



# **Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014-2020**

## **University of Foggia**

### **Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)**

According to its three-year strategic plan, and the objectives laid down under the Bologna Process, the UNIFG is committed to strengthening the internationalization of its academic relationships through the promotion of a number of initiatives: reinforcing communication at international level; developing student and staff mobility; improving the ability it has to attract foreign students and professors; increasing internship opportunities worldwide; strengthening initiatives dealing with specific geographical areas and international networks.

#### **Fundamental Principles**

By applying for the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, the University of Foggia will:

- respect in full the principles of non-discrimination set out in the Programme and ensure equal access and opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds
- ensure full recognition for satisfactorily completed activities of study mobility and, where possible, traineeships in terms of credits awarded (ECTS or compatible system.)
- ensure the inclusion of satisfactorily completed study and/or traineeship mobility activities in the final record of student achievements (Diploma Supplement or equivalent)
- charge no fees, in case of credit mobility, to incoming mobile students for tuition, registration, examinations or access to laboratory and library facilities.

UNIFG is using the European Credit Transfer System that measures learning outcomes and the hours of student work required to achieve them. A credit is based on the student workload needed to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Any

ECTS programme is to be reasonable in terms of workload for study periods abroad. According to the ECTS programme, each student should earn at least 60 points per year (that usually means the student should have at least 30 per semester) upon course completion in a satisfactory way. ECTS credits are not awarded if the performance is unsatisfactory.

UNIFG operates a grading system based on a conversion table for the allocation of grades to different course units. Maximum grade that a student can obtain is 30. Grades from 30 to 26 suggest a very good/good learning outcome. Grades from 26 to 18 reflect satisfactory/sufficient results. The lowest grade of achievement is 18.

The internationalization of the University system is a process that promotes and qualifies Universities at both local level and abroad, by providing the whole Italian country conceived as a system with opportunities of growth. The University of Foggia stands as a tool for the promotion of the internationalization process, in close cooperation with its territory and in accordance with national, local and community policies.

The University has laid down specific objectives relating to internationalization in its three-year plan 2010-2012, which not only affects the mobility of students and teachers, but also a planning investment in strategic geographical areas also indicated by CRUI (Conference of Italian University Rectors).

The objectives set out in the above plan have been reached; this has been confirmed by data, provided by the International Relations Office at the University of Foggia, on the growing numbers of teachers and administrative staff on mobility. Also, the number of both incoming and outgoing students, undergraduate and graduate ones, has also increased and so the partnership agreements with "top ranked" universities in Europe and Third-Countries. Collaborations with companies and academic institutions under the Erasmus Placement and the Leonardo Da Vinci Programmes, coordinated by the International Relations Office at the University of Foggia, have also been intensified in order to encourage mobility at all levels, and a better employability into the labour market on behalf of our students and recent graduates.

The geographical areas of interest of our University are, besides the European ones, all countries bordering the Mediterranean basin. In fact, many are the collaborations established with international networks such as:

- EMUNI (Euro-Mediterranean University; the University of Foggia is one of the founding members)
- PEACE Programme (Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education, International Network for Cooperation with Palestinian Universities)
- UNIMED (Mediterranean Universities Union)
- Compostela Network
- CUM (Community of Mediterranean University).

Multilateral Memoranda of Understanding have been also signed with UNESCO Iraq Office (Amman, Jordan); the Iraqi Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, Iraq, the University of Cairo in Egypt, etc.

About North America: the University of Foggia has started a collaboration activity with the Fulbright Commission, promoting periodic meetings on the opportunity to study and conduct research in the United States by enjoying of Fulbright scholarships. Also, the University of Foggia, along with the Chamber of Commerce, is about to enter into cooperation agreements with Canada.

Finally, the University of Foggia has promoted a Corridoio Produttivo Turistico Culturale Italia –Argentina to encourage and/or strengthen economic, cultural and social relations between Argentina and Italy and, in particular, between Argentina and the Region of Puglia. The actions taken by the University of Foggia for the development of cooperation with Argentina have provided:

- Signing new cooperation agreements
- Testing and evaluating current cooperation activities
- Exploring further opportunities for scientific collaboration and teaching through the exchange of students and faculty members, the presentation of common study and research projects, the joint organization of seminars and business initiatives.

In recent years, and this in order to reinforce the internationalization process at our University, we have adopted tools provided by and acknowledged by Europe itself, i.e. documents that have marked a turning point in the process of internationalization at a more general level: the Bologna process (1999), the Lisbon Strategy (2000) and the Barcelona European Council (2002).

These tools have helped us identify a series of objectives that we have strongly committed to pursuing:

1. getting adequate resources and ensuring that they are effectively used
2. ensuring professionalism in academic management
3. increasing the university contribution paid to both regional and local strategies
4. establishing closer cooperation between universities and enterprises to ensure a better dissemination and exploitation of the newly knowledge-based society.

Over the past two years, the University has been involved in the development of a project named "Jointly supervised research doctorates, and revision of the access modalities to PhD courses on behalf of foreign students". This has led to the elaboration of a new set of rules on the subject, of a "Draft-model" on international cooperation Agreements for the joint-supervision of PhD theses, and of a Framework Agreement for the academic cooperation among international Doctoral Schools.

The UNIFG is actually engaged in the implementation of a project on Double/Joint Degree Programmes (2015).

The UNIFG is committed to delivering teaching and training programmes where the international dimension and the Erasmus mobility action are a very relevant part of

them. In order to enrich the international expertise of its staff members, staff mobility is very encouraged, and is strongly acknowledged and supported.

Teaching assignment mobility is based on "inter-institutional agreements" between the University of Foggia and the receiving Higher Education Institutions. The receiving HEI/enterprise agree on the programme of the activities to be undertaken by the visiting teachers (teaching programme) prior to the start of the mobility period. In all cases, the activities of staff undertaking a teaching assignment are integrated into the curricula of the host institution. The University of Foggia teaching staff members are selected on the basis of their curricula, following a public notice of competition. Priority is given to projects where teaching modules in highly interdisciplinary areas or in areas with a specific need for strong transnational cooperation in teaching are delivered.

Staff mobility training follows as the same principles as the teaching mobility: the UNIFG and the receiving institution/enterprise agree on the "training programme" undertaken by the staff member, prior to the start of the mobility period.

An increase in number of students and staff on mobility in Europe and worldwide is a key institutional goal at the University of Foggia, and a relevant part of its strategic plan. The aim is to offer modern and different learning experiences to students on mobility; to attract, retain and develop high quality staff, and build an international reputation for excellence. To ensure full inclusion of all students and staff on mobility, the UNIFG activities also comprise other actions under the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). This builds on successful work by the IRO of the University of Foggia that has been particularly clever in attracting students from different parts of Europe.

The UNIFG intends to achieve the following aims:

- developing a tangible programme for the internationalisation of education;
- promoting curricula adjusted to the labour market needs in cooperation with enterprises;
- developing and maintaining international partnerships with foreign universities and institutes by participating in multilateral projects and thematic networks;
- disseminating the principles of the LLP and Erasmus University Charter; building a constantly improving system for the full recognition of study periods abroad;
- raising the quality of services for incoming students, enhancing tutoring;
- building a strong network of foreign partners;
- increasing promotional and informational activities related to mobility programmes.

These activities allow the University of Foggia to establish better transnational partnerships, basis for multilateral projects, networks and accompanying measures in the long term. The UNIFG encourages the participation of its staff members into intercultural activities such as seminars and meetings on "Communication across

Cultures”, “Cultural Meetings”, “Teaching International Students” and “Internationalisation”.

The UNIFG has a solid track record in delivering European projects that date back over several years. Also, the UNIFG ensures that financial support reaches potential students from lower income backgrounds through a better allocation of resources. Thanks to its internationalization process, the UNIFG aims to diversify funding sources. The targets of these funds are to develop centres of excellence and to make better investments in order to modernise the human resource management.