

Erasmus Policy Statement (2021-2027)

In its Mission Statement, the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (KU) defines itself as a cosmopolitan university. Internationalization is a cross-sectional task that affects all of the University's main activities. Europe has traditionally been a particular focus here. The KU has been participating in the Erasmus program since the 1990s, was one of the first universities in Germany to establish its own European Studies degree program and still maintains long-term partnerships with almost 200 universities in Erasmus program countries. With its participation in the Erasmus program, the KU wants to make its contribution to the implementation of the measures of the renewed EU agenda for higher education and the goals of the European Education Area.

With a view to the new EU agenda, the KU is meeting the very high demand for high-quality skills in Europe. It places particular emphasis on the acquisition of cross-cutting interdisciplinary and key skills as well as on a sense and value orientation. The interdisciplinary Studium.Pro element, which is gradually being introduced in all degree programs at the KU, offers students the opportunity to acquire key skills, to approach interdisciplinary topics and current problems in an interdisciplinary manner, and to increase social and civic engagement. If students attend interdisciplinary courses, acquire key skills or engage in social commitment at Erasmus partner universities, this can also be credited within the framework of Studium.Pro and integrated into their degree program.

The KU is responding to the increased demand for digital skills in particular by thinking digitalization as a cross-cutting issue with its tenure-track program "For a human-centered digital society". The junior professorships to be filled in this context address the advancing digitalization in research and teaching at the KU, complement each other in terms of subject matter and thus form a cross-faculty and interdisciplinary digitalization cluster. With its concept for promoting early-career researchers, the KU continues to respond to the need for good university lecturers. It supports its researchers in the acquisition and consolidation of didactic and teaching methodological skills with a diverse offer that is in particular provided by the Department of Educational and Academic Staff Development in Higher Education. Furthermore, the KU offers additional individual teaching methodology coaching for professors who are appointed for the first time. Such coaching is coordinated by the KU HR Development Department in collaboration with the Department of Educational and Academic Staff Development in Higher Education.

As a Catholic University, the KU can and would also like to contribute to the creation of inclusive and networked higher education systems, as called for in the new EU agenda. Based on a Christian view of human life, the KU's Mission Statement focuses on the individual with their talents and potential – regardless of religion or ideology, nationality, ethnic, cultural or social background, disability, gender, sexual orientation and age. Inclusion is a fundamental value at the KU, which also has a significant influence on measures in the field of internationalization. The KU thus acts in line with the goal of the European Education Area that everyone should have access to high-quality education regardless of their social and economic background. The holistic idea of inclusion is to be expressed and strengthened through participation in the Erasmus program. The KU is a networked University – building bridges between science and society is also a value set down in its Mission Statement. It intends to break down the barriers between academia and the rest

of society to make knowledge widely available. In doing so, it builds a sustainable network with various stakeholders in the region and strengthens the social commitment of its students. By consciously promoting mobility in the area of service learning and involving the region's economic sector and society, participation in the Erasmus program has a positive impact on the region and the regional industry by increasing the quality of academic education and teaching.

The Department of Education Innovation and Knowledge Transfer at the KU pools the University's transfer activities and brings the two latter aspects together with the innovation concept of the new EU agenda. One of its aims is to strengthen the exchange of knowledge between science, politics, the economy and civil society and to contribute to ensuring quality of life and prosperity in the region with technological and social innovations. In this context, the University is for example developing information and advisory services on sustainable organizational development. The exchange of students and lecturers in the Erasmus program expands these regional transfer activities by an international dimension, new ideas, suggestions and thus offers potential for innovation in the region.

Being a University funded by the state and the church, the KU aims to make its own university system effective and efficient through internal cooperation and good resource management. With regard to Erasmus, the KU has integrated the funding opportunities for further education stays in other European countries into the KU's own staff development program (KU FIT). This gives employees a greater incentive to take part in training programs abroad and further their international education. This project is also to be continued as part of Erasmus 2021-2027.

In line with the European Education Area's goal of making study and learning abroad the norm, the KU has provided for mobility options in all degree programs. In relation to its size, the KU is among the leaders in Germany in the area of teaching mobility – an area that is to be expanded further in the future. In order to maintain this high level of mobility, the KU's participation in Erasmus Key Action 1 "Mobility for Students and University Staff" is essential. For the KU, the goal of enabling its graduates to enter the job market and the academic qualification of its researchers play a key role. Participation in the Erasmus program increases the mobility of students and lecturers and thus the quality and job market relevance of academic education. This is achieved in particular by promoting key skills such as independence, critical thinking, the acquisition of foreign language skills and intercultural skills as well as academic exchange at an international level. Through the mobility options and numerous double degree programs, the KU enables its students to learn or perfect two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. The involvement of international professors at the KU and teaching at partner universities as part of teaching mobility programs also strengthens the foreign language skills of teaching staff, which in turn is essential for an international campus.

In addition to labor market skills, networking, innovation and efficiency, participation in Erasmus 2021-2027 offers another important opportunity for students, lecturers and staff at the KU: The opportunity to experience our European identity and to get to know and appreciate Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity. This is not only a personal enrichment for each individual, but also strengthens the profile of the entire KU as a University that is open to the world while at the same time being rooted in the Christian-European cultural area.