



## **Erasmus Policy Statement**

The mission of our University clearly stated and strengthened in our current Strategic Plan 2019-2023, is to contribute to creating a better, more just and more humane world through the impact of our graduates on society and the knowledge transmitted through our research. The problems that we, as human beings, are currently facing are becoming more complex and global; therefore, to effectively contribute to our mission, there are three pillars closely linked with the ERASMUS+ Program and with our institutional strategy of internationalization and modernization: the education and training of our students must be internationalized (including providing our University personnel with opportunities to constantly update their knowledge and procedures); research must be done in close collaboration with other international Universities and Research Centers; and as an Institution, we must network and collaborate with other HEIs, companies and organizations with the aim of making the European Union a more competitive region when faced with challenges presented from large emerging economies.

Comillas has long been an active promoter of the internationalization of our activities in both teaching and research. Its strategy has been focused principally on offering international experiences to all students. We are consistently ranked among the top universities in Spain regarding international exchanges, in relation to the size of our student body, and we have signed more than 600 active international agreements for the exchange of students and staff.

Our international partners are selected for their academic excellence, but also for their compatibility with our mission to promote ethical values. Currently, the majority of our partners are in Europe, and increasingly, in North America. However, in the past years, we have been actively promoting the expansion of our partnerships in Latin America and Asia. In addition, some African countries, such as Kenya, are also the subject of our interest, and we have succeeded in setting up several partnerships in this region and on the African continent. Our international strategy envisages both an increase in the number of partnerships in Europe, North America and Asia, and also the steady improvement in the quality of the institutions with which we partner. Our objective in participating in this Program is to establish close and lasting relationships with European HEIs of the same level as those that we have in Spain, such as, for example, the current strategic association of the University of Deusto, the Universidad Pontificia Comillas and the Ramon Llull University, recognized by the Government of Spain with the label of quality "Campus of International Excellence".

Currently, the most important target group of our activities in mobility are Undergraduate and Master's Degree students. We send approximately 800 of these students abroad every

year, mostly for academic study. We also have training programs for students, sending about 250 students every year to traineeships/internships in international institutions and companies. Every year we receive approximately 1400 exchange students from our international partner institutions.

We have also created an International Doctoral School, which has, among its goals, to increase the international mobility of our PhD students, as well as to welcome visiting Professors and Researchers. Our goal is to attract more international talent to our Graduate Studies, to increase the number of courses taught in English, and to enlarge the numbers of our international faculty and staff.

An area in which there is potential to improve is the mobility of University personnel and administrative staff, which tends to be a more difficult goal to achieve. In this regard, we plan to increase the number of places offered for teaching and research exchanges for our faculty and staff. In particular, we would like to increase the number of long-term stays abroad, since these are usually the most productive exchanges. We expect to achieve this by increasing recognition and merit awarded in our systems of promotion, by increasing the funding available for this purpose, and by continuing with the administrative support that is already available for the staff in this area.

Finally, regarding the development of double/multiple/dual/joint degrees, our University has been involved in the coordination of both an Erasmus Mundus Masters Program (on Economics and Management of Network Industries), and of an Erasmus Mundus Doctorate Program (on Sustainable Energy Technology Strategies). In addition, we also have Undergraduate/Bachelor's Degrees such as "E-4" (Bachelor's Degree in International Business Administration), in which we also have double/dual degrees with European and North American HEIs. Our strategy in this respect lies in the consolidation of these degrees (particularly Postgraduate Degrees), given that, in general, our Undergraduate/Bachelor's Degrees are already highly-ranked and in constant demand), and in the exploration of new opportunities for this kind of programs, principally in the area of the Digitalization of the Economy and Society.

Participation in the ERASMUS+ Program will allow our University to continue advancing in the internationalization of our teaching and research, as well as in the modernization of our University through relationships with other HEIs, by successfully improving the quality and number of our international partners.

Each project is organized and implemented in a different way, depending on its particular nature and goals. However, all of the projects are based on a close collaboration between the School or Faculty involved and the central Services at the University (namely, The Office for the Transfer of Results in Research and the International Relations Service). In

general, these projects are encouraged by the University through recognition and administrative support.

Regarding the increase of attainment levels for our students, professors and staff, our participation in the Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning Mobility will help them to understand the global environment in which they will carry out their careers, and the international orientation that they must give to their education and training. The goal of Comillas is to provide a well-rounded and comprehensive education and training to our students, and international experience is an essential component of this objective. The exposure of our students and staff to other international environments will also help us improve the quality and relevance of our activities, by learning from other universities through their best practices and standards.

Our University will further promote student mobility by designing Undergraduate/Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs in such a way that they involve semester or full year periods in which participation in mobility programs is easily carried out and highly recommended. In the case of staff, these activities will be promoted through professional promotion mechanisms and support for substitution in their respective positions during periods of stay abroad.

In addition, this Program will also improve the quality of the teaching and research at our University through mobility and cross-border cooperation. The Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among Organisations and Institutions will definitely help us to continue and strengthen our current participation in international networks and projects for teaching and research.

Our University will seek to establish alliances with other HEIs to foment programs that promote, among other areas, Entrepreneurship, Digitalization, Smart Industry, Artificial Intelligence and Business Analytics, with the ultimate objective of improving the competitive nature of the European Union vis-à-vis other major global economies. The key is to create networks of universities and companies that, by scale, can compete internationally

Regarding the linkage between Higher Education, and International Organizations, at Comillas we currently have a very close relationship with firms and institutions in our region. Participating in the Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to Policy Development and Cooperation will allow us to further extend our relationships, and to better fulfil the goals of the European policy agendas, in particular those regarding Research, Education and Training. Our international collaboration will also strengthen the contribution that we are currently making to our region, and to our commitment to excellence. Our initiatives will be focussed on fomenting alliances concerning the digitalization of our society, among others.

At Comillas we firmly believe that participation in the ERASMUS+ Program will contribute effectively to the internationalization and modernization of our activities and, consequently, of the entire Institution.

In relation to the mobility of students, professors and staff, since fortunately we have already reached a high number of agreements and partner institutions, our target objective in the quantitative realm is to sustain the current figures for mobility during the upcoming years of 2021 and 2022, and to achieve an increase of 10% in the indicator “number of incoming and outgoing students” by 2027, and an increase of 20% in the indicator “number of professors and staff participating in mobility actions”. However, if the COVID-19 crisis were to cause a drop in mobility, which is foreseeable at this time, the objective would be to recover the current level before the end of the period 2021-2027.

From a qualitative point of view, our objective is to maintain a rating “above 8 out of 10” for the indicator "degree of general satisfaction" of the participants (students, professors and staff) as well as for the assessment of the indicator "support offered by Comillas for mobility". These indicators are collected systematically at the end of periods of stay abroad as a mechanism for the monitoring of mobility actions.

With regard to the establishment of stable and long-term relations in our international collaboration during the period 2021-2027, and thanks to our participation in the Program, our target is to increase the indicator “number of international agreements” for mobility, cooperation and research by 10%. Moreover, we hope to increase funding from European calls for transfer, research and innovation activities by 5% each year, mainly in the field of digitization of society and the economy.

Finally, at Comillas we know that our connectivity and networks in international relations are already helping us to improve our financing, governance and modernization, and consequently, our participation in this Program will help in the long-term consolidation of this trend.

Madrid, May 2020



Julio L. Martínez  
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