

The history of the Erasmus Program



The name of Erasmus of Rotterdam, the famous early 16th Century humanist, was chosen for the ERASMUS (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) programme, launched by the EU in May 1987.

The Erasmus programme aims to improve the quality and strengthen the European dimension of third level education, by facilitating the mobility of young university students and staff throughout the EU.

The EU Socrates/Erasmus programme, started in 1995, enabled bi-lateral cooperation between universities, giving students and staff the opportunity to spend time studying or teaching at another European university, with their activity abroad being officially recognized by their home university.

The Socrates/Erasmus programme ended in 2006, having given over one million students the chance to study abroad.

The current EU “Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)”, replaced the Socrates programme in 2007 and provides for student mobility between participating universities (holders of the Erasmus University Card (EUC)), both within the EU and in third countries.

Opportunities offered by the Erasmus Program

The Erasmus programme enables students, doctoral students, teaching/research staff and non-teaching staff to spend time at one of the foreign universities participating in the Erasmus/LLP programme, which has signed a bi-lateral agreement with their home university. This period may be one of study, training or teaching. Non-teaching staff are involved in the preparation and monitoring of Erasmus/LLP participant mobility.

Erasmus offers two distinct opportunities for studying abroad:

1. Student and doctoral student mobility for study purposes.

The Erasmus programme makes available bursaries to study (taking courses, sitting exams, or doing doctoral research) at one of the participating universities abroad.

Erasmus students receive an ad hoc contribution from the EU. They can attend courses and use the facilities of their host university without paying further enrolment fees. It is guaranteed that their study abroad will be recognized, using either the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) or another compatible credit system.

2. Student and teaching staff mobility for participation in intensive programmes.

An intensive programme is a brief study programme (usually about ten days), which brings together students and teaching staff (who have received bursaries) from the third level institutes of at least three different countries participating in the programme. The aim is to foster the teaching of particular subjects and to allow those involved to benefit from learning and teaching in very favorable conditions.

Erasmus students with a disability are entitled to specific grants.

(Source : <http://web.unitn.it/en/ssi/20163/lifelong-learning-programme-llp-erasmus>)