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UNIC handbook on physical and virtual mobility. Teaching and learning in intercultural settings

2nd revised and supplemented edition

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The European University of Post-Industrial Cities

UNIC Handbook on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Part I (pp. 1-52)

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About this publication

UNIC Handbook on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Teaching and learning in intercultural settings

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[1] This handbook is a ‚living document' – it is going to be continuously revised during the running of the UNIC-project, and therefore it is going to change and develop in the course of time.

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Preface

This handbook reaches out to university teachers irrespective of their discipline and research fields. It has been written with the UNIC Alliance in mind and shows the diversity of practice of intercultural teaching which is currently applied in the different partner universities. Nevertheless, we want to address all teachers who are interested in this topic.

International Mobility, which can be realised physically as well as virtually (Virtual Exchange), may increase the quality of teaching and research through the exchange of knowledge, international networking and common projects. Regarding the involved individuals and organisations, mobility is expected to contribute to an attitude of respect towards the respective cultural values and to develop academic solidarity, which are pressing issues given the global challenges with respect to sustainability, diversity, inclusion, and armed conflict. Not least, the intercultural learning of mobile and home students and teachers shall be activated.

The authors of this Handbook hope to share with teaching staff a few ways to seize the opportunities of mobility and to give a taste of international exchange and collaboration.

The handbook consists of two parts.

The first part deals with the shaping of teaching and learning situations in an international and diverse environment and focuses on didactic reflections. It shall be used to enable teachers in their respective fields to design intercultural learning processes, which contribute to the learning of all – home students as well as international exchange students. The first part also gives an overview of different options that universities have to advance the internationalisation of higher education. Readers will find basic information, practical hints, and examples from the UNIC partner universities: the Stories from the field. Reflective questions and practical hints take the form of bullet points from chapter 2 onwards. The sub-chapters on "Stories from the field" offer concise practical perspectives on designing internationally oriented teaching to support any such setting. Readers can get inspired through the Stories from the different universities, where practical examples are elaborated.

The second part lists information about funding and support programmes by the UNIC partner universities with a focus on teaching staff, with concrete links and contacts at the respective institution.

Part I Designing Teaching in Intercultural Contexts of Higher Education

"Universities are increasingly concerned with the task of preparing graduates to be active and responsible global citizens in a world which is intrinsically digitalised, globalised and multicultural in nature." (O'Dowd 2017, 8)

1 Educational innovation through internationalisation

Internationalisation is a widely used description for a variety of activities in higher education policies, strategies, practices and research. From the perspective of Teaching and Learning internationalisation has been defined as "the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery […] to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society" (De Wit & Hunter, 2015, p. 29). Internationalisation, in order to contribute to the development of universities, has to be integrated in the higher education institutions' teaching, research, and service missions (Knight, 2004, p. 11). Therefore, it is a consciously driven development process, happening in all functions, operations and services of universities and it affects all stakeholders.

Especially within the frame of European Universities, internationalisation is a key feature of the Bologna Process at the beginning of the century (de Wit et al., 2015). The strategic strengthening of internationalisation leads to the development of innovative and sustainable models for student and staff mobility in physical and virtual environments. This goes hand in hand with new Erasmus funding lines, promoting short term and blended mobilities focussing on enabling international mobility for every student and staff member, regardless their study field, family or social background, abilities, etc. There is an increased urgency to counter the growing polarisation of our societies, respond to Europe's social and democratic challenges (EC, 2017) and foster global citizenship education. This can be defined with the words of UNESCO (2015) "a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity… [while emphasizing the] political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global" (2015, p. 14). Intercultural competence is generally seen as a major contribution to global citizenship. It can be summarized as: an individual's ability to effectively interact with people of different cultural backgrounds, while experiencing feelings of well-being and adjustment in intercultural settings (Leung et al., 2014). The development of intercultural competence is not a foregone conclusion in European education institutions and therefore needs to be supported by the design of the learning environment.

To create an environment where the former described learning and development activities can happen for all members, ten European

universities have joined forces to form the European **Uni**versity of **C**ities in Post-Industrial Transition. UNIC is composed by universities that face similar challenges regarding the transformation from an industrially organised society towards a post-industrial, knowledge- and service-based one. The universities are situated in Bilbao, Bochum, Cork, Istanbul, Liège, Łódź, Malmö, Rotterdam, Oulu, and Zagreb. One of the most important goals of UNIC is to develop innovative and sustainable models for student and staff mobility in physical (see e.g., Story 1), virtual (see e.g., Story 8 or Story 13) and blended (see e.g., Story 21) environments (UNIC, 2020, p. 11).

The pandemic situation has on the one hand made internationalisation measures in the form of virtual activities much more recognised and accepted. All UNIC universities have learned that online teaching is possible, and under certain conditions it can also be useful and good (see Story 6). Increasing demand in Virtual Exchange activities due to the pandemics is reported and underlines the meaning and significance of such activities (Helm & van der Velden, 2021). On the other hand, the online compulsion of the pandemic has led to a fatigue regarding virtual offerings among some students and teachers. Against this background, it is necessary to reflect which setting could best meet the desired learning objectives.

With the desired increase in international mobility, more and more students will be involved in learning that incorporates internationalisation elements, and more and more staff will be faced with the task to shape intercultural learning. This handbook suggests how learning environments, whether they are physical or virtual, can be designed to support intercultural encounters and learning within the respective disciplines, and how to support intercultural dialogue and inclusion within regular study programmes.

1.1 Internationalisation abroad and Internationalisation at home

A classic approach to promoting internationalisation is to encourage "internationalisation abroad" through physical mobility. Mobility then refers to teachers teaching abroad or students studying at a foreign university for a period, i.e., attending courses at a university in a different country from where they completed their second level education. In this approach, they receive ECTS credits from the foreign universities for participating in the mobility. This handbook contains a wealth of information about how physical mobility can be didactically supported, practically organised, and financed.

However, this handbook also takes into account that physical mobility has long since ceased to be the only way to internationalise a university, and internationalisation begins on one's own campus - as "Internationalisation at Home" (IaH; Knight, 2004; De Wit & Altbach, 2021). As physical exchange is only possible for a minority of students, internationalisation goals must be followed by additional or alternative measures. IaH means to integrate an international, intercultural, or global aspect into the curricula and structures of the home university, without members having to physically cross borders. From this perspective, the whole higher education institution with its activities in regard to research, teaching, service and support, with its values and goals, is involved.

In the future, internationalisation at home will likely become increasingly important as higher education institutions are obliged to prepare students for an increasingly diverse and globalized world. Considerate of the impact of travel on climate change and the need to provide similar opportunities for students with diverse needs and impairments, internationalisation at home is an important and attractive option. With advances in technology and communication, students will likely have more opportunities to engage with a global community of learners and professionals. Therefore, developing the skills and knowledge to navigate diverse cultural contexts and communicate effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds will be crucial for success in the global society.

Crucial to the Internationalisation at Home (IaH) approach is the explicit emphasis on ALL students and on the regular curriculum (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 64) in order to expand the perspectives of students and academics (Guimarães et al., 2019, p. 100). Research by Almeida et al (2019) has indicated that IaH contributes to a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and appreciation thereof for both local and international students. Especially local students with no prior

international experience benefit from IaH with a significant increase in intercultural competencies (Hofhuis, Jongerling & Jansz, 2023).

There are several ways in which higher education institutions can support internationalisation at home and abroad (Beelen and Jones, 2015):

1. Curriculum focused: incorporate international content and perspectives into courses and programmes such as international case studies and practices, and comparative international literature; include guest lectures from international colleagues or representatives of local cultural groups; enable virtual participation in learning activities with international partner universities (Virtual Mobility, Virtual Exchange or Blended Mobility); develop new teaching methods and techniques for multicultural classrooms; encourage engaged learning or engaged research activities with local cultural, religious or ethnic groups.

2. Student and faculty exchange (Physical Mobility or Blended Mobility): Institutions can promote exchange programs with foreign universities and encourage student and faculty mobility through scholarships and funding opportunities. The mobility of academic staff becomes a central concern in the IaH approach, as visiting lecturers are intended to strengthen the international profile of the host university by exposing students and fellow lecturers to new and unfamiliar ways of teaching and with different cultural perspectives on their scientific subject.

3. Language learning: Institutions can offer language classes for any languages or language immersion programs for the local language to help students develop their foreign language skills and cultural competence. The UNIC consortium has developed free Online Language Modules of the 10 UNIC languages.

4. Cultural events and activities: Institutions can host cultural events and activities on campus, such as language tables, cultural festivals, and guest lectures by, for example, international artists, cultural professionals, businesspeople, and scholars, to promote cultural exchange and understanding.

An especially interesting case of internationalisation in higher education is the implementation of joint degrees (see Story 1 and Story 2) which intensify and establish as a norm the international

cooperation between teachers and students of two or more universities in the regular curriculum of both (or more) study programmes.

This handbook contains a lot of information, especially on the design of internationally oriented teaching. In this way, it covers both internationalisation abroad and internationalisation at home.

1.2 Intercultural and inclusive education and mobility

The pressing necessity of global interdependence that influences societies, ecology, markets (including job markets), the forced and voluntary movement of people (migration) and the need for democratic and citizenship education demands universities to include intercultural and international expertise into their courses, intended learning outcomes, and assessments. That is why issues of intercultural exchange are becoming increasingly important – all the more so in an environment like that of European Universities.

Nowadays, universities operate in a 'superdiverse' space. 'Superdiversity' is a term which refers to an increased number of multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants and their descendants (Vertovec, 2007) who contribute to a variety of identities and ethnicities within one cultural space. The concept points to the heterogeneity in supposedly homogenous and clearly delimitable social groups. It can be deducted that there is also 'superdiversity' in the classroom regarding e.g., the age, gender, and abilities of the student body. Research on intersectionality since the 1990s (e.g., Crenshaw 1991) has furthermore shown the mechanisms of discrimination within (pedagogical) organisations as well as the importance of taking social inequality into account in educational processes (Lutz, Herrera Vivar & Supik, 2011).

Intercultural as well as inclusive education refers to pedagogical approaches that respond to diverse groups of learners (and teachers) in the classroom (Gay, 2018). The Higher Education system must change to meet the different needs of the learners, rather than expecting the individuals to adjust and assimilate to the existing norms and concepts of learning. Differences – long considered deficits that should be removed to create homogenous learning groups – are now understood as enriching and a chance for development. Staff in higher education institutions has to deal with questions of the design of teaching and learning, of organisation, of assessment etc. in order to ensure the success of all learners and a high-quality learning experience.

The digitalisation of Higher Education opens new opportunities (while simultaneously facing new challenges) to develop teaching and bring it to a next level of dealing with a broad variety of learners. This is also true for mobility settings. Virtual mobility seems at a first glance a good way to give all learners the chance of an intercultural encounter. And indeed, virtual mobility can be a meaningful way of integrating international cooperation into the standard curriculum and of

enhancing physical mobility. But virtual mobility cannot replace physical mobility, and efforts still are required to ensure a more inclusive physical mobility. Students with disability, chronic diseases and with care obligations, as well as students living in economic precarity, can encounter high hurdles in physical mobility, which must be cleared. For all students, both options are necessary and desired during their education (European Students' Union & Erasmus Student Network, n.d., p.3).

This handbook presents ways to make intercultural learning succeed in different mobility settings within the existing system of higher education.

1.3 The cultural imprint of higher education

Teaching and learning processes in educational organisations underlie certain cultural assumptions. Educational systems and organisations represent cultural norms and values, rituals, the social hierarchy, contents, methods, or communication rules of a society (Otten & Scheitza, 2015, p. 36). As Bates (2022) states, the culture infuses all parts of the learning environment: student characteristics, content, resources, student support, teaching and learning goals, gaining skills activities and assessment. All the above should be included and organized in such a way as to promote and encourage student learning. Creating opportunities for learning, institutions and teachers are in position to create and define a new culture, that reflects their values and beliefs.

At universities, knowledge of institutional terminology, communication rules and strategies is crucial to pass successfully through institutional processes. In this view, diversity disturbs the flow, as all additional explications, misunderstandings or additional consultations take time and can therefore be seen as challenging (Otten, 2003, p. 16) although diversity, as stated above, implies positive and enriching aspects for universities. It enhances and triggers development processes on many levels and is especially valuable in creating new organisational routines and innovative practices (Millem, Chang & Antonio, 2005; European University Association, 2018).

Intercultural learning includes the acquisition of knowledge about one's own and about other cultures with the aim to open one's attitudes towards intercultural settings and to gain the skills of effective interaction and collaboration with people of different backgrounds (Otten, 2003, p. 21). Curricular activities of intercultural communication contribute to intercultural competence development during study abroad experiences (e.g., Boonen et al., 2021; Wickline et al., 2020).

A useful way of uncovering different approaches in highly institutionalised organisations, like universities, is to see whether the student experiences assimilation, adaptation, or negotiation. These three approaches reflect a range of strategies in higher education institutions and may themselves be interconnected rather than distinct concepts. When teaching to support intercultural learning in Higher Education, all three approaches must be considered by the teacher:

- **Assimilation** means that the student makes an effort to fit into the system. Pure assimilation hinders the organisation to change, as the pressure for change lies only on the students.

> Assimilation in specific instances is helpful and necessary. Yet, if it is not combined with institutional measures, there will not be an organisational learning and development process, and the needs of students who are perceived as different are not considered (Otten & Scheitza, 2015, p. 57).

- **Adaptation** means that the host system adapts to students' needs. Routines can be changed regarding content, to methods of teaching and assessment, and to the creation of new structures to meet the needs of all students. In this case, the pressure of change lies on the host system. This means that routines and rules are changeable, which can be a challenge in terms of flexibility for the persons involved (Otten & Scheitza, 2015, p. 57). Therefore, adaptation and assimilation must be connected and interdependent processes, in order to generate reliability and flexibility in an appropriate measure.

- **Negotiation** means that students and teachers explore and discover new ways of achieving a learning outcome together, by collaborating with each other and shaping the structures of their university (Otten & Scheitza, 2015, p. 54). This co-constructive approach encourages a balance between and the inclusion of multiple perspectives (Otten & Scheitza, 2015, p. 57). Negotiation is highly participative and often the solutions reached are well accepted.

This handbook describes how intercultural learning in mobility settings in Higher Education can be promoted by fostering all three – assimilation, adaptation and, especially, negotiation – in the field of teaching. Overall, it should thus contribute to making teaching successful, international, and diversity sensitive.

2 What teachers can do: general remarks

This handbook will address the different mobility settings, namely physical mobility, virtual mobility, virtual exchange (as a special form of virtual mobility) and blended mobility. These terms describe different ways to bringing students into contact with other higher education systems or with students and faculty in other countries.

Each of these settings has its specific challenges, which are examined in more detail in the third chapter of this handbook. However, all approaches also have commonalities. Regardless of whether a course is designed for physical mobility, virtual mobility, virtual exchange or blended mobility, consideration of certain aspects can always be helpful and valuable in planning and implementation. These aspects are presented in this chapter.

In general, it can be said that research on higher education teaching has identified many important success factors for learning processes in higher education (Schneider & Preckel, 2017; Biggs & Tang, 2011). This research has not produced "recipes" for successful teaching, i.e., there is not guarantee that the combination of certain elements automatically leads to the desired learning success for students. However, it is possible to infer which aspects significantly increase the likelihood of learning success. These include, for example, well defined and aligned learning objectives (Biggs, 2003), clear and understandable explanations, opportunities for interaction among students (Smith & McGregor, 1992) and between teachers and students (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Based on this knowledge of general success factors for university teaching, we have compiled the recommendations on how teaching can be successfully designed when it takes place in a clearly international and intercultural setting, or when a standard programme is meant to be made accessible for an international audience. These recommendations are organized along the following main themes: 1) expectations, roles, and rules, 2) topics and material, 3) contact and interaction, 4) assessment and evaluation. For all four themes, the reflection checklists in the appendix might help.

2 What teachers can do: general remarks

2.1 Expectations, roles, and rules

Clear communication regarding learning objectives, rules, and other expectations is considered one of the most important success factors in higher education teaching. This is all the more true if internationally mixed groups are taught. As many expectations are taken for granted as part of the respective culture in an educational system, they are usually not actively communicated. Expectations regarding student behaviour should therefore be made explicit, as well as the role of the teacher and – if this is known – how that might differ from the students' experiences in other countries. Such explication can significantly help to avoid misunderstanding (Otten & Scheitza, 2015, pp. 37-38). A university teacher can define one part of these aspects, for the other part conversation and negotiation with the group should be sought.

a) **Your settings:**

- Put yourself into the place of an international student, not knowing the Higher Education system, educational methods, assessment formats, cooperation, and discussion rules of your institution: where would you see yourself stumble, where would you need extra explanations?
- Formulate clear learning objectives (or outcomes) and communicate them both verbally and in the material accompanying your course. Have different learners in mind while planning: learners from different disciplines, a diverse group of students, learners from different universities or different countries with different abilities.
- Find tasks and examples from different disciplinary fields and follow the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The UDL framework encourages teachers to incorporate multiple forms of engagement, representation, action, and expression thereby building inclusion into their courses from the outset (Rose, 2001).
- Respect and integrate time for getting to know one another and explaining different university systems. Have a written description of the tasks and explain how your students can find appropriate working groups and topics (if needed).
- Consider that not all students have connections to other learners in the group outside of class. If you want your students to participate in group work, make sure to organise this in class so that all students are assigned to or find a group. This is especially important in online classes. It may also be necessary to emphasise the benefits to learning collaboratively and dedicate a learning objective to this.

- Consider whether, in addition to subject-matter learning objectives, intercultural learning objectives such as intercultural competence and responsible global citizenship could be achieved (and how they could be measured). Integrate the cultural aspect into the tasks and the assessment, so that students do not get the impression that this work is less important than their professional learning but a part of it.
- Explain the teaching and learning culture considering how this might differ elsewhere: what is the role of teachers and students, how can students get in touch with the teacher and with each other, which behaviour is desired during the course, what are the expectations regarding course work, etc. A focus on student-centred learning can be a deviation from the student's home institution and students need to understand what this means for them as learners (e.g., their active participation in class is necessary).
- Since the understanding of deadlines can differ according to cultural character, the binding nature of them in your course must also be explained.

b) Conversation and negotiation:
- Ask your students if your settings are unfamiliar to any of them and engage in conversation with the group about whether and why adjustments to your ideas might be useful.
- Find out if students can bring a special (international) perspective to a topic and be open to integrating it, conscious that this request may also make the student feel more vulnerable or exposed.
- Encourage your students to contact you if they cannot easily follow your course or complete assignments like other students due to special circumstances. If possible, be open to deviations from the majority rules (e.g., regarding the language in which exams must be taken).
- Be sensitive to issues related to language proficiency and provide extra and appropriate support to students who may be lower in level regarding the used language for teaching.
- Find out if there are any international students enrolled in the course who have special credit requirements from their home institution and address them.

2.2 Topics and materials

Integrating international, heterogeneous perspectives, and realising interculturally responsive teaching requires a careful selection of topics and materials (Gay, 2018; Muñiz, 2019). Certainly, the scope varies depending on the discipline and the subject matter discussed - and is greater in a political science seminar than in a basic mathematics course, although mathematics benefits from international origins. Nevertheless, it is always possible to include an international perspective when selecting material and content.

Additionally, it is important to provide material in a way that it is easily accessible and comprehensible for international students, both for preparation and follow-up.

Hence, two different dimensions can be considered:

a) **Provide topics and material that open heterogeneous, international perspectives:**
- Search and integrate literature, examples, and case studies from different contexts, as far as possible and suitable. In some cases, also the use of texts in a lingua franca can be helpful in promoting understanding across cultures.
- Check international academic journals and other secondary sources for internationally comparative perspectives on your teaching topic.
- Check whether it makes sense to choose texts from authors or with content that represents another approach to your topic than usual.
- Be careful and critical of stereotypical illustrations or examples in your teaching material and texts, avoid them or discuss them critically in class.
- Reserve, if possible, at least one session focussed on intercultural comparison of your lecture's topic, where applicable.
- Incorporate diversity in the lesson plan: (1) Invite diverse speakers and guest lecturers from a local cultural group or from another country, to add varying points of view and real-life context to different subjects, (2) Connect the class to real-life scenarios (e.g., make use of the news for reflection and debate).
- Question social hierarchies and be sensitive to everyone's culture, beliefs, and language concerns, and use these insights to design your lesson plans.

b) Provide materials that can be worked on well by diverse groups of students. These will benefit all students:

- Use a variety of teaching material and methods to accommodate different students' learning preferences.
- Record lectures so that students can listen to them on repeat.
- Support instruction with audios or visuals, e.g., presentation sheets, graphic overviews, audio descriptions, flowcharts, or handouts, so that students can work with them easily. When creating resources use document headings to structure and alt tags for images to aide digital accessibility.
- Give, whenever possible, your students the opportunity for online individual or collaborative learning by providing compiled asynchronous material such as short quizzes in the format of formative assessment, learning cards, mind maps, discussion forums, etc.

2.3 Contact and interaction

Active engagement with learning objects is another basic requirement for learning success at the university. Interaction is particularly important in heterogeneous, international groups. On the one hand, it helps students who are not in the majority to connect with the group as a whole. On the other hand, it is only through interaction that the benefits of heterogeneous groups can be fully realised. It is only through interaction that different perspectives are exchanged and lead to new insights. Furthermore, learning objectives in the area of intercultural learning can only be reached when diverse people and their cultures encounter each other in genuine interaction and can reflect on that.

a) Create occasions for group interaction:

- Create tasks for your students that require interaction, however small it may be.
- Use a variety of digital tools and methods (e.g., Dyer 2023). Provide training or guidelines on how to use the tools and methods to be used (e.g., short video instructions).
- Encourage students to ask questions, ask open-ended questions yourself, and let students search for solutions first (e.g., by talking to their neighbour). Organise opinion polls to promote active learning.
- Organise small group work and collaborative elements during your course, if feasible. Even buzz groups for brainstorming on a topic can be a good way to get your students in contact with each other.

- In interactive settings, insist on mixed groups when possible, and emphasise the need and benefit of intercultural understanding. Devote time and energy to reflection about it.
- If using group work, consider any impediments to interactive engagement in the groups that your students may have (both home and international students) and support students to acquire skills to work well in groups.
- Encourage your students to share personal stories with each other by giving them questions about personal experiences connected to your topic, so that they can build a connection via their everyday life.
- Make your students aware of how they can connect with each other virtually and create a need to do so.
- Vary your didactic approach to provide different learning occasions and offer different approaches in a heterogeneous group. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL; Rose, 2001) framework encourages teachers to incorporate multiple forms of engagement, representation, action, and expression thereby building inclusion into their courses from the outset.
- Provide students with the opportunity to interact with each other on the first class, you can call it 'Networking' or 'know each-other'.
- Reflect the importance of a diverse group especially in terms of ideas generation for group work or group active learning, and the impact it may have on grades.

b) Give opportunity for personal contact with you:
- Stay a little while after your course in the classroom or the video conference, to give your students the possibility to ask questions and get in contact with you. Let your students know that you will be available for some minutes after the lecture.
- Be open to contact out off the course time and explain to students how best to reach you.
- If you use communication tools such as an online forum, look at the posts made there and communicate with students through these tools as well.
- Allocate counselling or tutoring weekly sessions to meet your students whenever they need to.

2.4 Assessment and evaluation

"Assessment drives learning": This didactic saying is still true today. Whether students focus on the intended learning objectives in a learning process depends to a large extent on whether these learning objectives are part of an examination. International elements are integrated into assessments and evaluations via the content as well as the form of an exam.

Independently from the examination and the evaluation of student performance, you can also scrutinise your teaching from the perspective of internationalisation and intercultural focus at the end of a course through student evaluation.

a) **Summative Assessment:**
- If possible, select examination tasks in such a way that the subject of the examination must be reflected from an intercultural perspective. Keep in mind that students need to have practiced these or similar kinds of tasks before the final exam takes place.
- In the case of flexible forms of assessment, such as oral exams or writing assignments, allow students to consider a topic from a culturally specific perspective. Make the exchange of different culture-specific perspectives part of the exam (e.g., through appropriate group presentations, peer-feedback or discussion).
- If intercultural exchange was part of your teaching scenario, integrate reflection on it into the assessment. Formative elements such as portfolios or reflective questions can help.
- Since examination approaches also vary depending on the university system and discipline, providing assessment options can be helpful for the appropriate evaluation of a diverse student body.
- Provide assessments in a lingua franca, either parallel to your teaching language, or for everybody.
- Make sure the assessment is inclusive and equitable, especially considering students from different backgrounds by (1) avoiding the one-size-fits-all assessment method. You can include different types of questions e.g., multiple choice, open ended, matching questions, short cases etc. (2) Providing clearly articulated assessment criteria and marking rubrics to maintain fairness.
- Use continuous and periodic forms of assessments so that the evaluation will be spread throughout the year and not only based on one or two chances.

- Optimally align the assessment methods and criteria to the competences and also to internationalised learning outcomes.

b) Formative Assessment:
- Use regular small assignments which are not graded to get feedback on the how students are learning. These may include writing protocols, reflective questions, summaries of readings.
- Assessing the process of learning can be as important as assessing the product of learning and portfolios or learning diaries are ideal for capturing students' iterative development (there are specific digital tools for that).
- It is also possible to use surveys to assess students' self-perception of their learning (e.g., intercultural learning, language learning, communication strategies, collaboration strategies, etc.). That can also be used for conducting a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) research project to provide evidence of impact of your teaching approaches on student learning and can also lead to a publication.
- Remember that a formative assessment needs to include to telling students how to improve – avoid general statements such as "Study more." Consideration should be given to cultural aspects and how to support students' feedback recipiency.
- Specific methods (e.g., think-pair-share, one-minute-paper, peer feedback) can support you in assessing students' learning and understanding.

c) Evaluation:
- After a few weeks, ask whether students can comprehend the contents of the course and how well integrated they feel.
- Discuss with your students at the end of the semester if the course supported intercultural learning.
- Ask your students what made learning in a higher education system easy and what made it difficult for them. Share and discuss these results with the whole group.
- Discuss with your students what you can do better in future courses to incorporate international perspectives, integrate all students, and facilitate intercultural learning.
- Ask your students what could motivate them to make more effort.
- You can gather comments from students in face-to-face, or via an online forum in the Learning management system used by your university, even during the semester. This could provide

students with an opportunity to mention what could be changed or improved.

3 Mobility settings

As stated in the introduction to chapter 2, this handbook addresses different mobility settings: physical mobility, virtual mobility, virtual exchange (as a special form of virtual mobility) and blended mobility. While the previous chapter focused on aspects of overarching relevance for teaching diverse groups of learners, this chapter is concerned with the specifics of mobility settings in the learning environment.
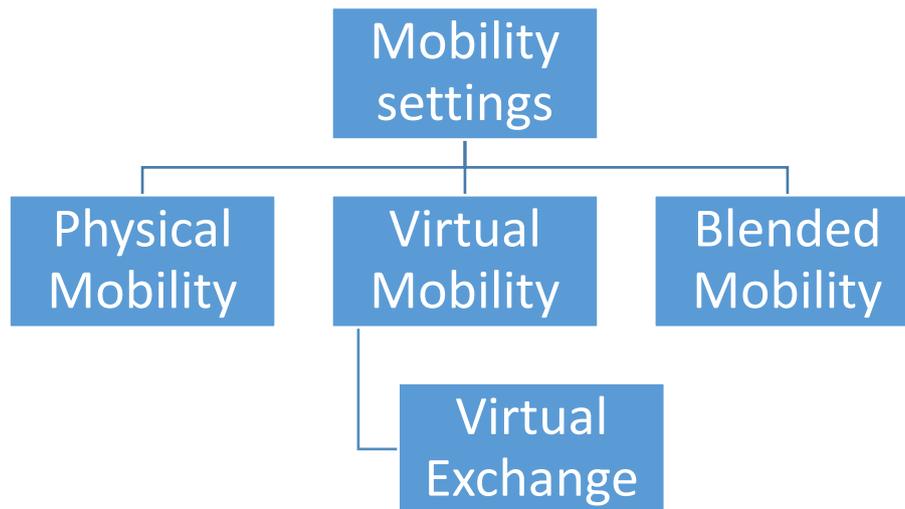
Figure 1: Mobility Settings

In this handbook, it is assumed that readers are already familiar with some of the concepts - this is particularly true for physical mobility, and to a somewhat lesser extent for virtual mobility. These formats will therefore be dealt with more briefly. Virtual Exchange will be addressed extensively, as it is pedagogically demanding and tremendously important in many respects for internationalisation in general and the university network of UNIC in particular. The same is true for the blended mobility.

In every subchapter, the Stories from the Field sections (Physical mobility, Virtual mobility, Virtual Exchange and Blended mobility) include examples on how academics and their universities created frameworks for internationally oriented teaching and how they concretely implemented such teaching. The UNIC universities do already have a treasure trove of practical experience and successful implementation.

The Stories from the Field have been written by different teachers and educational developers and therefore they differ in style and phrasing.

3 Mobility settings

3.1 Physical mobility

The discourse on internationalisation in higher education has traditionally been focussed on physical student mobility, i.e. sending domestic students abroad to study at foreign universities and acquire credits, which are then recognised at the home university (for funding see point 5.1.1). However, the rate of student mobility is rather low compared to the expectations – European ministers responsible for Higher Education expected in 2009: "by 2020 at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad" (European Higher Education Area, 2009). This is due to financial costs (e.g., travel costs, giving up one's employment), time (most mobilities last a semester or two) and organisation (agreements, accreditation) associated with it. Presumed cultural and language barriers also play a role. Therefore, the benefits of physical mobility only serve a minority of students and more often than not, they are taken up by students from privileged socio-economic backgrounds (Brandenburg, Berghoff & Taboadela, 2014, p. 37). Student mobility rates are at an average of 8% of graduates in Europe, mobility programmes for teaching staff (for funding see point 5.1.2) are even less frequent (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2020). This is due to the fact that teacher mobility is neither institutionally required nor is the disruption of teaching activities at the home institutions easily remedied.

Nevertheless, physical mobility is an important way to provide international and intercultural experiences to individuals, therefore barriers to physical mobility should sharedly be mitigated. New formats are continuously developing to foster mobility experiences for all students. If long-term stays are hard for many students, they (and their teachers) can now opt for shorter offers like, e. g., summer schools or research stays (see chapter 3.5 for a comparison of the benefits of all mobility concepts).

Teachers and academic support staff can do a lot to support the learning of international students. At the same time, the presence of international students provides a great chance to foster the intercultural learning of the students (and the staff) in host universities. Hence, teachers should have international students in mind while planning and conducting their courses, even if they do not know in advance whether international students will participate, and specifically design for international students when they plan to involve them.

Incoming international students have the advantage that teachers can easily establish direct contact with them and keep an eye on their

successful integration in the courses. If you are considering the hints in the previous chapter, you are well on your way to facilitating student integration.

Stories from the field: innovative physical mobility concepts

The Stories from the field in this section illustrate how physical mobility, outside of traditional Erasmus stays of individual students, is realised within the UNIC alliance. Even though the cases also contain elements of virtual mobility, physical mobility is the focus here.

Story 1: Joint-Degree Master „Superdiversity in Education, Organisations and Society" (SEOS)

A joint full Master programme on superdiversity has been developed by eight UNIC partner universities allowing students to learn in an international peer group and study in different UNIC universities during the two years, combining virtual and physical mobility offers. The Master involves educational sciences, social sciences as well as organizational research and management, and bases on collaborative and challenge-based learning approaches. Discover the Joint-Degree Master SEOS.

Story 2: MSc Redesigning the Post-Industrial City (RePIC) – an inter-university, multidisciplinary joint postgraduate programme

Within the scope of the UNIC alliance, this joint master's programme of eight universities wants to create an educational experience which recognizes and responds critically to issues of cities in different forms and stages of post-industrial transition. The goal is to educate the next generation of specialists with the 21st century skills and knowledge needed to address the challenges and opportunities of cities in transition and superdiverse societies. Discover the joint MSc RePIC.

Story 3: Road safety summer school organised by the Faculty of Transport and Traffic Sciences, University of Zagreb

The Faculty of Transport and Traffic Sciences of University of Zagreb has organised a comprehensive road safety summer school credited with 2 ECTS. It includes guest lectures from international experts and practical work on crash test data for students from all over the world. Discover the Road safety summer school.

3.2 Virtual mobility

Virtual mobility is an activity that gives remote access to learning in international learning environments facilitated by digital communication tools. Students join courses and lectures at other universities virtually (Boaretto et al., 2013, pp. 7-8; Rajagopal et al., 2020, pp. 2–3). Virtual mobility can, but does neither necessarily require, bespoke co-designed international collaborative learning and teaching, nor deeper reflections about intercultural learning (in contrast to Virtual Exchange, which is a specific and didactically more shaped form of virtual mobility). The courses do not have to be specially designed for international participants, but teachers should have digital and language competences to deliver them. Students are required to make special arrangements themselves to ensure recognition and credits at their home universities (Boaretto et al., 2013, p. 16). Virtual mobility, as defined above, enables the student "to enrich […] intercultural, language and ICT skills even without moving from home" (Boaretto et al., 2013, p. 8). UNIC offers a wide range of open courses for its students to enable virtual mobility.

An essential advantage of virtual mobility in contrast to physical mobility is its availability and accessibility, as virtual mobility can be accessed remotely and/or asynchronously. Lists of different tools and apps that can be useful in education can be found online (e.g., Dyer, 2023).

Many barriers of the physical mobility settings are mitigated or completely removed by having virtual mobility. Therefore, virtual mobility is more accessible to many more people (Guimarães et al., 2019, p. 102). Yet, at the same time, other hurdles still occur – the lack of social contact with the host students will probably be pronounced, as informal meetings, informal communication and extra-curricular activities are not available. In addition to that, as international students struggle to establish relationships with other international students or with people outside of the university, spontaneous forms of intercultural learning are limited (see chapter 3.5 for a comparison of the benefits of all mobility concepts).

Particularly in the case of larger virtual events such as lectures, lecturers may lose sight of whether international students are listening and whether they are able to follow the course. It is therefore all the more important to address this issue as suggested in the previous chapter.

Special attention is also required if intercultural learning is a learning objective. The mere presence of international students in an internationally mixed setting is of limited effectiveness for both the

home and the international students (Guimarães et al., 2019, p. 100). The design of interaction opportunities during the course and the possibility to contact the lecturer should be duly considered in the case of virtual mobility. Here, too, reference can be made to the explanations in the previous chapter.

Stories from the field: Virtual Mobility

The Stories from the field in this section illustrate how Virtual Mobility is realised in the UNIC partner universities. The formats are not always clearly distinguishable from Virtual Exchange activities. Even though collaborative elements of Virtual Exchange are included, they have been selected for this chapter because they illustrate an interesting aspect of virtual mobility, such as e.g., virtual extracurricular activities (Story 4) or focus on single short appointments.

Story 4: Students' experiences with virtual mobility in Communication and Media

The perspective of students in virtual activities is taken in this Story from the field. Virtual activities in Communication and Media Bachelor Program at Erasmus University Rotterdam included participation in virtual lectures, interaction with international peers and extracurricular activities. Discover Students' experiences with virtual mobility in Communication and Media.

Story 5: An international hybrid lecture in the field of Tourism

The one-session hybrid lecture took place at the University of Deusto in Bilbao, whereas parts of the audience came from the University of Woosong in Daejeon, South Korea. Teachers prepared an interactive lesson and paid much attention to the preparation of the interaction. Discover the international hybrid lecture.

Story 6: "Strategic Financial Analysis": fostering interaction in a big lecture of 400 students

This Story from the field is an interview extract with a professor in Business of Uni Liège, Marie Lambert. She has intensified the digitalisation of her lecture during the pandemics and has kept the elements in order to support students' interaction and to enable virtual mobility. Discover "Strategic Financial Analysis".

Story 7: UNIC Teaching the Teachers Training 2: Intercultural Dialogue

UNIC's Centres for Teaching and Learning are collaborating to provide *Teaching the Teachers* Trainings for UNIC's academics. The teaching approach of Virtual Exchange takes centre stage. The enabling of intercultural exchange and communication between

faculty members is highly appreciated by the participants. Discover UNIC Teaching the Teachers Training 2.

Story 8: A virtual teamwork in Events Management/ Hotel Management
Tourism professor Samiha Chemli, under the Erasmus+ mobility, co-created a joint special lecture along with her colleagues Prof. Bruce Shim and Prof. Michalis Toanoglou from the University of Jeonju in South Korea. The students from both universities have been directed to collaborate on an activity at the end of the lecture. Discover the virtual teamwork in Events Management.

What is Virtual Exchange?

GOAL 1
Academic exchange ▶

GOAL 2
Development of
key competences ▶

GOAL 3
Inclusive mobility ▶

GOAL 4
Support for
responsible
global
citizenship ▶

Virtual Exchange is
a form of virtual mobility
characterised by particularly
intensive interaction between
teachers and students across the border
of at least two countries.

Story from the field

The six key elements of
Virtual Exchange are:

1 Partnerships   READ MORE ▶

TIPS 1 2 3 4 5 6

2 Tasks   READ MORE ▶

TIPS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

3 Technology   READ MORE ▶

TIPS 1 2 3 4 5

4 Mentoring and support   READ MORE ▶

TIPS 1 2 3 4 5 6

5 Integration   READ MORE ▶

6 Recognition   READ MORE ▶

10 steps to organise virtual exchange   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

UNIC

3.3.1 Idea and objectives

Virtual Exchange is a form of virtual mobility characterised by particularly intensive interaction between teachers and students involving at least classrooms in two countries. Virtual Exchange thus corresponds particularly well to what the universities of the UNIC network are striving for and the UNIC-institutions believe in its added value to the portfolio of options that students have in order to obtain international experience (Helm, 2018, p. 2; Baroni et al., 2019, p. 4). Yet, at the same time, it has not yet been implemented on a broad scale in the past. Therefore, this concept will be given a little more space than the ones presented before (see chapter 3.5 for a comparison of the benefits of all mobility concepts).

Virtual Exchange aims at uniting students from different universities virtually in collaborative tasks and supporting them in the discussion of specific topics, the exchange of ideas or the joint generation of a product and its presentation. Virtual Exchange is embedded in regular teaching activities, i.e. each teacher teaches a regular course at their own university, but the two (or more) courses are linked with each other by the use of digital tools. Elements of Virtual Exchange can shape a course over an entire semester or enrich only particular parts of it. Virtual Exchange is always an activity recognized by both institutions, worthy of study credits or part of a broader activity that is ascribed study credits (O'Dowd 2018; Helm, 2018, p. 2; Baroni et al., 2019, p. 4).

Beyond the academic exchange, an explicit or implicit element of Virtual Exchange is the students' reflection about their experiences in the intercultural collaboration (Helm, 2018, p. 2; Baroni et al., 2019, p. 4). See the Stories from the field for practical impressions.

In summary, the following general goals of Virtual Exchange can be highlighted:

- **Academic exchange**: Teachers and students can enter a cross-border academic exchange and thus become acquainted with new academic perspectives in an international context (Gokcora, 2021, pp. 1-3).
- **Inclusive mobility**: As a part of the internationalisation at home strategy, Virtual Exchange (like all virtual mobility settings) can be an occasion for international encounter and intercultural learning for everybody – especially for those students who cannot stay abroad for various reasons or where institutions are encouraging restricted travel in response to the climate crisis. However, it is important to keep in mind that virtual settings cannot fully replace the benefit of the physical

experiences, as yet, and can also create new barriers (in more detail see also chapter 1.2).

- **Development of key competences**: Virtual Exchange can not only enhance students' academic skills, but also promotes the development of other key competences, such as the use of digital tools or coping with intercultural communication situations (Stevens Initiative 2023; Helm & van der Velden, 2020, p. 18).
- **Support for responsible global citizenship**: The academic exchange should foster critical thinking and democratic skills, invite an exchange of perspectives and develop active and engaged global citizens (Helm & van der Velden, 2020, p. 18; O'Dowd, 2018, p. 21). The combination of Virtual Exchange, challenge-based learning and societal cooperation are intended to transform societies to become more participative, more inclusive and more sustainably democratic in the long run.

3.3.2 Realising Virtual Exchange

To realise a class-to-class Virtual Exchange in higher education teaching settings, there are some variables to consider. Here again, the general explanations in chapter 2 of this handbook are a good starting point to design a course. However, there are aspects that are more specific to Virtual Exchange. Robert O'Dowd (2020) describes six key elements of Virtual Exchange. These are partnerships, tasks, technology, mentoring and support, integration and recognition. In particular, the first four aspects are aimed at teachers, which is why they are presented here in addition to the notes from chapter 2, together with some practical implications. All practical hints can be found in the Virtual Exchange checklists in the appendix which might help lecturers structure their ideas.

Partnerships

Both teachers and students will have to create partnerships of collaboration during a Virtual Exchange. Teachers find common or complementary topics, agree learning outcomes, tasks, and methods, and find ways to communicate with each other about the students' learning processes. Students will work in small mixed working groups. The experiences in international groups show that the relationship between different partners is crucial for the success of academic and intercultural learning. That means that the partners must get to know each other to establish good working relationships, so that people are neither seen as anonymous figures on a screen nor as pure representatives of their national culture (Baroni et al., 2019, p. 12).

University teachers can reflect on the following aspects to develop partnerships, while combining topics and teaching approaches:

- Start from your own teaching. There is no need to construct a whole new course, try to integrate the Virtual Exchange sessions into an existing curriculum.
- Check semester times and national holidays in order to find a good period for your collaboration (2 to 8 weeks in a weekly structured 2h-course are considered to be an appropriate duration). Start small, e.g., with two co-taught sessions, where comparative questions are discussed, and then extend your collaboration over the next semesters step by step.
- It is possible to have only one or two synchronous sessions with the two classes, e. g. kick-off or presentation sessions. But keep in mind, that it has to be feasible for your students to organise autonomously in their working group. A common time slot might therefore be a good supportive structure. Since the specific local course time can also be used to support the students in their collaborative work (see point 'Mentoring and Support'), you will have to find a balance between these needs.
- Give yourselves structures for the collaboration with your co-teacher, like fixed time slots, prepared topics, and a regular agenda. Talk about communication tools and think about how you can share documents and ideas.
- Provide your students with an agreed-upon structure, such as common tools to use for synchronous communication, a common forum where they can discuss asynchronously and a digital learning environment where they can share documents and work together. Prepare these structures for your student groups as early as possible.
- If your students work within internationally mixed groups, there are different roles which are recommended to distribute amongst the group. Responsibilities for different subtasks must be clear and scheduled (Bukvova et al., 2006, p. 292). Explain the different roles in group work processes and have a clear and transparent mode of distributing them.

Tasks

Virtual Exchange always requires defining tasks for students to work on together.

When designing tasks for a Virtual Exchange, it is important to give attention to the different types of tasks. O'Dowd and Waire (2009) classify tasks into get-to-know tasks, comparative tasks and collaborative tasks.

Get-to-know tasks are basic, as the depth of the contact is crucial for a successful intercultural learning process. Thus, having enough time for getting to know each other is important; e.g., guiding this process through a set of tasks can be a good way to acquaint the students with each other, so that they do not stay at a superficial level of contact but really get in touch with deeper personal and cultural orientations. Teachers can describe in detail which information students shall give their fellow students about themselves, as well as which information they should ask from them. In order to act as a role model, also the involved teachers should present themselves to the group with information comparable to the one they want their students to share with each other.

In a second step, students can work on *comparative tasks*, which allow attention to similarities and differences of personal background, academic background and/or their cultures. The guidance of the teachers by formulating an appropriate task is again crucial (giving a good description of what students shall do, and how, using which tools).

When students are thereby introduced to each other, they can start with *collaborative tasks*. The description of each task must again be detailed and clear (O'Dowd & Waire, 2009). In a Virtual Exchange project called 'Evidence-Validated Online Learning through Virtual Exchange' (EVOLVE), teachers established Virtual Exchange walkthrough-guides, where students find information about tasks, connected questions, different steps to pass, deadlines, responsible persons for the task, timing, product, etc. (EVOLVE, 2018). Tasks can be designed according to proven didactic principles, such as problem-based learning or research-based learning. The need for considering the perspectives and contributions from every participant of the working group is crucial in collaborative tasks.

In a good Virtual Exchange task, professional and social learning are interwoven. The following aspects can guide you to find an appropriate task for your Virtual Exchange.

- On the whole, it is important to find a task that provides meaning for the involved students. Research-oriented teaching on the basis of the latest international publications on the subject can be a reasonable approach to ensure meaningful confrontations with the topics.
- Formulate the different tasks that your students shall accomplish clearly. Guide them through the exchange by equipping them with questions they could ask, comments

they could make, topics they could discuss. Where possible, act as a role model.

- Get-to-know tasks can comprise little videos or photo stories about oneself, the city in which one lives, typical regional food, or rationales why one chose his study programme, for example. Students can share these and ask mutual questions or find common points in an asynchronous communication first.
- A comparative task should allow your students to discover another perspective on a course's topic, and to explain their perspective on it to their international peers. Students can share little texts, newspaper articles or websites to show how a specific topic is discussed in their country.
- Collaborative tasks shall comprise the sharing of perspectives on a problem that has to be solved by the internationally mixed group. As a result, students should create a 'product' (film, paper, object) together, which can be presented to the plenum at the end of the Virtual Exchange. During collaborative tasks, synchronous and asynchronous communication can be used in combination with each other.
- Start small: when you conduct your Virtual Exchange over a short period of, e.g., two sessions, comparative tasks enable communication about culturally different perspectives regarding the teaching topic. Collaborative tasks need preparation and therefore more time and can be added in following semesters if you continue your collaboration.
- Supply all descriptions and information, after having explained them, also in writing.
- Use different communication tools so that your students can develop both their oral and written (professional) communication competences, and train in synchronous and asynchronous settings.

Technology

To realise Virtual Exchange, it is necessary to have a look at digital competences. Using social networks and social communication channels on a daily basis does not necessarily mean that students know how to use online technologies in formal learning contexts as well. Even less of an awareness of how to use these technologies for public engagement and participative action can be expected. Therefore, explicit training of digital competence may be necessary by providing different activities with explications of the digital tools and

training in using these tools. Especially online intercultural interaction and collaboration needs support in order to create a real dialogue, in different modes of online communication (Helm & van der Velden, 2020, p. 19).

In addition to that, it is to consider that using both, synchronous and asynchronous tools while working on tasks is also very important, as each of them support the development of different aspects of intercultural and language competence (Lists of different digital tools can be found online; e.g., Dyer, 2023). Synchronous meetings support especially the negotiating competences, formulating questions, discussing. Asynchronous work is stronger on delivering quite detailed information. Also to be kept in mind that synchronous communication is quite spontaneous and privileges native speakers, in contrast to asynchronous communication where students have more time to prepare their statements and everybody may contribute more equally (O'Dowd, 2018, p. 11).

Technical struggles during the Virtual Exchange can be prevented by some considerations:

- Choose well the tools which you want your students to use. Technology always follows your didactical reflections and has to serve your learning objectives.
- When you have chosen a tool, make sure that it is well embedded in the course's activities, so that your students really have to use it.
- Prepare the digital structures for the students' working groups well-timed.
- Train your students in using the tools that they have to use during the online interaction. Let them make dry runs and practise using the tools, especially if it seems likely to you that the tools are not yet known to all students.
- Make sure that everybody knows where they can find support if there are any problems with the technology.

Mentoring and support

During a Virtual Exchange, students encounter linguistic, cultural and digital challenges that encourage many learning opportunities. Yet, to be effective, it is important that teachers are attentive to actively support their students' learning (Gutiérrez et al., 2021).

Literature describes three types of pedagogical mentoring in class-to-class Virtual Exchanges, i.e. activities of the involved teachers to support the learning of their students during the virtual exchange. They follow a model of students' working groups organising

autonomously their collaborative work, while the respective local class time is used to reflect on their experiences within the respective class (Gutiérrez et al., 2021; O'Dowd, Sauro and Spector-Cohen, 2020).

The *first type* of pedagogical mentoring takes place before the exchange, in preparation of the online interaction. Introductory sessions regarding the teaching topic can be conducted; the setting of a Virtual Exchange can be explained. Teachers can present models or examples of appropriate communication strategies from previous exchanges and instruct the students within their respective classes how to deal with these situations. In the same way, the training in the use of digital tools, as mentioned before, can take place before the Virtual Exchange (Gutiérrez et al., 2021; O'Dowd, Sauro and Spector-Cohen, 2020).

The *second type* of pedagogical mentoring comprises the chairmanship of the interaction within the working groups. Since teachers in many cases are not present during the concrete interaction within these groups, only reflective mentoring of the experiences will be possible. These can take place during the local plenum sessions, where the whole classes meet without their international partners. The task of the respective teachers to build a climate that allows the discussion of critical incidents during the student interaction. They should be openly addressed so that new and different understanding can be supported (and thoughtful reactions eventually prepared). Critical incidents can involve e. g. disagreements or different perspectives on the teaching topic, struggles with the teamwork or cultural misunderstandings. This is a very important type of pedagogical mentoring, because not only the concerned students have the opportunity to reflect on their interaction, but also the local peers learn from these reflections and discussions. Therefore "these teacher-led analysis sessions in the local classrooms are vital to the success of the […] learning process" (O'Dowd et al., 2020, p. 152).

This leads to *type three* of pedagogical mentoring, which implies the reflection of students' experiences and written communication in regard to the professional discourse, e.g., locating the different perspectives with their connections to power and participation in the professional field (Gutiérrez et al., 2021; O'Dowd, Sauro and Spector-Cohen, 2020).

- Before the Exchange, it is important to already explain and proof well your position as companion of your students' learning, and to emphasise the importance of mistakes and conflicts for their learning.

- Prepare your students with professional as well as intercultural knowledge, as described above, in consultation with your partner teacher.
- If you don't have examples from previous exchanges, you can also use examples provided in literature in order to prepare your students.
- With your teaching partner: talk about what your students are doing, which topics they are discussing and if any irritations or problems arose. So you can support each other as well, and work with both groups synchronized. Fix a time slot per week for your conversations.
- During the exchange, ask your students to report any strange, crazy or exciting messages or statements made by their international peers. Support your students in understanding why their international peers act in a certain way (with support from your partner teacher) and in finding appropriate reactions. This can regard professional learning, collaborative learning and/or intercultural learning.
- After the exchange, integrate the students' experiences into the further process of the course and refer regularly to it.

Integration and Recognition

As mentioned earlier, O'Dowd (2020) refers to two more dimensions. *Integration* is about linkage to the study programs, which can be achieved, e.g., by considering Virtual Exchange in accreditation processes. On the faculty level, common onboarding sessions for all Virtual Exchange students one or two times per year can also be useful to create a sense of community and share information. Within the UNIC consortium, all partners agreed to support Virtual Exchange as an option of how a course can be shaped, and added it to e.g., examination regulations and study regulations, or corresponding instructions of the university's leadership (e.g., Dean, Provost, Rectorate) to ensure there are no hurdles to an implementation.

Recognition ultimately refers to the fact that a university should create the framework conditions for Virtual Exchange in order to acknowledge the teaching performance for this particular format. Institutional commitment and faculty incentives are relevant points (Milem, Chang, Antonio, 2005, 25), e.g., by giving teachers additional funds for hiring student assistants, giving teachers a fellowship for pursuing a Virtual Exchange, or reducing other teaching obligations so that teachers can dedicate the time to the Virtual Exchange preparations. Another way is through academic recognition, e.g., by rewarding commitment to the Virtual Exchange in appointment or promotion procedures.

3.3.3 Virtual Exchange in 10 steps

The following 10 steps illustrate a process how a Virtual Exchange project could be designed. Depending on the particular project, not all steps must be gone, or some steps might be treated simultaneously, or in another order.

1. Have a look at your own courses. Where could an international perspective enhance students' learning? Write a short abstract on your ideas. The checklists for Virtual Exchange teachers in the appendix might help you.

2. Find a partner. This will need some time. Partners for VE activities are mostly found in research networks, contacts of colleagues who have been abroad, internet research, via the universities' networks. Within UNIC, internationally organised teacher trainings (see Story 7) are an occasion to get in contact.

3. Get to know your partner. Exchange material you use in your teaching, schedule a virtual meeting and talk about your points of interest, give each other guest lectures in your mutual courses, if possible, meet physically (e.g., by Erasmus teaching mobility) and have guest lectures and/or interaction with your respective students (see Story 10). The Agreements with your partner teacher – Checklist might help you.

4. Agree on the timeline. When do you want your activity to take place? How long should it be? Academic calendars and preparation of the implementation may differ significantly from one university to another (see Story 16).

6. Agree on common learning objectives (see Story 11 and Story 14). What are the teaching and learning methods as well as tasks to reach these, and which results of the students' collaboration would you aim for? How could you support your students to succeed in the task as well as in the intercultural communication and collaboration?

5. Talk about assignments and workloads you want to attribute to the activity (see Story 21). This must not be similar for both groups, but keep in mind that different workloads might lead to different motivational positions. How many ECTS should your students receive? Do you want to grade the VE activity, or will there be another assignment outside of the VE activity?

7. Prepare an explanation (at best in written form) about the activity for your students. This can be a kind of guide with descriptions on what, when, with whom, until when they have to do.

8. Conduct your activity. Be in good contact with your students and with each other and talk about how your students are coping with the task and their international peers (see Story 18). Discuss with each other on mentoring strategies for your students.

9. Reflect on your VE activity. Let your students evaluate the VE and do an evaluation and reflection also among the teachers' team (see Story 19). What went well? What went wrong? Where is adaptation needed? What should be different next time? What have you learnt?

10. Plan the next event (see Story 17).

3.3.4 Start small vs. Realise VE as a labour of love

Institutional change and improvement can happen one of two ways: crisis/revolution and incremental modification. The first needs lots of energy from the whole organisation from the beginning, the second gives itself time to evolve and develop slowly in the course of time, with a constant manageable effort.

Thus, the planning of a Virtual Exchange activity may be influenced by organisational circumstances of crisis, occurring in the department, faculty or university – e.g., less and less interest from students with threatened closure of a study programme may release enough energy in the department to facilitate educational innovation, in order to save the study programme by attracting more students.

The pandemic situation with sudden online education has also been a crisis, enabling new formats of teaching that have not been thinkable before.

On the other side, most of the education in universities cannot be considered as taking place in times of crisis or revolution. Therefore, the organisational energy may not support very much educational innovations like Virtual Exchange activities. This means teachers have to dedicate their own time and energy to the development of their teaching and the change of the routines at their department/faculty. In this respect, an approach that focuses on implementing small changes that can gradually sum up to an innovative teaching approach can be considered as an achievable way. Departmental routines for facilitating these activities will be changed by time.

Teachers who have favourable conditions in their department (e.g., already experienced routines), or who can mobilise other sources of energy for their teaching development (e.g., PhD projects, networking benefits), or who consider the Virtual Exchange activity itself as a source of energy and inspiration – a labour of love or passion project – could also go ahead with a full project.

3 Mobility settings

Stories from the field: Virtual Exchange

The Stories collected in this section show the great variety of options in designing Virtual Exchange activities in Higher Education. All included Stories describe an international team of teachers collaborating and integrating the activity in their courses. All projects have realised a students' collaboration in international small groups, or follow this as an objective for the next semester.

Story 9: Doing Business between Croatia and the Netherlands: A Virtual Teamwork Project – Starting a Business Abroad

In this 8-week Virtual Exchange activity, Business students from Uni Zagreb interact and collaborate with Business students in the Netherlands. Teachers create comparison tasks for their students and follow common learning objectives, e.g., the development of negotiation skills. Discover the Virtual Teamwork Project.

Story 10: A collaborative course project on International Human Rights

Discover the teacher's perspective with this Story from the field from Dr. Işıl Aral, a colleague of Koç University, about her Virtual Exchange collaboration in Law. She worked with a Belgium colleague to guide their students in reviewing Human Rights judgements in small internationally mixed groups and in engaging in discussions about this. Discover the collaborative course project on International Human Rights.

Story 11: Virtual Exchange session in Education

Master students in Education had the opportunity to participate in a Virtual Exchange session on 'Self-regulation and socially shared regulation of Learning (SSRL)'. The two involved teachers, Dr. Astrid Wichmann from RUB and Essi Vuopala from UOULU, have integrated the session in their respective courses at their home universities. Discover the Virtual Exchange session in Education.

Story 12: Research colloquium for Master and doctorate students in Catholic Theology

A team of four teachers from Uni Zagreb and RUB have conceived a full block seminar on 'Religion, Church and Theology in Times of Crisis – a Theological and Religious Pedagogical Research'. Actual research projects of Master's and Doctorate's thesis were presented and discussed against the background of pandemics, globalisation and political radicalisation in both countries in form of a virtual conference. Discover the research colloquium in Catholic Theology.

3 Mobility settings

Story 13: Virtual Exchange in creative writing: Moomins as a cultural phenomenon
Students of different majors at the University of Lodz's master's studies had the opportunity to participate in a virtual exchange on Moomins as a cultural phenomenon: philosophy, multimedia storytelling, and double addressee. [Discover the Virtual Exchange in creative writing.](#)

Story 14: Sustainability in Process Engineering: A Virtual Exchange course experience
Two engineering researchers have developed a hybrid lecture for their MA students. They have used different digital formats and methods of international cooperation during their course. After the lecture part, RUB students continued in a group work on sustainable processes in engineering industries. [Discover the Virtual Exchange course experience.](#)

Story 15: Urban modelling for post-industrial cities: virtual collaboration in Geo Sciences
A full digital block course in the field of Geo Sciences has been co-designed and conducted by three teachers from Uni Liège, Uni Zagreb and Ruhr University Bochum. Students worked with and reflected on satellite data to model urban growth and change in small internationally mixed groups. [Discover the virtual collaboration in Geo Sciences.](#)

Story 16: Dignified Spaces in a Plural Europe: On the (In)Visibility of Cultural and Religious Communities in Post-Industrial Cities. Interdisciplinary Virtual Exchange Project Involving Theology, Philosophy, Media and Visual Arts.
Teachers from four different universities and different disciplines have co-planned and co-conducted a Virtual Exchange course dealing with spaces of cultural and religious communities in UNIC cities. The course consisted of meetings twice a week and field work of the students in their respective cities. [Discover the interdisciplinary Virtual Exchange project 'Dignified Spaces'.](#)

Story 17: German language learners in Ireland: a collaborative Life Writing project within a Virtual Exchange
In the course 'Life Writing through Technology: An Irish-German Project', third-level students of German in Ireland were matched with third-level students from different learning pathways in Germany. Students received 10-credit points for fulfilment of a biographical project which involved carrying out interviews in the target language and engaging with qualitative research methods (first iteration in

2020/21). The module is commencing its fourth iteration in 2023/24. [Discover the collaborative Life Writing project.](#)

Story 18: Education for Sustainable Development – a Virtual Exchange project with partners from school practice
Teacher students from Spain and Germany collaborated on concepts for implementing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in schools. School practitioners and a policy-making institution presented cases of best practices and were involved in discussions with the students. Based on this, the students developed their own ideas, guided by their respective teachers as moderators. [Discover the Education for Sustainable Development project.](#)

Story 19: "Lived Religion in Plural Cities": a Virtual Exchange project in Protestant Theology
Teachers at Ruhr University Bochum and University of Deusto collaborated to design a Virtual Exchange experience in a full block seminar for their students. The course included international guest lectures and a small research project for the students in internationally mixed small groups. [Discover "Lived Religion in Plural Cities".](#)

3.4 Blended Mobility

Blended mobility (for funding see point 5.1.3) describes a mix of physical and virtual settings, where the physical elements are mostly (but not always) shorter. In this sense, short and intensive programs like summer schools or conferences can be facilitated by a former virtual collaboration (see Story 22) and, as a whole or a part of a course, lecture, programme, or workshop can internationalise a curriculum (Beeck & van Petegem, 2013, p. 3). Especially for students who would not be mobile if they had to stay abroad for a longer period of time, blended study programmes can promote mobility (see chapter 3.5 for a comparison of the benefits of all mobility concepts). It is therefore important that universities organise credits and recognition of achievements in a blended setting (see Story 20 and Story 21), just as they would do in case of physical mobility – as part of their study programs (European Commission, 2021, p. 45).

Virtual components can be provided both as preparation for a physical mobility, for offering support going along with the physical mobility phase or as its follow-up:

- **Preparative activities**: Mostly, the virtual component is seen as facilitating the physical component, for example by preparing students linguistically, enhancing prior knowledge, and acquainting students with the learning and research culture so that they can succeed better in the host country (Michels et al., 2014, p. 99). In virtual projects, physical elements can function like kick-off meetings. Vice-versa, virtual elements can be used as preparative phases, where first orientations and eventually first tasks can be prepared, in a less intensive way, to get into an international organisation, get to know some persons, before going physically to another country for a longer period. Through virtual preparation, it is possible to test and improve specific skills and abilities by providing individual online learning courses to adjust the prior knowledge required for following the lectures and courses regarding the studies (Beeck & van Petegem, 2013, p. 4). If students are supposed to work together with international peers in small groups, cross-cultural preparation has to be established in order to prepare students for their encounters and to be aware of possible differences and misunderstandings. The preparation involves definitions of culture, difficult situations, stereotypes, and cultural models (Welzer et al., 2018, pp. 4-5).
- **Accompanying activities**: Virtual support can also take place during a physical or virtual mobility activity. For example, there can be reflective meetings with home teachers or peers,

language training, or other skills training, as well as culture-specific information about the host culture, which are provided virtually during a physical mobility period or vice-versa. This can allow for a deeper reflection, processing and immersion of the intercultural learning, and it is very important if there are collaborative elements during the mobile period (see also point 3.3.2 Mentoring in Virtual Exchange).

Blended internships require a mentoring system to reflect regularly on the internship (Beeck & van Petegem, 2013, p. 6) – as for most (local and physical) internships some sort of accompanying-system in the form of courses or supervisors already exists, this could be integrated in these structures. Academic support during the stay abroad, either virtually or face to face with peers and mentors is an important aspect of both virtual or physical internships (and, probably, also study periods) abroad. As Beeck and van Petegem (2013) describe, virtual support for a student abroad from the peer group which stays at home can be an "'internationalisation@home' experience for their peers who undertook their internships at local companies. Hearing about and discussing the experiences of the students abroad also enlarge[d] the local students' awareness of international differences between business cultures" (p. 7).

- **Follow-up activities**: After a mobility activity abroad, virtual elements can follow as presentations or digital projects, in which some results of the mobility work can be presented. Physical meetings at the end can serve as presentation meetings, where students can present the outcomes of their work to the whole group. As products of students' collaborative work, again a multiplicity of possibilities emerges. It might be a short film, an installation, an activity in public space, a site-specific performance, short theatre pieces (Purg et al., 2018, p. 188). Also written documents or guidelines are products, which can also be useful for next generations of students or practitioners. Public exhibitions, which also involve the citizens of the specific city, can create and connect to local developments (see UNIC CityLabs). An interesting aspect in follow-up activities might also be the organisation of a virtual afterglow, which includes virtual alumni associations (Beeck & van Petegem, 2013, p. 4) and can therefore contribute to the long-term implementation of blended projects.

In any case, the goal of combining virtual and physical mobility is to increase the success of all, home and international, students in

completing a course and gaining credits at their home or their host university.

As far as the design of blended mobility formats is concerned, we can generally refer again to the explanations in the previous chapter. However, in blended settings a good description and explication of the combination of the different formats and the learning outcomes is even more necessary than in the formats introduced so far. Students need this to develop a clear idea of the process and the tasks to be completed over time.

A blended setting is implemented by UNIC's partner universities by combining university courses (face-to-face) with (virtual) CityLabs. These UNIC CityLabs address a very diverse audience, bring together academic disciplines, and tap into the collaborative structures between cities and the respective universities. Students, citizens, academics, and city stakeholders work together to identify and solve societal challenges faced by post-industrial superdiverse cities.

In these urban meeting places, UNIC students, researchers and teachers meet UNIC's associate partners, local communities, and citizens to co-create innovative solutions to real-life urban challenges. Teachers can prepare their students on specific topics in their regular courses before attending a CityLab, or they can use the results of a CityLab in their subsequent course. During CityLabs, the underlying challenge-based and impact-by-design research methodologies ensure that social impact and research will go hand in hand. They confront students with new societal challenges in their local context and teach them to address these challenges using new hybrid forms of knowledge to generate innovative solutions from an international approach. The combination of citizen-centred and participatory design principles creates a sense of belonging to the UNIC community facing the common challenges. The Stories from the field below (Story 23 and Story 24) illustrate the idea of finding creative solutions to real-world problems in internationally mixed groups in UNIC CityLabs.

Stories from the field: Blended Mobility

The Stories present in this chapter describe activities in a range of diverse realisations. All activities involve a virtual collaboration in combination with a physical meeting of the participants. The Erasmus+ funding programme called 'Blended Intensive Programme (BIP)' supports most of the activities.

3 Mobility settings

Story 20: UNIC Generations' Lab course: collaborative virtual team work on case studies in Business studies
Between May-June 2022, UNIC Oulu in collaboration with all UNIC partner universities organized the first Blended Intensive Program (BIP). UNIC Generations' Lab was a 5 ECTS course part of the Entrepreneurship minor at Oulu Business School, the University of Oulu consisting of a virtual and physical phase with 10 seminars. Discover UNIC Generations' Lab course.

Story 21: Innovation in Foreign Language Education – A Blended Intensive Programme
A 3 ECTS course has been co-developed by Sina Werner, lecturer in foreign language didactics, to engage in discussions on traditions and innovations in foreign language education for student teachers in Germany, Span, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, and Italy. Online lectures and international online collaboration were concluded by a one-week physical meeting on campus in Spain. Discover the Blended Intensive Programme in Foreign Language Education.

Story 22: Doing business in an international environment. A blended course in Business/Management
Six organisations, involving universities, a bank as well as a theatre, collaborated for a blended course in business and management. Students from Croatia, Germany, Portugal, and Argentina participated in the blended program. The activities included traditional lectures, work on case studies, and quizzes. Discover the blended course in Business/Management.

Story 23: CityLab „Integration and Cultural Diversity: focus on Racism"
Representatives of the Ruhr University Bochum and the City of Bochum, as the two largest employers in Bochum, discussed how to deal with and prevent racism within both organizations. Based on this discussion, an interdisciplinary group of students conducted a small research project and presented their results in a public event. Discover the CityLab "Integration and Cultural Diversity".

Story 24: CityLab „Educational Equity"
A virtual panel discussion with participative workshops identified challenges for Bochum as a post-industrial City. Students took this up and, guided by their teacher, organised a digital hackathon to find solutions. The hackathon has been integrated in an elective course. Discover the CityLab "Educational Equity".

3.5 Benefits of the different mobility settings

The text above describes different mobility settings with its advantages and challenges. In summary, the advantages can be described as follows.

Physical mobility: mobile students and teachers benefit from cultural immersion and physical contact with people from another culture. Not mobile students and teachers benefit only if interaction and collaboration are initiated. Ecological reflections should be involved while considering if a flight is necessary. Recognition is organised by faculty agreements. Priority and special support should be given to students who are discriminated against, like working students, caring students, students with disabilities and students in precarious situations.

Virtual mobility: mobile students and teachers benefit from easy access to an international context. Not mobile students and teachers benefit only if interaction and collaboration are initiated. Virtual mobility is realisable without travelling and thus enables contact and access also to other continents. Recognition is in most cases to be organised by the student. Special support should be given to disadvantaged students.

Virtual Exchange: all students and teachers benefit from deep intercultural collaboration. Travelling is not necessary, but reliable hardware and internet connection are required at all sides. Recognition is organised by the teachers. All students should be supported during their collaborative international teamwork.

Blended mobility: mobile students and teachers benefit from intercultural collaboration. Not mobile students and teachers can benefit in the virtual component if interaction and collaboration are initiated. As the physical mobility part is usually short, students in precarious situations can afford it more easily and should be given priority, if financial or ecological reasons hinder the travel of the whole group.

4 Conclusion

Intercultural teaching is a great opportunity for cross-border professional exchange and enables reflections on teaching and learning processes at universities. In this regard, the pedagogical and professional development of scientists can be enhanced. Virtual Exchange, as a collaborative approach to teaching and learning is particularly suitable for initiating reflection processes on learning objectives, teaching and learning methods as well as support activities for students, as also shown in the Stories from the field.

As has become clear, it is not only necessary to provide support for the international students, but to keep the whole group of students in mind as intercultural learners. Moreover, the teachers also benefit in their professional development through co-teaching processes and communication about learners' needs and learning processes as well as enhanced research opportunities through meeting with partners, and access to the broader network that results from the exchange for the dissemination of their work. Mobility and exchange settings should therefore not be underestimated in their reach and impact on educating the citizens of the future.

In any case, to internationalise learning and teaching at university, even little steps can be useful. What is important, is to stay open and flexible to reflections on accessibility of one's own teaching, on how the teaching can be designed to be more diverse in terms of methods, support, assignment options, language etc. so that it reaches out to a greater variety of learners. Since within UNIC universities, teachers encounter a wide variety, which can be supposed to even increase in the future, these endeavours gain more and more importance.

Virtual Exchange, as an innovative approach to intercultural encounters, international mobility and teaching and learning settings, proves to be highly flexible. It depends on the teaching topic, which may be research- or otherwise oriented, and thus it has always professional as well as intercultural learning outcomes.

To start with a small idea of student interaction, find an international teaching partner to try it out and, together, give it the time to get larger and more comprehensive – this is a procedure that can be useful and takes into account the constant development of teaching over time.

Part II Organisational and Financial aspects of Exchange and Mobility

5 General Introduction to the Most Common Funding Programmes

The previous sections of the handbook have looked at different mobility formats from a conceptual-didactic perspective. However, whether mobility in studying and teaching is achieved often also depends on financial-organisational issues. In the following, we will therefore go into detail about different funding and support offers within the UNIC-Alliance and beyond.

5.1 Erasmus

The Erasmus funding line Mobility with Programme Countries (KA131) is open to all students (full-time) and staff at all eight UNIC partner universities. It offers them the opportunity to fund students and teaching staff as well as administrative staff for study, internship, teaching and training stays in one of the 34 participating programme countries.

Erasmus programme countries are all member states of the European Union plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Serbia, Republic of North Macedonia and Turkey. Each student may receive Erasmus funding up to 12 months per study cycle (Bachelor, Master and PhD – i.e. EQF levels 5-8). They may study and/or intern abroad within this period as many times as they wish.

Part of the Erasmus programme (within the *Mobility project for higher education students and staff* under *Key Action 1: Learning Mobility of Individuals*) is also the transfer of credit points earned at the host institution abroad. This process is facilitated and secured by a Learning Agreement which is to be concluded prior to the stay abroad between students and academic advisors.

Under *Key Action 2: Cooperation among organisations and institutions*, Erasmus fosters internationalisation of European higher education institutions by supporting the building of Partnerships for Cooperation, Partnerships for Excellence, Partnerships for Innovation and Capacity Building projects. Thereby, innovative practices can be developed, transferred and implemented in all areas of higher education on organisational up to European level. This includes projects for the joint development and preparation of Virtual Exchanges or the development of joint curricula. The local International Offices offer more detailed information and provide advice for those interested in developing and piloting their own projects.

5 General Introduction to the Most Common Funding Programmes

5.1.1 Erasmus Student Mobility for Studies & Traineeships

Studies
Based on the Erasmus Inter-Institutional Agreements between the participating universities, Erasmus students are exempt from paying tuition fees at their host institution and receive a grant from their home institution for the time spent studying abroad. This grant is supposed to (partly) cover any additional costs students may be confronted with in a foreign country. Erasmus programme countries are divided into three groups according to the average costs of living and there are additional grants available for students with children and disabilities.

Internships
In addition to study opportunities abroad, Erasmus also enables students to gain (international) work experience and to explore a host country and its language by funding internships for durations between two and 12 months.

The grant benefits include a country-specific internship grant as well as linguistic, organisational, and intercultural support by the International Offices before, during and after the internship. Students with special needs (parents, students with disabilities) can receive a grant top-up to compensate for possible additional costs.

5.1.2 Erasmus Staff Mobility for Teaching & Training
Erasmus allows for mobility of higher education administrative and teaching staff in programme countries to enhance internationalisation of higher education institutions. Financial support is based on the different costs of living in the destination countries ("programme countries"). Daily funding rates are supplemented by travel costs depending on the actual distances between the place of departure and the destination of the mobility. Funding also includes special grants for persons with children and disabilities.

Staff Mobility for Training (STT)
For training purposes, university staff from various areas (e.g., general, and technical administration, finances, student advisory services) may be transferred to a host higher education institution. The stays abroad last a minimum of two days and a maximum of two months.

Exemplary training formats are among others job shadowing, study visits, participation in workshops and seminars and in language courses.

In order to participate in the programme, participants need to coordinate the content, possible goals and a rough schedule with their supervisors. Participants looking for information on the application prerequisites and procedures should contact the International Office at their university.

UNIC Job Shadowing

UNIC Job Shadowing is an ongoing initiative in which all UNIC universities offer opportunities for UNIC staff on a regular basis to shadow their counterparts or colleagues from neighbouring fields of work and exchange best practices. This can either happen in one-on-one or group settings – depending on the offered activities and occasions (e.g., as part of a UNIC City Lab Festival). To find out about current opportunities in your field, please visit our [database](). The minimum duration of a UNIC Job Shadowing stay is two weeks (ten business days) and comprises the time that is physically spent abroad at a partner university (five business days minimum) as well as (online) preparation and follow-up tasks. Funding can be made available through Erasmus STT. If you want to find out about the possibilities for (financial) support, please contact the UNIC staff member(s) in charge at your university.

Staff Mobility for Teaching Purposes (STA)

As mentioned above ([point 1.1]()), staff mobility is an important pillar in internationalizing university teaching. Staff mobility must take place in a destination country ("programme country") that is not the country of the sending institution and not the main country of residence of the person concerned. For teaching purposes, higher education staff can visit a receiving higher education institution with a valid ECHE (outbound mobility). Teaching stays within Europe last between two days and two months (excluding travel days) with a teaching load of at least eight hours per stay or per week. Teaching should be a part of normal curriculum at the host university, not a visiting lecture.

5.1.3 Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs)

[Blended Intensive Programmes]() (BIPs) are a new special funding line in the new 2021-2027 Erasmus programme generation aiming to promote the use of innovative learning and teaching methods to explore the diverse possibilities of online collaboration between at least three countries. A BIP is characterised as a short-term, intensive joint activity or course for students and/or staff and combines phases of virtual learning with a short group mobility, e.g., at the host institution, of between five to 30 days.

The minimum number of participants (students or staff) is 15 – participating members (students and staff) of the host institutions **not** included. Participants from abroad receive Erasmus funding from their home universities. Lastly, Students should be offered the opportunity to at least earn 3 ECTS counting towards their degrees. For staff, the workload should be correspondingly high.

5.2 Swiss-European Mobility Programme (SEMP)

The Swiss counterpart to the Erasmus programme offers very similar study, training, and teaching options for students as well as academic and administrative staff at Swiss higher education institutions. For more information, interested students and staff can visit the programme website and/or contact their International Offices directly.

5.3 UNIC Opened Courses

UNIC Opened Courses is an initiative by all UNIC universities. It enables UNIC students to virtually take part in and complete lectures and seminars at other UNIC universities. Students at a UNIC university can choose from a wide variety of digital courses taught in English, receive credit for their studies and gain international experience from home. In case of questions concerning the transfer of earned credits, students should contact their departments and academic advisors directly. In case teachers themselves are interested in opening their courses/lectures, the local UNIC team should be contacted.

5.4 UNIC Mobility Hubs

The UNIC Mobility Hubs are local, physical but also complementary virtual places (websites) which are embedded in all UNIC partners' International Offices. The UNIC Mobility Hubs provide the following services:

- Personal advice and information on mobility-related opportunities for students and university staff within UNIC,
- Practical support for students and university staff in organising mobilities to UNIC partner universities (including looking for accommodation and financial questions),
- Administrative support for mobile students and university staff concerning matters such as registration issues, transfer of credit points.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

The UNIC universities appear in alphabetical order of the cities in which they are located.

Please click for quick navigation.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

University of Deusto (Bilbao)

Erasmus - Mobilities for Studies

Deusto offers its students a variety of subject specific exchange places at different partner universities in Europe. Further information are provided on the respective websites of the International Office (for outbound students / for inbound students).

Erasmus – Mobility for Traineeships

At Deusto, students of all disciplines also have the opportunity to apply for Erasmus funding for self-organised internships in European countries. Detailed descriptions of the grant benefits, the grant rates and internship conditions are available on the websites of the International Office.

Study Abroad Options Worldwide

Deusto holds several agreements with universities all over the world for students to perform an exchange. Detailed information is to be found on the website of the International Office (for outbound students / for inbound students).

Erasmus Staff Mobility for Training

Deusto holds an annual Staff Week which focuses on one hot topic for every occasion. The university opens a call per semester for staff to apply for a mobility.

Erasmus Staff Mobility for Teaching

The university opens a call per semester for staff to apply for a mobility.

Deusto International Virtual Campus

Deusto International Virtual Campus is a multidisciplinary offer with courses on hot topics. Courses are offered in English and Spanish designed specifically for international students.

UNIC Opened Courses
see point 5.3

Team Outbound Mobility Services
Please check our Fact Sheet for all contact details.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Ruhr University Bochum

Erasmus - Mobilities for Studies

Ruhr University Bochum offers its students a variety of subject-specific exchange places at different partner universities in Europe. Further information are provided on the respective websites of the International Office (in German & English).

Erasmus – Mobility for Traineeships

At Ruhr University Bochum, students of all disciplines also have the opportunity to apply for Erasmus funding for self-organised internships in European programme countries. Detailed descriptions of the grant benefits, the grant rates and internship conditions are available on the websites of the International Office (in German & English).

Other (Research) Internship Options

Apart from Erasmus, there are also other sources for the funding of (research) internships available, for example PROMOS (website in German & English) and LabExchange (website in German & English).

Study Abroad Options Worldwide

In addition to numerous international cooperations of the individual departments, institutes and chairs, Ruhr University Bochum also maintains a large number of university-wide, central and thus interdisciplinary partnerships which are open to all RUB students. Detailed informed is to be found on the website of the International Office (in German & English). For discipline-specific offers please visit the individual faculty and department websites. There is also the possibility to apply for PROMOS funding for study stays at partner universities outside Erasmus. More information on PROMOS is available online (in German & English).

PROMOS Field Trips

Field trips are designed to impart subject-related knowledge and provide students with insights into the host country. Apart from that, they also enable teaching staff to visit their (research) partners abroad and can thus help to lay the foundation for future cooperation projects and student activities. You can find more details on prerequisites and funding on the website of the International Office (in German & English).

UNIC

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Erasmus Staff Mobility

Erasmus allows for training of higher education staff in programme countries to enhance internationalisation. For training purposes, Ruhr University Bochum's staff may be transferred to a host higher education institution with ECHE or to another institution established in another destination country ("programme country") and active in the labour market or in the fields of education, training or youth. Interested staff can find more information on the eligibility and formalities on the corresponding website (in German & English).

Staff Mobility for Teaching

Ruhr-Universität Bochum also supports guest lectureships at European partner universities with Erasmus (STA - Mobility for teaching purposes). Interested teaching staff can find more information on the eligibility and formalities on the corresponding website (in German & English).

Mobility Options for PhD Students

The *Project International* (PR.INT) is an initiative by the *RUB Research School* and aims to give doctoral researchers the opportunity to establish and expand their own international network and to internationalise their research. The funding line is intended to increase the visibility of both researchers and RUB alike. It (financially) supports PhD students planning research stays, lab visits, internships and field research abroad and enables participation in conferences, workshops and summer schools. It is also possible to apply for funding for inviting guest scientists to RUB.

DAAD Funding

The *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* (German Academic Exchange Service, DAAD) offers a wide variety of stipends and funding opportunities for (inbound and outbound) undergraduate and graduate students, PhD students and teaching staff on all levels. Students and staff have to apply directly with the DAAD, but the International Office also offers general advice on the options available through the DAAD and supports applications by students and staff.

Team Outbound Mobility Services (Including Responsibilities)

The Outbound Mobility Services Team at RUB is eager to assist you. Please just check the contact list (in German & English) in order to find out who you should get in touch with depending on your concern.

UNIC Opened Courses

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

See point 5.3

Promotion of Virtual Mobility and Virtual Exchange

RUB has funding programmes for innovative teaching formats and for establishing and expanding digital international teaching offers (such as virtual mobility, virtual exchange, challenge-based learning and city labs). For detailed information please consult the programmes' website.

Promotion of Blended Mobility

If your students are interested to learn more about the application for Blended Intensive Programmes at RUB, information is available on the dedicated website (in German & English). For further information, especially on the organisational aspects from a teacher's/institutional point of view, you can either directly consult the DAAD website on BIPs or the responsible colleague (Ms. Laura Schiffmann) at the International Office at RUB: laura.schiffmann@rub.de

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

University College Cork

University College Cork (Ireland) has a long history of mobility and international engagement stretching back to the nineteenth century. Across many categories and programmes, inbound and outbound mobility is available at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Erasmus+ for Students

Since the Erasmus programme's inception, UCC has been an active participant and has renewed its Charter until 2027. See [2023/24 overview](). UCC has a large number of Erasmus [partners]() with whom it work closely to facilitate inbound and outbound mobility under the Erasmus funding scheme. Mostly these partnerships are discipline-specific and are limited to students in particular degree programmes.

Outbound students are expected to do their own research on opportunities, with [guidance]() from the International Office AND from their Programme Coordinator (primary academic advisor). Generally speaking, year three (of a four-year programme) is the preferred window for academic mobility, with application deadlines in November/December for travel the following autumn or May/June for travel in the following spring. In addition, UCC students have access to the [Erasmus+ placement]() (i.e. traineeship) programme from 2-12 month in duration.

Erasmus Manager: Clare Murphy, International Office (claremurphy@ucc.ie)

Inbound Erasmus+ Students apply via their [home institution]() via a [specified process](). Applications for study must be made by May for the following Autumn/Full Year, or by September for the Spring Semester only.

Lead: Jim McEvoy, International Office (jim.mcevoy@ucc.ie)

Bilateral Exchange

Beyond the Erasmus scheme, UCC has bilateral exchange relationships with >75 prominent [Universities worldwide](), and participates in a range of global scholarship schemes that support mobility. Some of these partnerships are discipline-specific and are limited to students in particular degree programmes.

Outbound students are asked to do their own research on opportunities, with [guidance]() from the International Office AND from their Programme Coordinator (primary academic advisor). Generally speaking, year three (of a four -year programme) is the preferred window for academic mobility, and participation is by application

only. Application deadlines vary but are generally around February for the following year. Financial support for the travel and living costs are limited, but some UCC Colleges have made small bursaries available.

Inbound students, under the terms of reciprocity, apply through their home institutions and directly to UCC's International Office. Such students are given wide access to the Book of Modules for Visiting Students (listing of academic modules available).

Lead: Mary Brid Murphy, International Office (mb.murphy@ucc.ie)

Joint/articulated degree programmes with Partner Institutions
In some cases, governed by institutional Memorandum of Understanding or Articulation, inbound fee-paying international students from designated joint programmes are accepted under the Visiting Students heading. Details of process vary according to programme.

Fee-paying inbound Study Abroad
As part of UCC's overall model for Internationalisation, large numbers of fee-paying international students are recruited and enrolled for either one semester or the full year as Visiting Students.

EU Visiting Students (for whom Erasmus+ arrangements are not in place between UCC and their home institution) can be admitted as fee-paying Visiting Students. Lead: Jim McEvoy, International Office

Non-EU Students apply under a different process and are assessed at non-EU Fees (currently between €13,880 and €15,130 per year, pro-rated for single semester).

In many cases, under partnership agreement, institutions regularly send large cohorts on a fee-paying basis as part of their study abroad offering. Similarly, UCC works with Study Abroad aggregators to offer UCC access to a wider range of students (largely from the USA). Lead: Karen McSweeney, International Office (K.McSweeney@ucc.ie)

In both categories, students are assessed on academic merit and English competence before admission.   Students are given wide access to the Book of Modules for Visiting Students (listing of academic modules available). Deadlines for application are June for the following Autumn/full year and October for the Spring semester only.

Erasmus+ for Staff
Under the umbrella of Erasmus+, UCC participates in a range of Erasmus for Staff programmes.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

In addition to outbound Staff mobility, under the same scheme, UCC hosts inbound Staff mobility. In all cases this is at the discretion and with the expressed support of the hosting unit.

Lead: Clare Murphy, International Office (claremurphy@ucc.ie)

Contact Persons and Information: UCC International Office

UNIC Opened Courses
See point 5.3

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Koç University (Istanbul)

Erasmus - Mobilities for Studies
Koç University provides all students the opportunity of spending a semester or an academic year at partner universities in Europe within the scope of Erasmus+ Mobility for Studies. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs' website in English.

Erasmus – Mobility for Traineeships
At Koç University, students from all disciplines are encouraged to apply for Erasmus+ Mobility for Traineeships. Students are expected to find their work placements independently but can receive assistance as well as professional advice and tips on various topics related to the search for an internship at the KU Career Development Center. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Erasmus – Worldwide Study
Koç University offers all students the opportunity of spending a semester or an academic year abroad by also opening up new regions beyond Europe within the framework of the Erasmus+ Credit Mobility Programme. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Erasmus – Worldwide Internship
At Koç University, students from all disciplines are encouraged to apply for Erasmus+ Worldwide Internships to gain vital international experience in Erasmus+ Credit Mobility Programme partner countries in addition to traditional destinations. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Global Exchange
The Global Exchange programme provides an opportunity to spend a semester or an academic year at a partner university in non-European countries. Koç University's partners in North America, South America, the Middle East, Africa, Eurasia and Asia-Pacific welcome KU students for a semester exchange. The Global Exchange Scholarship Programme offers financial support for selected KU students who are in financial need. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Summer Exchange
Koç University runs a Summer Exchange programme with selected partner universities. A pre-set number of KU students attends partner universities' short-term summer programmes or the students

spend a regular summer semesters at the partner institution. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Research Internship/Mobility

Koç University encourages students from all disciplines to apply for research internship/mobility programmes of partner universities from different continents and various countries. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Short-term Study Abroad Programmes

In addition to semester-long exchange opportunities within the scope of various exchange frameworks, Koç University offers short-term study abroad opportunities to students from all disciplines. Students are encouraged to apply for summer and winter study abroad programmes which are organised with prestigious partners. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

International Fellowship and Service-Learning Programmes

Koç University offers global engagement, service-learning and social entrepreneurship programmes to all students from different disciplines to develop 21st century leadership competences, such as global awareness and systems leadership, intercultural sensitivity, personal development, interpersonal skills, narrative literacy, creative problem solving and entrepreneurship spirit. Detailed information about these programmes is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

Erasmus – Staff Mobility for Teaching

Erasmus+ enables academic university staff to spend teaching periods at partner universities via bilateral agreements in which the staff mobility for teaching assignments is foreseen.

Erasmus – Staff Mobility for Training

Erasmus+ enables administrative university administrative staff to take part in professional development activities, e.g., job shadowing, professional development courses or specific competence-building offers/workshops. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in English.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Erasmus – Staff Mobility under Credit Mobility

Erasmus+ Credit Mobility enables academic university staff to teach abroad or carry out joint academic and educational activities such as giving seminars and organizing workshops at partner universities in the programme countries around the globe.

Erasmus+ Credit Mobility enables university administrative staff to take part in professional development activities job shadowing, observation periods, professional development courses or specific competence-building events beyond Europe.

Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in [English](#).

Swiss-European Mobility Programme (SEMP)

Faculty and staff members at Koç University are able to complete a period of teaching or training abroad at a partner University in Switzerland in the framework of SEMP based on bilateral agreements.

Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in [English.](#)

Visiting Scholar Opportunities

In addition to the Erasmus+ and the SEMP programme, Koç University offers a variety of opportunities for its faculty members and researchers to visit partner- and non-partner universities. Detailed information is provided on the Office of International Programs website in [English](#).

Office of International Programs (Including Responsibilities)

The International Office staff is eager to support student and staff mobility as well as to work with Koç University's international partners to develop mutually beneficial relationships.

Office of International Programs consists of three sub-units:

Exchange Programmes and International Partnership Development

International Projects and Education Programs

International Community Services Office

Please check the contact list (in [English](#)) in order to find out who you should get in touch with depending on your inquiry.

Virtual Mobility

Virtual Mobility is offered to all students from all disciplines since the Fall Semester of the Academic Year 2020/2. To encourage students to

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participate in this new form of mobility, Virtual Mobility is promoted separately. One of the promotional materials, "6 Reasons to Join Virtual Exchange", can be accessed here.

UNIC Opened Courses

See point 5.3

Programmes for the Promotion of Virtual Exchange

Koç University is planning to promote Virtual Exchange opportunities online, in face-to-face seminars, via emails, newsletters and social media platforms. In this scope, the Office of International Programs is collaborating with the faculties to identify faculty members who are interested in co-designing and/or co-teaching courses as Virtual Exchanges.

In addition to this, a UNIC Mobility Hub web page under the Office of International Programs will be in place soon. All UNIC related events, organisations, opportunities as well as virtual offerings will be published/announced through the official website.

For further information you can directly contact the responsible colleague at the Office of International Programs at Koç University: Ms. Tuğba Güven, tguven@ku.edu.tr

University of Liège

Erasmus

The Erasmus programme allows ULiège students to enjoy mobility (study stay or placement) recognised in one of the 27 member states of the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and North Macedonia.

Erasmus Belgica

The Erasmus Belgica programme is an initiative of the Prince Philippe Fund aiming to encourage the mobility of students from higher education within the **three Belgium communities** via a study stay (from three months to a year) or to complete a **placement** there (minimum of two months).

Study Stays outside the European Union

To increase the mobility opportunities offered to its students, each year the University of Liège signs **bilateral agreements with non-European partners with study stays in mind.**

Internship with Funding in Europe

Intended for students with a placement forming part of their course, these international placements can only be carried out during the course. The placement may be integrated in or added to a "classic" Erasmus period; it will then be funded in the context of this period. The length of the period must be a minimum of 9 weeks and a maximum of 12 months per cycle.

Placement with Funding Outside the European Union

Intended for students with a placement as part of their course programme (minimum 9 weeks).

UNIC Opened Courses

Doctoral Students' Mobility

In the context of the doctoral training, the **Research and Development Administration can support PhD students financially** if they want to attend a seminar or summer school abroad, provided that this international experience is recognised in their PhD training.

Students can also choose to write a **co-tutored thesis** with another university to obtain a doctorate from both universities after your PhD.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Programmes for Staff

Erasmus Teaching Mission (STA)+
These are assignments for ULiège teaching staff. To be eligible for STA funding, teachers must commit to teaching a minimum of 8 hours per week (minimum 2 days) in a partner university. These courses must be an integral part of the curriculum for students at the host university.

Training Mission (STT) for Academic and Administrative Staff
This type of mission enables ULiège staff to go to a foreign institution to follow a training course/workshop (minimum 2 days).

To be eligible as a training mission, the activity must meet the following criteria:

- have as its objective the learning of new and innovative practices in learning, teaching, administration or management;
- provide for the dissemination, within the home HEI, of the knowledge acquired by the participants;
- not be devoted to a specific academic discipline (whether a conference or any other type of event).

Short-Term Mobility for Students
ULiège wishes to strengthen the internationalisation of its students' courses by enabling them to take part in exchanges of varying types and duration.

To this end, subsidies have been set aside to support

Individual short-term student mobility projects (such as summer schools, individual competitions or other projects organised by an external organisation or university), (excluding student placements and training courses for doctoral students, for which funding is also available).

Students taking part in international competitions, as a team, with the aim of promoting international experiences as an alternative to traditional student mobility during their course.

Contact Persons and Information

Relations internationals
international@uliege.be
+32 4 366 92 55

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6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

More detailed information:

[General information on student mobility](#)

[General information on doctoral mobility](#)

[General information on staff mobility](#)

[Map of ULiège partner universities](#)

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

University of Oulu

Erasmus - Mobilities for Studies
There are close to 500 Erasmus+ bilateral agreements at the University of Oulu, which offer a vast variety of options for students to go on exchange. The Erasmus+ agreements are field specific, meaning they concern either a field of studies or Faculty or Degree Programme. For more information, please consult the following [website](#).

Erasmus – Mobility for Traineeships
At the University of Oulu, students of all disciplines also have the opportunity to apply for Erasmus funding for self-organised traineeships in European countries. Detailed descriptions of the grant benefits, the grant rates and internship conditions are available on the dedicated [website](#).

Other Traineeship Options
Apart from Erasmus, there are also other sources for the funding of traineeships available, for example [Work Placement Outside of Europe](#) and [Embassy Work Placement](#) (for native/fluent Finnish speakers only).

Exchange Destinations outside of Europe
Academic Affairs coordinates exchanges with several bilateral partners, networks and programmes around the world. Exchange programmes cover programmes such as FIRST (Russia), ISEP (North and South America, Asia, Oceania) and north2north (North America, Nordics, Russia). Some of the agreements are multidisciplinary and open to all students who find suitable courses in the partners' course catalogues. Some agreements are restricted to only one Faculty or School and only students from those Faculties or Schools can apply to those destinations. For more information, please visit the [website](#).

Erasmus Staff Mobility for training
University of Oulu can generally support staff training mobilities up to 5 working days. The Erasmus staff training mobilities do not require an Erasmus bilateral agreement. Conferences and research visits are not eligible for Erasmus Staff Training.

Organisation of the Erasmus staff training is the responsibility of the participant. Our European partner institutions organise Erasmus Staff Training weeks year-round. Contact your Faculty International Coordinator for more information.

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Erasmus Staff Mobility for Teaching

Teaching staff of the University of Oulu can go on Erasmus Teaching Exchanges to European higher education institutions. Erasmus teaching staff exchanges require an Erasmus+ agreement between your home department/field of study and the hosting institution.

UNIC Opened Courses

See point 5.3

The University of Oulu opens several courses for other UNIC students each semester. The students from the university of Oulu are as well encouraged to choose courses from other UNIC universities. More information are available on the dedicated website.

Other Virtual Mobilities

In case you have an idea of virtual mobility implementation, don't hesitate to contact Eeva Pennanen, eeva.pennanen@oulu.fi or the International Mobility Services Team international.office@oulu.fi.

Contact Details

Email: International.office@oulu.fi

Mailing address: International Mobility Services, Academic Affairs, PO BOX 8000, 90014 University of Oulu, Finland

Street address: Pentti Kaiteran katu 1, 90570 Oulu, Finland

Erasmus Institutional Coordinator: Ms Sari Vähäkangas, international.office@oulu.fi

Virtual exchanges and UNIC initiatives: Ms Eeva Pennanen, eeva.pennanen@oulu.fi

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Erasmus - Mobilities for Studies
Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) offers its students a variety of subject-specific exchange places at different partner universities in Europe. Agreements are made on faculty level. Further information is provided on the respective websites of the faculties and the International Office (Worldmap in English and grant details in English).

Erasmus – Mobility for Traineeships
At Erasmus University Rotterdam, students of all disciplines also have the opportunity to apply for Erasmus funding for pre-arranged or self-organised internships in European countries. The availability of pre-arranged internships varies per faculty. Detailed descriptions of the grant benefits, the grant rates and internship conditions are available on the websites of the International Office (in English).

Study Abroad Options Worldwide
In addition to numerous international cooperations of the individual faculties and institutes, Erasmus University Rotterdam also maintains a couple of university-wide partnerships which are open to almost all EUR students. Partnerships can be found on the Worldmap (in English).

UNIC Opened Courses
See point 5.3

Erasmus – Mobilities for Training
Erasmus allows for training of higher education staff in programme countries to enhance internationalisation. Interested staff can find more information on the eligibility and formalities on the corresponding website (in English on our Intranet).

Erasmus – Mobilities for Teaching
Erasmus University Rotterdam also supports guest lectureships at European partner universities with Erasmus (STA - Mobility for teaching purposes). Interested teaching staff can find more information on the eligibility and formalities on the corresponding website (in English on our Intranet).

International Mobility Services
The ErasmusPlus Team at Erasmus University Rotterdam is eager to assist you. Please send an email to us at erasmusplus@eur.nl

regarding Erasmus+ questions or look for the faculty contact information on our website (in English).

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

University of Zagreb

Important note: The University of Zagreb is not integrated; it consists of 34 independent constituent units: 31 faculties, 3 academies (drama, fine arts, music). Therefore, mobility opportunities can be possible on both university and faculty/academy level. As an exception, due to programme and implementation constraints, for Erasmus+ mobility, this mobility programme and its projects are implemented and administered centrally by the central International Relations Office at the Rectorate. For this reason, all Erasmus+ mobility information is more easily available and retrievable at a single point of entry, the University website.

Erasmus - Mobilities for Studies

The University of Zagreb offers its students subject-specific exchange places at different partner universities in Europe and outside Europe (more than a 1000 Erasmus+ agreements are in place). Further information, detailed description and grant rates are provided on the website of the central International Office (in Croatian & general information in English, information for incoming exchange students in English).

Erasmus – Mobility for Traineeships

At University of Zagreb students of all disciplines also have the opportunity to apply for Erasmus funding for self-organised internships in European countries. Detailed descriptions, the grant rates and internship conditions are available on the websites of the International Office (in Croatian).

Worldwide mobility options

Apart from Erasmus, funding is available for exchange and other activities:

- based on partnerships and agreements signed centrally by the **University** for universities in Europe and around the world. The list of agreements is available on the website administered by the central International Office (English). Mobility calls are usually published per semester, depending on the number of available places and specific mobility conditions for each university. The calls are published by the central IRO office.
- based on partnerships and agreements signed by the **constituent units**: each of the 33 faculties/academies (for detailed information please visit the individual websites of the faculty/academy or contact their IRO office).

6 University-Specific Information on Physical and Virtual Mobility

Other opportunities and activities available at the faculty/academy level: mobility through networks such as Ceepus, and other programmes (for detailed information please visit [websites of the faculty/academy](#) or contact their IRO office).

UNIC Opened Courses
[see point 5.3](#)

Erasmus Staff Mobility
Mobility of university staff is a very important aspect of internationalisation of the University of Zagreb and encompasses a variety of international activities at the central level and at the faculty/academy level.

Mobility opportunities at the central University level:

Erasmus+ for European (programme) countries and Erasmus+ for non-European (partner) countries: for training (STT) and for teaching (STA)

Academic mobility based on bilateral university partnerships and strategic priorities for countries in Europe and outside Europe

For more information, please visit the website of the central IRO office in [Croatian](#). For useful additional information for staying in Zagreb, please check information in [English](#).

Incoming Erasmus+ staff mobility is arranged at the faculty/academy level (please visit the individual [faculty/academy websites](#) or write directly to their international relations contacts available [here](#)).

Other mobility and funding opportunities for staff (please find detailed information in [Croatian](#)).

Mobility opportunities based on partnerships and agreements signed by the constituent units:

each of the 34 faculties/academies (for detailed information please contact the faculty/academy IRO offices [here](#)).

Mobility Services teams (including Responsibilities)
The Mobility Services Teams (outbound and inbound) that can assist you are:

- at the **university level** (primarily for Erasmus+ and university bilateral exchange: calls, mobility conditions, grants, incoming applications for students, general inquiries) is the **Central International Relations office**. The University of Zagreb is a very large institution, so in order to provide better and faster

assistance please be sure to first check the pertaining [website information relevant for your inquiry](#) and then, if you need further assistance, please contact the central office - the contact list [here.](#)

- at the **faculty/academy** level (for Erasmus+ study questions, learning agreements, other study specific arrangements, for incoming staff arrangements and for bilateral faculty/academy mobility opportunities): **faculty or academy IRO offices or other contact persons**, please check the list of contact persons [here](#).

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8 Appendix

8.1 What teachers can do – reflection checklists

The following checklists could help teachers in reflecting on their teaching and designing it in a more intercultural way. The blank fields are for teachers' individual reflection and thoughts. The topics of the checklists are based on the explanations in chapter 2.

Expectations, roles and rules – reflection checklist

	What could I do/change in my course? How can I encourage my students to use the new measure?	How can I explain it to my students and encourage them to ask questions about the measure?	How did it work?
a) **Put yourself into the place of an international student**: where would you see yourself stumble, where need extra explanations?			
b) **Formulate clear learning objectives** and communicate them both verbally and in the material accompanying your course.			
c) **Follow the principles of UDL: ensure multiple means of engagement, representation and expression.**			
d) **Respect and integrate time for getting to know one another and explaining different university systems**. Have a written description of all tasks.			
e) Not all students have connections to other learners in the group outside of class. **If you want your students to participate in group work, make sure to organise this in class**.			
f) **Integrate an intercultural aspect into the learning objectives, students' tasks and the assessment**.			
g) **Explain the teaching and learning culture considering how this might differ elsewhere**.			
h) Since the **understanding of deadlines** can differ according to cultural character, the more or less binding nature of them in your course must also be explained.			

i)	**Ask your students** if your settings are unfamiliar to any of them and engage in conversation with the group.			
j)	**Find out if students can bring a special (international) perspective to a topic and be open to integrating it.**			
k)	Encourage your students to **contact you if they cannot easily follow your course or complete assignments like other students due to special circumstances**.			
l)	Find out if there are any international students enrolled in the course who have **special credit requirements from their home institution and address them**.			

Topics and materials – reflection checklist

		What could I do/change in my course? How can I encourage my students to use the new measure?	How can I explain it to my students and encourage them to ask questions about the measure?	How did it work?
a)	Search and integrate **literature and examples** from different contexts.			
b)	Check international journals for **internationally comparative perspectives** on your teaching topic.			
c)	Check whether it makes sense to choose texts that represents another approach to your topic than usual.			
d)	**Be careful and critical towards stereotypical illustrations or examples**.			
e)	Reserve, if possible, **at least one session focussed on intercultural comparison of your lecture's topic**.			
f)	**Invite guest lecturers** from a local cultural group or from another country.			
g)	**Record lectures** so that students can rehear them.			

h)	**Talk slowly**, avoid local/colloquial language or explain it.			
i)	**Support instruction with visuals**, so that students can work with them easily.			
j)	**Give your students the opportunity for online individual learning** by providing little quizzes, learning cards, mind maps, etc.			

Contact and Interaction – reflection checklist

		What could I do/change in my course? How can I encourage my students to use the new measure?	How can I explain it to my students and encourage them to ask questions about the measure?	How did it work?
a)	**Create tasks for your students that require interaction**, however small it may be.			
b)	Provide **training or guidelines on how to use the tools and methods to be used**.			
c)	**Encourage students to ask questions**, and let students search for solutions first (e.g., by talking to their neighbour).			
d)	**Organise small group work and collaborative elements during your course**.			
e)	In interactive settings, **insist on mixed groups** when possible, and emphasise the need and benefit of intercultural understanding. **Devote time and energy to reflection about it.**			
f)	If using group work, consider any impediments to interactive engagement and **support students to acquire skills to work well in groups.**			
g)	**Encourage your students to share personal stories with each other** so that they can build a connection via their everyday life.			

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	What could I do/change in my course? How can I encourage my students to use the new measure?	How can I explain it to my students and encourage them to ask questions about the measure?	How did it work?
h) Make your students aware of how they can connect with each other virtually, and create a need to do so.			
i) **Incorporate multiple forms of engagement, representation, action and expression** (UDL; Rose, 2001) thereby building inclusion into their courses from the outset.			
j) **Stay a little while after your course in the classroom or the video conference**, to give your students the possibility to ask questions and get in contact with you.			
k) **Be open to contact out off the course time** and explain to students how best to reach you.			
l) If you use communication tools such as an online forum, **look at the posts made there and communicate with students through these tools as well**.			

Assessment and Evaluation – reflection checklist

	What could I do/change in my course? How can I encourage my students to use the new measure?	How can I explain it to my students and encourage them to ask questions about the measure?	How did it work?
Summative Assessment a) Select examination tasks in such a way that the **subject of the examination must be reflected from an intercultural perspective**.			
b) In the case of flexible forms of assessment, **allow students to consider a topic from a culturally specific perspective.**			
c) **If intercultural exchange was part of your teaching scenario, integrate reflection on it into the assessment**.			
d) The **choice between different examination formats** can be helpful			

	for the appropriate evaluation of a heterogeneous student body.		
e)	**Enable assessments in a lingua franca**.		
Formative assessment			
f)	**Use regular small assignments which are not graded** to get feedback on the learning process of your students.		
g)	If you want to grade the process of your students, **regular and structured collection of students' learning outcomes should be ensured**.		
h)	It is also possible to **use surveys to assess students' self-perception on their learning**. Results can also be used for conducting a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) research project, and lead to a publication.		
Evaluation			
i)	A few weeks after the start, **ask whether students can comprehend the contents of the course and feel well integrated**.		
j)	Discuss with your students **at the end of the semester if the course supported the learning objectives**.		
k)	Ask your students **what made learning in a higher education system easy and what made it difficult for them**.		
l)	Discuss with your students **what you can do better in future courses to incorporate international perspectives, integrate all students, and facilitate intercultural learning**.		

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8.2 Virtual Exchange Checklist

The following checklists could help teacher teams in designing a Virtual Exchange activity. The blank fields are for teachers' reflections and ideas for their collaboration. The topics of the checklists are based on the explanations in chapter 3.3.

Virtual Exchange – Partnerships

	What are both partners' requirements?	What can be a solution for our Virtual Exchange?	How did it work?
a) Start thinking from your own teaching. There is no need to construct a whole new course, try to integrate the Virtual Exchange sessions into an existing syllabus.			
b) Check semester times and national holidays in order to find a good period for your collaboration (2 to 8 weeks in a weekly structured 2h-course are considered to be an appropriate duration).			
c) It is possible to have only one or two synchronous sessions with the two classes, e. g. kick-off or presentation sessions. But keep in mind, that it must be feasible for your students to organise autonomously in their working group. A common time slot might therefore be a good supportive structure.			
d) Give yourselves structures for the collaboration with your co-teacher, like fixed time slots, prepared topics, and a regular agenda. Talk about communication tools and think about how you can share documents and ideas.			
e) Prepare the structures (tools for synchronous communication, forum where they can discuss asynchronously and a digital learning environment where they can share documents and work together) for your student groups as early as possible.			
f) Explain the different roles (task responsible, persons taking the minutes, etc.) in group work processes and have a clear and transparent mode of distributing them.			

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Virtual Exchange – Tasks

	What are both partners requirements?	What can be a solution for our Virtual Exchange?	How did it work?
g) It is important to find a task that provides meaning for the involved students.			
h) Formulate the different tasks that your students shall accomplish clearly. Guide them through the exchange. Where possible, act as a role model.			
i) Get-to-know tasks can comprise little videos or photo stories about oneself. Students can share these and ask mutual questions or find common points in an asynchronous communication first.			
j) A comparative task should allow your students to discover another perspective on a course's topic, and to explain their perspective on it to their international peers. Students can share little texts, newspaper articles or websites to show how a specific topic is discussed in their country.			
k) Collaborative tasks shall comprise the sharing of perspectives on a problem that has to be solved by the internationally mixed group. As a result, students should create a 'product' together, which can be presented to the plenum at the end of the Virtual Exchange.			
l) Start small: when you conduct your Virtual Exchange over a short period, comparative tasks enable communication about culturally different perspectives regarding the teaching topic. Collaborative tasks need preparation and therefore more time and can be added in following semesters if you continue your collaboration.			
m) Supply all descriptions and information, after having explained them, also in writing.			
n) Use different communication tools so that your students can develop both their oral and written (professional)			

communication competences, and train in synchronous and asynchronous settings.			

Virtual Exchange – Technology

	What are both partners requirements?	What can be a solution for our Virtual Exchange?	How did it work?
o) Choose wisely the tools you want your students to use. Technology always follows your didactical reflections and must serve your learning objectives.			
p) When you have chosen a tool, make sure that it is well embedded in the course's activities, so that your students really must use it.			
q) Prepare the digital structures for the students' working groups well-timed.			
r) Train your students in using the tools that they must use during the online interaction. Let them make dry runs and practise using the tools.			
s) Make sure that everybody knows where they can find support if there are any problems with the technology.			

Virtual Exchange – Mentoring and Support

	What are both partners requirements?	What can be a solution for our Virtual Exchange?	How did it work?
t) Before the Exchange, it is important to already explain and prove well your position as companion of your students' learning, and to emphasise the importance of mistakes and conflicts for their learning.			
u) Prepare your students with professional as well as intercultural knowledge, in consultation with your partner teacher.			
v) If you don't have examples from previous exchanges, you can also use			

examples provided in literature to prepare your students.			
w) With your teaching partner: talk about what your students are doing, which topics they are discussing and if any irritations or problems arose. So, you can support each other as well, and work with both groups synchronized. Fix a time slot per week for your conversations.			
x) During the exchange, ask your students to report any strange, crazy, or exciting messages or statements made by their international peers. Support your students in understanding why their international peers act in a certain way (with support from your partner teacher) and in finding appropriate reactions. This can regard professional learning, collaborative learning and/or intercultural learning.			
y) After the exchange, integrate the students' experiences into the further process of the course and refer regularly to it.			

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8.3 Agreements with your partner teacher before starting your Virtual Exchange activity – Checklist.

The following checklists could help teachers structuring their communication with their partner teacher(s) while planning a Virtual Exchange activity. The blank fields should be filled in by each teacher and with their common agreements.

I Frame conditions – agreement

	Partner 1	Partner 2	Our common agreement for the Virtual Exchange
1. Semester times			
2. National holidays or other holiday times			
3. Contact channels between teachers: e-mail, phone, messenger			
4. Other comments			

II Teaching and learning culture – agreement

	Partner 1	Partner 2	Our common agreement for the Virtual Exchange
5. Usual behaviour of students			
6. Usual communication between students and teachers			
7. Usual teaching methods			
8. Usual tasks and learning formats			
9. Is it possible to grade students in groups, or has the assignment to be individual?			
10. Other comments			

III Your individual courses – agreement

	Partner 1	Partner 2	Our common agreement for the Virtual Exchange

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11. How many students are in your course?			
12. What are your learning objectives?			
13. What are usual tasks for students in your course?			
14. What are usual results of students' course work?			
15. What is usual support you give to your students?			
16. Are your students used to digital tools? Which ones?			
17. Are your students used to work in groups?			
18. Are your students used to interactive settings and collaboration?			
19. How is your students' level of [language of the exchange]?			
20. How many ECTS get your students for the course?			
21. How do you usually assess students in your course?			
22. How does your usual syllabus look like?			
23. Which information do you usually give your students before the course begins?			
24. How do your students usually prepare for your courses?			
25. If your students need explanation regarding tools, tasks, collaboration, how do you usually integrate this in your course?			
26. How do you usually deal with attendance?			
27. Do you usually agree on a 'digital netiquette' with your students?			
28. Other comments			

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IV Your Virtual Exchange – agreement

	Partner 1	Partner 2	Our common agreement for the Virtual Exchange
29. Length of the common syllabus			
30. Tools for digital synchronous communication between students			
31. Tools for digital asynchronous communication between students			
32. Virtual Learning platform (moodle, blackboard, ilias)			
33. Collaborative tools			
34. How is the exchange graded?			
35. How is the exchange integrated in the curriculum?			
36. What is the collaborative task for your students?			
37. Other comments			

V Teachers' collaboration – agreement

	Partner 1	Partner 2	Our common agreement for the Virtual Exchange
38. What time is good for a weekly meeting?			
39. Which topics do you want to discuss during your weekly meeting?			
40. How can you share texts and other documents?			
41. Could you think of visiting your partner teacher in person?			
42. Could you think of giving guest lectures in each other's courses before your Virtual Exchange?			

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43. Other comments			