



# UNIVERSITY OF KRAGUJEVAC

**Erasmus Code: RS KRAGUJE01**

**PIC: 998850323**

## POLICY STATEMENT

University of Kragujevac was established in 1976 as the fourth largest university in Serbia. However, its roots date back into 1838 when the first institution of higher education, *Lyceum of Serbian Principality*, was set up in Kragujevac, the first capital of Serbia. Today, University of Kragujevac is a modern educational and research institution consisting of 12 faculties with over 125 accredited study programs pursued by 20000 students. Further development of the University is aimed at retaining the position of the main teaching and research institution of the Central Serbia Region preserving Serbian culture and academic tradition and serving as a major driver of its economic and industrial development.

As for the University's plans and aspirations in relation to international cooperation, they are presented in a number of strategic documents, the most important being the Internationalization Strategy and Mobility Strategy with Action Plans that were adopted by the University of Kragujevac Senate in 2015 and 2016.

[http://www.kg.ac.rs/eng/international\\_strategy\\_and\\_action\\_plan.php](http://www.kg.ac.rs/eng/international_strategy_and_action_plan.php)

[http://www.kg.ac.rs/eng/mobility\\_strategy\\_and\\_action\\_plan.php](http://www.kg.ac.rs/eng/mobility_strategy_and_action_plan.php)

Being aware that the University of Kragujevac is not among the largest universities in Serbia and away from the capital, the additional efforts and commitment have to be invested into development and improvement of institutional infrastructure and capacities to attract potential international partners and boost its internationalization. At the same time, with its dispersed structure, 6 faculties located in Kragujevac and 6 in neighboring towns in the region, the University's internationalization strategy has to reflect this specificity in terms of providing equal opportunities for all students and staff in relation to their international participation, as well as in terms of providing the opportunities for the development and economic growth of the region and society at large.

The main objectives of the University's Internationalization Strategy for the period 2015 - 2020 are the following:

- Modernization of curricula to include more English taught courses, as well as skills, values and competences that will increase employability and competitiveness of students at globalized labor market
- Increasing the number of incoming and outgoing staff and student mobility for the benefit of the individual participants, as well as the institution as a whole
- Enhancing cooperation with EU and non-EU foreign universities, research institutions, companies and civil sector





- University's commitment to internationalization in sense of building its capacities (financial, human resource, infrastructural, quality assurance) for better participation in international programs.

University of Kragujevac has signed over 70 bilateral agreements with partner institutions worldwide and 60 IIAs reflecting mutual interests and benefits of the partners based on equality and reciprocity. The partners have been chosen on the basis of compatibility of study programs and research profiles, previously established successful cooperation that was further expended within Erasmus+ program, as well as on new affiliations that may bring diversity and novelty in educational and research activities. Since Serbia was not eligible for internship placements until 2018, higher emphasis will be given in future to establishing contacts that will enable students to gain practical work experience, crucial for their future careers.

As for mobility goals, they are outlined in Mobility Strategy and supported in a number of University's acts (Rulebook on participation in Erasmus+ international credit mobility, Rulebook on realization and recognition procedure of student mobility and ECTS, Terms and conditions for the selection of students and staff for a mobility)

[http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/pravilnik\\_o\\_proceduri\\_ucesca\\_u\\_kreditnoj\\_mobilnosti\\_programa\\_erasmus\\_plus.pdf](http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/pravilnik_o_proceduri_ucesca_u_kreditnoj_mobilnosti_programa_erasmus_plus.pdf)

[http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/Pravilnik\\_o\\_priznavanju\\_mobilnosti\\_i\\_esp\\_bodova.pdf](http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/Pravilnik_o_priznavanju_mobilnosti_i_esp_bodova.pdf)

[http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/Rules\\_and\\_conditions\\_for\\_the\\_selection\\_of\\_students.pdf](http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/Rules_and_conditions_for_the_selection_of_students.pdf)

These documents reflect University's commitment to strengthening the mobility of staff (academic and research) and students at all three study levels, as the key element of enhancing its internationalization policy. Mobility yields new contacts, has multiplying effects and leads to new cooperation (joint participation in projects, joint degree programs, joint publishing, co-mentoring of thesis, etc). Also, it serves as the instrument for improving academic and research quality and faster integration of our University into European Higher Education and Research Area.

The University also supports the development of double/joint degrees, despite unfavorable national legal framework which hinders these efforts. Therefore, the University rather opts for more applicable forms of cooperation - establishing of joint degree programs with the partners from the region or *co-tutelle* agreements.

The University of Kragujevac has a rich experience in the implementation of international educational and research projects, and lately in the mobility projects. This aspect of international cooperation is acknowledged in the University's Internationalization Strategy, while its organizational aspects are closely defined in the Rulebook on the procedure of implementation of University's international projects  
<http://www.kg.ac.rs/Docs/pravilnikprojekti.pdf>.





The importance of the participation in the international projects is recognized in two dimensions: **academic-scientific** - through development of new study programs, development of new practical skills and expertise, through cooperation with industry and social sector, achieved research results, innovations and patents, and in **capacity building dimension**, through exchange of knowledge, experiences and best practices, building of skills and expertise of staff involved in administrative and financial management of international projects, acquiring of equipment, teaching tools, laboratory devices, literature, etc. Given the above said, it is not surprising that the participation in international projects will remain one of key strategic goals of the University's internationalization strategy in future. The University's commitment to supporting this goal is reflected in a large network of organizational units established to support the implementation of international projects, starting from the Central Department of International Relations with the Office of International Projects and Mobility Office and Career Office, through the Network of Erasmus+ faculty coordinators providing a smooth connection and cooperation between the University and its faculties. The University plans to increase its participation in cooperation projects within Erasmus+ and other programs by improving and expanding its promotional activities and the scope of its support services:

- continuing monitoring of project funding opportunities, program rules and procedures,
- organizing Info days dedicated to open calls and current possibilities for applying for funds within Erasmus+ and other programs,
- organizing workshops dedicated to project applications writing and submission,
- searching for competent partner institutions for establishing project consortia,
- searching for partners in private and tertiary sector in order to extend cooperation opportunities and support the economic growth and sustainable development of the region,
- providing assistance and individual counselling in formulating ideas in accordance with strategic objectives of the grant programs,
- providing assistance in project management, administrative, financial, reporting, etc.

As for mobility projects, the previous successful participation in Erasmus Mundus networks, has helped the University to establish contacts, gain experience and build its institutional capacities for the participation in Erasmus + ICM. The University will continue to cherish these contacts and collaboration that has been proved valuable and beneficial, but will, at the same time, attempt to open as many new contacts as possible creating new mobility opportunities for the personal benefit of its students and staff, but also for the benefit of the institution as a whole.

The projects attracting incoming students and staff are also of great importance for the University, for the introduction of the institution itself and its possibilities, but also for the promotion of the cultural and historic heritage of the region and the country as a whole. The University recognizes that mobility is a two-way process allowing all mobile participants to learn from each other and build on each other's experience.





University of Kragujevac participation in "curricula development" projects has had large impact on modernization of curricula and teaching practices. University plans to continue to introduce more attractive study programs and teaching tools, particularly at its 3 engineering faculties providing students with key competences in IT and digital technologies and enhancing their employability and competitiveness at globalized labor market. Introduction of newly acquired teaching methods, on-line and blended learning, allows students to acquire new transversal skills. University's goal is to further upgrade these skills through increasing student practical placements, particularly student traineeship mobility within Erasmus+ICM, for which Serbia has not been eligible until 2018. University also supports professional development of its teachers offering continuous education opportunities within the Center for Lifelong Learning, as well as through staff mobility as a prestigious and rewarding activity. Moreover, University is committed to providing an upgraded access to open science by pursuing several digitally based open science projects allowing teachers, researchers and students to develop research skills and to digitally explore the latest scientific trends.

At all faculties, as the part of continuous quality assurance process, students and graduates are asked to evaluate study programs in relation to gained knowledge and competences and employment prospects. This practice is the outcome of University's participation in CONGRAD Tempus project which addressed the need of HEIs to improve their institutional management and self-evaluation capacities by creating a graduate contacts collection system and implementing regular graduate surveys.

University of Kragujevac strives towards inclusive and connected HE primarily by implementing a merit-based enrolment system with transparently set requirements leading to equal opportunities and fair admission process. University follows all Government's affirmative actions, for example, increasing of ethnic Roma enrolment in higher education. Through the current participation in Erasmus+ CBHE "Introduction of part-time and short cycle studies in Serbia" University plans to organize part-time and short cycle programs in order to offer more flexible study options to wider categories of population. University's Center for Career Development provides general career guidance on career opportunities and choices, but also offers special support to disadvantaged students, particularly to SwD advising them on all opportunities related to career, internship, mobility, etc. In addition, this Center has established a cooperation with the Municipality of Kragujevac, in relation to providing practical student placements in Municipality's institutions helping students develop their social and civic competences. These practical placements are the part of their regular curricula and are, therefore, officially recognized by faculties and rewarded with ECTS credits, if applicable.

University of Kragujevac is the leading university in the region in relation to innovation projects – it coordinated two regional Tempus projects with this thematic and is currently coordinating Erasmus+ CBHE project "Institutional framework for development of third mission at universities in Serbia". All these projects has had a great impact on the universities in the region empowering them to play a new role - of the driver of the





region's economic growth and development. In the course of these projects, University has established a number of Centers - Knowledge Transfer Center, Collaborative Training Center, Creative Center, Business Support Office, as well, a number of strategic documents - all aimed at meeting University's objective of enhancing the cooperation with business sector. This not only leads to income generating, but opens the door to students to encounter new learning concepts and exercise their creative and entrepreneurial skills.

In order to respond to internationalization opportunities (increasing number of programs that Serbia has become eligible to participate in), University of Kragujevac had to change its organizational and financial structure to cater to the needs of their students and staff, demanding new services and new conditions for the participation in cooperation projects. Today, University's International Department is the largest administrative unit reflecting the management's commitment to prioritize this activity, setting its course towards supporting effective and efficient higher education system based on European values, standards and practices. University's commitment to upholding European Charter and Code for researches resulted in receiving HR Excellence in Research Award by European Commission, granted to institutions and organizations who provide and support stimulating and favorable working environment for researchers.

