

Erasmus Policy Statement of Modern Business School

Institution's International Strategy

Internationalisation and partnership with other higher education institutions from abroad are positioned as core values of functioning, further development, and growth of Modern Business School (in further text: MBS).

In the Internationalisation Strategy of MBS for period 2017 – 2022, it is clearly stated that the development and growth of MBS imply planning and establishing a long-term partnership with other higher education institutions, with the aim to join efforts and strengths towards fostering international cooperation and partnership in the area of mobility, education, research, and innovation.

Internationalization Strategy of Modern Business School for period 2017 - 2022 is available on: <http://mbs.edu.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Internationalization-Strategy.pdf>

MBS has the aim to strengthen its cooperation and partnership with higher education institutions from the Western Balkans, European Higher Education Area, and European Research Area.

When selecting partners, MBS seeks to establish partnerships which will bring mutual benefit and improve the institution's competitiveness, by using the following criteria: academic quality of the higher education institution (in further text: HEI), study programme compatibility, potentials for joint degree programme development, knowledge exchange, common values, and ethical work principles. The process of choosing a partner is motivated mainly by the programmes that those HEI have. HEI that are compatible or have programmes that are similar to programmes at MBS are the institutions that MBS prefers to work with. It is MBS belief that, by using this approach, it will improve the teaching process and methods, quality and competencies of teaching staff.

One of the key aspects of international cooperation is the mobility of students and staff within the Erasmus+ Programme, as well as all other mobility schemes. Mobility of students, teaching and non-teaching staff represents one of the strategic priorities of MBS.

The main aim of participation in the Erasmus+ Programme is to improve the quality of education by new curricula and/or new teaching methods. This corresponds with institutional internationalisation strategy – to strengthen collaboration with international partners and to develop strategic cooperation, but also to foster staff to develop and improve their curricula, competence, learning practices, teaching methods, and language skills.

In addition to modernisation of MBS, other goals important for European Education Area will be achieved through the participation in the Erasmus+ Programme: opportunities to spend some time abroad in order to study, learn, improve language skills, but also values such as: non-discrimination, transparency, inclusion, diversity, European identity.

An important aim of MBS is to achieve the appropriate balance between incoming and outgoing mobility, to encourage and foster student mobility at all levels of study (undergraduate and master studies), and to make sure that mobility has a sustainable impact

on the internationalisation activities at MBS, but also to promote youth civic engagement and environmentally friendly practices.

MBS will make an effort to ensure that participation in Erasmus+ Programme becomes more inclusive, accessible, participatory, simpler, and less bureaucratic through the digitalising administrative procedures, in accordance with the European Student Card Initiative and Erasmus Without Paper. Modern Business School respects the principles of non-discrimination, transparency, and inclusion of any individual regardless of his/her background.

The most important overall result of mobility is to enhance the quality of education, support innovations, and meet the demand for skilled graduates in the international labour market.

MBS plans to foster its participation in international networks and strives to increase cooperation with strategic partners. In order to enhance career opportunities for the graduates, MBS intends to develop joint or double degree programmes at the undergraduate and master level. With all types of mobility programmes, MBS aims to achieve one more goal - cross-cultural tolerance and diversity. It is necessary to state that learning, understanding, and accepting different people, societies, and cultures is also a part of MBS objectives, and mobility programmes are essential in that sense.

MBS is committed to excellence in accordance with international standards, while the quality of teaching and research are a central part of its vision. Through international projects and mobility schemes, staff and students develop new ideas and practices through collaboration, which consequently leads to new achievements. MBS is open to collaboration and partnership in the field of science and higher education, which will be based on mutual respect and equality.

Framework for the organisation and implementation of international cooperation projects

MBS has established an organisational and legal framework for participation in international cooperation projects, through the functioning of the International Cooperation Office and Department for Project Development. Furthermore, all important information and activities in the field of international cooperation within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme are provided on a separate web page on the MBS website in a clear, concise, and transparent manner.

The International Cooperation Office and Department for Project Development are responsible for monitoring various management procedures, in order to ensure the achievement and implementation of the expected results within the given time and resources. The Department for Project Development is in charge of implementation, quality assurance, control, and monitoring of projects. All these activities will be supervised, bearing in mind the time management and predefined work plan. Important activities, such as process control, overall project evaluation, and quality control are guaranteed by the Department.

The main purpose of the Department for Project Development is the coordination of project activities: Erasmus+ projects and all other projects are connected with different business

partners. In cooperation with the International Cooperation Office, the Department chooses, plans, and controls all projects and identifies those that are in accordance with the overall Internationalisation Strategy of MBS.

MBS applies several criteria, in compliance with its Internationalisation Strategy, when deciding on a project initiation or accepting an invitation for participation in a project: project objectives and sustainability, quality of partnerships, appointed team members and their expertise, expected results, overall benefits for all partners. MBS has the necessary structures and operational capacity to submit and implement international projects such as Capacity Building, Strategic partnerships, Knowledge alliances, and Jean Monnet projects.

In accordance with the MBS Internationalisation Strategy, some of the goals related to international cooperation projects are:

- To increase teaching staff mobility, reduce organizational barriers for staff members, and motivate them to spend a certain period of time working abroad. MBS will particularly value an international experience. Staff mobility through the Erasmus+ Programme has a strong impact on the professional development of teaching staff and is recognised as an investment in the quality of the educational process at home.
- To provide students with international dimensions in their education. MBS strives to encourage students to study or be trained abroad and to take part in international projects or/and conferences. In this way, students will increase their overall skills, knowledge, employability, language, contacts, experience, cultural awareness.

By demonstrating a full capability of students and staff to study, work, and teach in English, MBS has a plan to significantly increase the number of incoming and outgoing mobilities, as explained in the Key Action 1 of the Erasmus+ Programme. On the other hand, MBS is ready to share its knowledge and best practices with other higher education institutions.

Modernisation Agenda

The participation of MBS in the programmes funded by the EU in the field of education, research, innovation, mobility, services, governance, etc. is one of the main driving forces behind its process of modernisation and further development and growth. MBS firmly supports and endorses the renewed agenda of the EU in the field of higher education and is determined to keep implementing its strategic goals and priorities.

A) Ensuring that graduates leave higher education with the skill sets needed in the modern economy

MBS will keep fostering diverse forms of cooperation with the employers through its Center for Career Development and Student Counseling, with the aim to increase the relevance and quality of its study programmes.

MBS collects the data regarding its graduates from the labour market, with the aim to determine both advantages and shortcomings of its educational offer and make informed decisions to ensure continual improvement. Those data are an integral part of the institutional self-evaluation reports and quality assurance.

MBS recognises the need to constantly modernise its curricula. It will continue to participate in the calls in the domain of the Erasmus+ Programme for the projects of cooperation and innovative teaching methods.

In the modern economy, whom you are connected with is far more important than who you are, so MBS stimulates its students to participate in mobility programmes in order to expand their network and contacts, acquire new skills, build intercultural awareness and strengthen their language skills. In addition, MBS wants to have an online master's programme in English, so that a larger number of international students would study at our institution. Through Erasmus+, MBS will gain knowledge from partners on how to implement those online programmes in English in the best possible way.

B) Building transparent, non-discriminative and inclusive higher education system

MBS respects the principles of non-discrimination, transparency, and inclusion of individuals with long-term unemployment, low income, dependence on the social welfare system, individuals belonging to a national or ethnic minority, individuals with cultural inclusion difficulties, individuals from remote and rural areas, peripheral regions, areas with limited public transport.

Furthermore, inclusion, non-discriminatory approach, and transparency is secured for individuals with social obstacles – individuals that face discrimination because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, young parents, single parents.

With the improvement of the overall quality of regular studies, MBS intends to help those students who are not in the position to attend lectures to study at home. In the following period, MBS wants to improve distance learning (DL) teaching methods and online learning platforms. This would enable many students who have to work and study at the same time, who are single parents or/and disadvantaged students to acquire appropriate knowledge.

C) Making sure that higher education institutions contribute to innovations in the rest of the economy

Science, higher education, and cooperation with the business sector and the rest of the economy are balanced and interconnected at MBS. Through its Department for Project Development and Centre for Career Development, MBS has taken basic steps towards making connections between economy and education. Some results have been achieved, but they could be improved. Erasmus+ Programme will give MBS the opportunity to see how our partner HEI are operating and provide knowledge on how to improve relations with the rest of the economy, especially at the international level. The key aim is to create a climate of openness to new ideas and knowledge and to foster collaboration with partner HEI, which will consequently contribute to the economy through skilled students. After graduation, those students will be the future employees, completely prepared and skilled to improve productivity and bring innovation to the overall economy.

D) Supporting higher education institutions and governments in making the best use of human and financial resources available

Models of public-private partnerships have been very attractive in the past few years, and many governments have supported that kind of cooperation. It has been proven that sometimes governments do not have enough funds to run state projects, and sometimes state projects lack professional skills and management. MBS believes that mobility programmes and schemes will provide the necessary knowledge to students and staff on how to best use all available resources. Furthermore, MBS's aim is to produce effective and productive human capital which is perceived as a very important factor for development and growth in any country.

E) Raising awareness of environmental problems and fostering and supporting environmentally friendly practices

MBS has recognised that raising awareness of the importance of environmentally friendly practices and environmentally responsible behaviour is an important aspect of education. Within its study programme, MBS has subjects relevant to these topics: "Ecological management", "Tourism and sustainable development", as well as subjects in which a

particular fund of classes are devoted to this topics: "Customer Behaviour", "EU Environment", "Innovation Management in Services", "Traffic Management".

If incoming students do not have any of these subjects during the mobility, MBS will organise various lectures regarding environmentally friendly behaviour in order to raise awareness about wasting energy, water, paper, and promote environmentally friendly practices. Stimulating group discussions and experience sharing will take place during those lectures. Each participant will realise how his/her lifestyle and behaviour impact the environment and what can be done to make a positive change.

MBS will stimulate mobility participants' environmentally friendly behaviour through different approaches. Incoming mobility participants will be informed about the accommodation options which are within walking distance of MBS. Furthermore, mobility participants will be provided with all the information regarding transportation that does not have a negative effect on the environment - use of public transport with reduced emissions of gases, there are electric cars, bicycles, scooters.

The entire process from application and selection until the return of mobility participants will be managed electronically, without wasting paper, in accordance with the initiative Erasmus Without Paper. All important data will be exchanged electronically with the aim to eliminate or minimise the need for paper documents, in accordance with EIDAS regulation (Electronic Identification, Authentication and Signatures) and the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). Furthermore, this will lead to a much faster and efficient administrative procedure, but also to environmentally friendly practices.

F) Promotion of the European values through active citizen and civic engagement during mobility

MBS is aware that active citizen and civic engagement through various activities will promote and benefit the overall quality of study experience during mobility. Before mobility, incoming mobility participants will be informed about key organisations and activities that stimulate civic engagement and active citizenship in the host county. Information can be found in the Handbook for Incoming Participants: <https://mbs.edu.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Incoming-Participants-Handbook.pdf>

During the mobility, incoming participants will be encouraged to share (through meetings and workshops) their knowledge and experience in their home countries regarding civic engagement and active citizenship. After the mobility period, they will be encouraged to share the experience and knowledge about civic engagement, that they have gained during mobility at MBS, in their home country.

When it comes to the outgoing mobility of students, one of the selection criteria will be the students' willingness to promote European values in the field of an active citizen and civic engagement. In their motivational letters for outgoing mobility, special emphasis in the selection procedures will be put on those activities (<https://mbs.edu.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Selection-Criteria.pdf>). After they return to their home countries, students will be asked to organise a meeting with other students and to point out the key benefits of mobility and how Erasmus+ impacted their lives, employability, education, and civic engagement. Special focus will be put on their activities in various students' organizations, formal and informal groups, voluntary activities, etc. In that way, mobility participants have the opportunity to build networks of contacts, to actively participate in society, and develop a sense of European citizenship and identity.

G) Contribution to the European Education Area

MBS will contribute to the creation of the European Education Area through the continuous promotion of European values and by making mobility possible for all higher education students, through the establishment of strong European student identity and by fostering automatic mutual recognition of mobility achievements.