

***D. Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)***

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain a) how you choose your partners, b) in which geographical area(s) and c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees. (max. 5000 characters)

Original language [EN]

The Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (IAMZ) is one of the four Mediterranean Agronomic institutes of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM). CIHEAM is an intergovernmental organization formed by 13 countries (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). Its mission is to develop cooperation through postgraduate education and promotion of cooperative research in agriculture, food science and environmental management particularly in, but not limited to, the Mediterranean Region .

Internationalization is deeply embedded in the elaboration and delivery of CIHEAM's educational provisions, both official degree leading and life-long learning specialized training. New programs are designed by an international ad hoc committee, and on-going programs are also reviewed by internal and external international review panels. Collaboration between IAMZ and numerous prestigious HEI and other public and private institutions in many countries is fundamental for the success of our programs.

IAMZ develops Master of Science Programmes (120 ECTS, officially recognized as equivalent to the Spanish Master degree), some of which are jointly organized with Spanish Universities. Students are recent graduates or professionals who wish to update or gain deeper knowledge in the specialty. They come mainly from Mediterranean countries, other non-Mediterranean European countries and Latin-America. Education is provided by highly-qualified invited experts, selected for their experience and prestige in each subject, mainly from Europe and the US. These experts come from universities, research centres, international organizations, administrations and firms from all over the world, mainly from Europe and USA. The collaboration between IAMZ and numerous institutions in Spain and elsewhere is also critical for carrying out the Master of Science Theses.

In order to strengthen the internationalization process and mutual recognition of the MSc degree across the Mediterranean Basin and particularly in non-EU CIHEAM member countries, CIHEAM has a specific line of action for collaborating towards developing joint MSc Degrees with relevant non-EU Member Countries' Higher Education Institutions, building up innovative curricula and promoting mobility of students and staff. In this context IAMZ funds short-term mobility actions of students and faculty coming from these countries in our programs. We also receive foreign short term EU students to participate in specific modules of our Master courses at their own expenses.

As present we just issue double/multiple degrees in our national and international collaborative educational programs. However CIHEAM, as an international cooperative institution, is open to joint degrees.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme. (max. 2000 characters)

Original language [EN]

The participation of IAMZ in the Erasmus Programme has the following objectives:

To increase the number of European students. IAMZ is actively engaged in promoting international cooperation between EU members and non-EU Mediterranean and Latin-American countries offering an ideal academic environment that contributes positively to the quality of professional and personal development of students. Until now the number of European students is limited, as IAMZ scholarships must be first and foremost assigned to students from less developed Mediterranean countries

To favour the possibility of IAMZ EU students getting funds to complete some training in HEI of other EU countries different from Spain .

To enable the participation of lecturers from HEI of European countries in an established framework of institutional collaboration, and take benefit from the Erasmus staff mobility.

To increase exchange with HEI of new EU member countries, some of which are of great interest for Mediterranean cooperation.

As mobility in Master programs (the only full degree we issue) is lower than in the undergraduate programs, IAMZ is particularly interested in participating in multilateral projects and networks, especially in Erasmus Mundus Master courses. They offer IAMZ the possibility of developing further cooperation with other European HEI and, at the same time, to bring HEI from non-EU countries to participate in our training programs. In this context we have one Master course approved, we have unsuccessfully submitted another proposal last year that we want to resubmit. In these activities we have involved HEI from EU non-CIHEAM member countries (WUR from the Netherlands, TUM from Germany), non-EU CIHEAM member countries (Algeria, Morocco) and third countries (USA, Japan, Canada). We are also interested in the current Action 2 mobility programs.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda\*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)

Original language [EN]

The CIHEAM's strategic view to improve its training programs was contained in a proposal entitled "Improving Higher Education in Mediterranean Food Security and Rural Development" that was approved by the Union for the Mediterranean. The actions proposed to be carried out at IAMZ and at the other three CIHEAM institutes are closely related to the areas identified as critical in the agenda for the Modernisation of Europe's Higher Education Systems to maximise the contribution of higher education systems to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. These five areas are:

1. Improving employability and entrepreneurship of our graduates. High education needs to review and further develop the opportunities to enable students to consider self-employment and entrepreneurship as promising alternative options. Moreover, successful new enterprises can enhance development of new products, production processes and organizational innovations.
2. Implementing a Mediterranean Doctoral Platform. The platform would contribute to the cooperation activity of CIHEAM aiming at re-enforcing research competences useful for agricultural, rural and agro-food development of Mediterranean countries.
3. Developing e-learning. Through this action to start regular implementation of e-learning in those Mediterranean Agronomic institutes in which e-learning is already an occasional or additional tool and allow for a progressive implementation in all others.
4. Enhancing Quality Assurance Systems to improve the training programs and to raise awareness on the importance of QA in the Mediterranean Region.
5. Strengthening Degree Recognition and Internationalization of MSc Degrees. It is necessary to open new perspectives for the full recognition of the equivalence of CIHEAM MSc to those countries in which our graduates have had problem in the past and to help develop MSc Degrees with relevant Member Countries' Higher Education Institutions, jointly building up innovative curricula and promoting students and staff mobility.

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and an active participation in the new "Erasmus for All" Programme is critical to successfully fulfilled the five actions included in the UfM project.

\* COM (2011) 567 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0567:FIN:EN:PDF>)