and Global Engagement)

Active participation in the Erasmus+ programme is crucial in order for INN to achieve these goals and instrumental for increasing student and staff mobility, integrating international and multicultural issues in INN`s study programmes e.g. through Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2-projects with international strategic partners.

a) INN is actively working to strengthen already existing cooperation and to develop new agreements. INN`s choice of partner institutions is divided into a selected number of strategic partners and a larger number of mobility partners. The strategic partners at INN are chosen at faculty level based on close cooperation between research and education. Where possible common strategic partnerships and synergies among networks across faculties are encouraged, in addition INN has a number of mobility partners which are chosen at study programme level according to what they can add to the learning outcomes for specific studies.

b) INN`s prioritized geographic cooperation areas include Nordic and European countries, Anglo-saxon countries like the USA, Canada and Australia, Sub-Sahara Africa and Indonesia. In addition, INN has established close cooperation with Japan, India and Nepal. INN`s strategy is to continue developing the existing cooperation in research and education within these geographic areas through active participation in European, Nordic and other relevant programmes. To widen the range of destinations for our outbound students and to diversify the pool of incoming students INN has chosen some mobility partners based on geographical diversity. The guarantee of educational relevance has still been the most important consideration also with these partners.

c) INN`s strategy is to encourage, recommend and facilitate student mobility at all levels, i.e. Bachelor, Master, PhD and staff, to increase the quality of education and to strengthen the learning outcomes of each study programme. INN`s strategical priority will be to link research and education cooperation whenever possible, in addition to mobility for internships in public and private companies. Mobility as a mean to increase research cooperation and network building will be particularly emphasized for PhD students and prioritized to support further development of INN`s PhD programmes.

INN`s participation in international cooperation projects within the framework of Erasmus+ is and will be a tool to support and implement the following activities:

1. Increase student and staff mobility to strengthen the internationalization of INN study programmes and profile. Mobility will not be limited to countries within the EU, but also with selected strategic institutions in countries outside the EU through participation in Erasmus+ KA1 International Credit Mobility. This will allow for building a close link between research and education cooperation and synergies with other international cooperation programmes and will build upon the existing experience with International Credit Mobility.

2. Strengthen the link between research, education, innovation and sustainable development

- INN is currently participating in a number of KA2-projects for higher education, both as coordinator and participant, and are working continuously with developing further applications.
- INN`s cooperation with developing countries (specifically in Africa and Asia) will be further developed by continuing our active participation in Erasmus+ Capacity Building Projects.
- INN aims at actively participating in Knowledge Alliances projects, building on and exploring synergies with cooperation projects from other programmes (e.g. Interreg). INN will also particularly encourage

participation in Erasmus+ Sport, since sport is one of INN`s strategic subject areas, and any other relevant call within the Erasmus+ framework.

INN`s institutional strategy to increase participation in Erasmus+ Key Actions has been to allocate key internal funding and to provide administrative support to both develop applications and to implement projects allocated (e.g. involving the different relevant administrative sections). This strategy has been successful through an increase in funded project applications and will be further strengthened in the future.

Participation in the Erasmus+ programme has had an impact, and will continue to impact INN`s modernization through:

1 – Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs:

INN performs well when it comes to research intensity (publications per academic employee) in Norway and has among the lowest drop-out rates in the country. This inspires the institution to look for new ways to increase student and staff engagement. International mobility, when it is well integrated into studies and research, is expected to strengthen the participants` dedication and inspiration to pursue their exploration further. INN therefore intends to achieve better integration of mobility into study programmes and involve incoming students in accomplishing the international learning outcomes for local students. Increased mobility is also expected to better attune INN to the European standards for desirable graduate and researcher attributes. Mobility of PhD students, within Erasmus+ whenever possible, is also particularly emphasized. INN is also open to the inclusion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

2 – Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

Outgoing mobile students have to a limited degree been involved in the study programmes at home during their stay abroad. INN intends to include outgoing mobile students more as a contribution to internationalisation at home through the use of ICT and other new technologies. This gives a wider impact of the Erasmus mobility through the sharing of experiences that are relevant for the learning outcomes of the study programme. All study programmes at INN will define programme specific learning outcomes in relation to international and multicultural issues and staff exchange will be further promoted. INN will evaluate student mobility according to how well they fulfil the learning outcomes. Joint supervision of Bachelor, Master and PhD students, and internship opportunities within the public and private sector through mobility will also be further encouraged.

3 – Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

Through participation in the Erasmus programme and more generally following the Bologna process, INN will continue to implement satisfactory procedures for many of the issues raised under priority 3 like efficient recognition of credits gained abroad, transparent recruitment and attractive working conditions for researchers. INN has also endorsed the European Charter & Code to facilitate international researcher mobility and recruitment since 2016.

4 – Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

One of INN`s priorities is the knowledge transfer and close cooperation with regional actors and stakeholders to inform both the development of INN`s educational programmes and its research activities. INN`s participation in international projects (e.g. H2020, Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2, EUI, Interreg, NFR, HK.dir.-programmes) contributes actively to this cooperation and will continue to be pursued. International students and staff participating in Erasmus exchanges will be involved as a valuable resource for regional development, for example through student internships and international cooperation projects.

5 – Improving governance and funding

INN`s efforts to increase participation in EU-funded projects have resulted in the allocation of several H2020 projects and Erasmus+ KA2 projects, in addition to a successful '[Starting grant](#)' application from the [ERC](#) in 2024. In addition, INN University was awarded status as European University (EUI) in 2024, when the EMERGE-alliance received funding in the EUI-call. The EMERGE-alliance will be a central driver in

INNs ambition to use internationalization as an integrated tool to increase the quality of education and research through mobility and international cooperation projects in the years to come.

6 – EMERGE European University Alliance (EUI)

EMERGE is an abbreviation of 'European Margins Engaging for Regional and Global Empowerment' and the alliance partners are [University of Limerick \(Ireland\)](#), [Dimokritio Panepistimio Thrakis \(Greece\)](#), [Université Renne 2 \(France\)](#), [Europa-Universität Flensburg \(Germany\)](#), [Unisersité Bretagne Sud \(France\)](#), [Univerzita Mateja Bela \(Slovakia\)](#), [Nepolis University Pafos \(Cyprus\)](#), [Universidade da Coruna \(Spain\)](#) and [University of Inland Norway](#).

All members are regional educational institutions located in the periphery of their countries. The members see this as an advantage because the institutions are key actors in their regions and aim to use this as a driving force for creating productive peripheries in Europe.

This includes a common long-term strategy for education that strengthens the link between education, research, and innovation, and facilitate the free movement of students and staff between the institutions. The institutions aspire to be key partners for working and social life, and to contribute to sustainable social and business development through research-based learning, entrepreneurship and creativity. The Erasmus+ programme is at the heart of facilitating the alliances commitment to closer institutional cooperation that contributes to increased mobility, professional development and innovative, sustainable research in line with EUs and UNs SDGS.