



## **Erasmus Charter for Higher Education**

Subject: **Erasmus Policy Statement**

Maastricht University (UM) is a young and international university in the heart of Europe, with a distinct global perspective and a strong focus on innovative education and research. Maastricht University is first and foremost a globally linked European university, an open and inclusive academic community, striving for a good mix between Dutch, European and other international students, addressing European and global issues in our education and research programmes. Our participation in the Erasmus+ programme over the years, also as the programme has evolved, has benefited thousands of our students, staff and researchers, offering them a unique international exchange experience.

With the majority of our students, staff and researchers reporting a significant positive impact in terms of enhanced professional development, international outlook and employability, the Erasmus+ programme functions as a valuable addition to our internationalisation strategy and international classroom. Therefore, we aim to support as many students, staff and researchers as possible to take part in the Erasmus+ activities, from outgoing mobility to incoming. In this process, we strive to guarantee a geographical and gender balance in the cohort of participants.

On the incoming and outgoing side, we regard our Erasmus+ participants as ambassadors for our institution and the programme and encourage them to use their international experiences for the benefit of their local societies.

We see the Erasmus+ programme as beneficial in the enhancement of human mobility and knowledge exchange capital in Higher Education and deem it an important responsibility for UM to create a welcoming atmosphere and to facilitate the rapid integration of our incoming Erasmus+ participants. We do this by extending the offering of language courses to our exchange students, staff and researchers and by making use of our extensive buddy programme, in close cooperation with local and regional municipalities and other partners. In order to ensure a high-quality international experience, we continuously invest in the further professionalization of our support services and emphasize intercultural competencies, languages skills and streamlined processes in staff development.

The Erasmus+ programme allows us furthermore to tap into new joint research possibilities with partner universities abroad and enables the sharing of our expertise in teaching and research, hereby strengthening our international profile and quality of education. Collaboration with institutions abroad has and will be a core element of our strategy. The Erasmus+ policy framework further strengthens our academic networks, such as the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) and Young European Research Universities (YERUN), with some of our colleagues taking part in activities such as international staff weeks and exchanges, hereby sharing best practices and intensifying bilateral contact between our institutions. Collaboration includes the further development of joint and double degree programmes, continued staff mobility and collaboration in research projects.

We celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Erasmus+ programme, congratulate the achievement of empowering over 9 million people to take part in the programme and look forward to continuing our strong involvement in all components of the programme.