



**Universiteit
Leiden**
The Netherlands

**European
Policy
Statement**

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Subject **Erasmus Charter for Higher Education - European Policy Statement**

Internationalisation and mobility

Leiden University is a European research university and stands for high quality research and academic teaching. Our lecturers integrate their research in their teaching activities and our students perform in a challenging study environment that is becoming increasingly international. Our students prepare themselves for positions in which they can put their academic knowledge and skills to good use. Our research is of the highest international standard and contributes to innovation centred on prosperity, wellbeing and culture in a sustainable society. We focus on pioneering scientific research and seek inspiration in the scientific and societal challenges of the future.

To prepare our students optimally for an increasingly globalised world and a European continent of interdependent nation states, we provide them with an international environment in Leiden and with international opportunities abroad. In order to create such an environment, the university is fully engaged with the strengthening of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area, and actively stimulates the mobility of staff and students. Student mobility is promoted in all three cycles and is enabled by a wide network of exchange partners and a professional student support infrastructure that can assist students in finding and funding study abroad or international internships. Staff mobility is promoted by the university's human resource development policies, that value international academic experience.

The university's ambition is to further internationalise its student population, the student's learning environment and the student's learning experience. The university therefore offers all its master's and Ph.D. programmes in English and wants to increase its intake of international students in these programmes and in its English language bachelor's programmes. To this end, the university will increase its number of English-taught bachelor's programmes and the number of English-taught courses in its regular bachelor's programmes. The university intends to expand the proportion of its international master's students to 20% in 2015. In our doctoral programmes, already more than 40% of the Ph.D. candidates have a non-Dutch nationality. In addition, we wish to remain an attractive destination for exchange students from Europe and

beyond, while the same time maintaining the high level of diversity of its international student and staff population. Currently more than 100 different nationalities study or work at Leiden University.

The university also aims to provide a truly international study environment for all of its students. Students in Leiden as well as those that venture abroad should have the opportunity to benefit from a real international academic experience. Through a professional support infrastructure, bilingual communication (in both Dutch and English) and a hospitable attitude, the university provides international students with a stimulating environment in which they are able to develop academically. The academic experience is further enhanced through internationally oriented courses and programmes, preparing our students for the challenges of a global knowledge society and an international labour market. The international orientation of Leiden's programmes is strengthened by the international composition of the university's academic and support staff. Currently, about a quarter of all personnel have a nationality other than Dutch.

Learning mobility is a cornerstone of the university's international ambitions. Nearly all programmes offer a 30 ECTS opportunity in the bachelor's curriculum that students can use for broadening or deepening their knowledge, either at Leiden University or at universities abroad. In the master's programmes students are stimulated to attend international activities, participate in international internships and research projects, or spend a period abroad for study. At doctoral level the university considers international activities (conferences, seminars, summer schools and research projects or internships) to be a fundamental part of the doctoral experience. For academic staff, international experience is considered an important factor in the recruitment of new staff and for the career advancement of existing staff members.

To promote the mobility of bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. students the university offers a number of university managed scholarships (such as LUSTRA, Outbound Study Grants and Erasmus grants) and in addition provides support in applying for additional external sources. Most PhD students will receive funding for international activities either from their departments, from research project resources or from external sources. The university has a dedicated website for the Erasmus programme for students and a website for staff.

International Collaboration

Leiden University firmly believes that co-operation is imperative for contemporary research universities. Collaborating with other universities in the Netherlands and with universities abroad is an essential vehicle for the exchange of ideas and the pooling of resources. The university is involved in institutional networks such as the League of European Research Universities, the Coimbra Group and the Europaeum. Many of our faculties and institutes

collaborate in formal international networks in various disciplines. At individual level, our academics collaborate with colleagues from around the world.

Another priority of the university is co-operation with sectors outside of academia. Teaming up with industry and connecting with local, regional and national governments and with other organisations, can potentially benefit our teaching and research. The university has developed strong links with industry in the region and stimulates the creation of new businesses based on the knowledge produced in the university. The Leiden Bio Science Park illustrates the university's dedication to valorisation, entrepreneurialism and cooperation with industry. Regional and international consortia like Medical Delta and HealthTies are further examples of the university's commitment to regional and international collaboration within the triple helix of university-industry-government relations.

Learning from these and other experiences in international, inter-sectoral cooperation, Leiden University aims to stimulate the participation in Erasmus for All's activities related to cooperation for innovation, in particular the strategic partnerships and knowledge alliances. The university also intends to use the programme's possibilities to strengthen our cooperation with EU countries in Eastern and Central Europe and with EU neighbouring countries. We consider the extension of our collaborative networks a priority for the coming years.

Leiden University and the Higher Education Modernisation Agenda

Leiden University's motto is: Praesidium Libertatis, Bastion of Liberty. Leiden University pursues a strategy of inclusiveness as well as excellence. Diversity – in terms of gender, ethnicity, nationality and socio-economic background – is incorporated in this strategy. The university has introduced a diversity policy aimed at increasing the intake and study progress of various groups, taking into account the talents of each individual student.

In its vision on education, the university emphasises the academic nature of its programmes. This means that ongoing developments in scientific research form the basis of and the inspiration for our educational programmes. In this way, our graduates are equipped with the skills needed in the contemporary labour market, an environment that is characterised by complexity and constant change. The dynamic relation between our education and the national and international labour market is an important factor in our curriculum development and in the development of our career support activities.

The internationalisation of our programmes and of our university plays an important role in linking our academically inspired education programmes with the labour market. Leiden University recognises the potential value of study abroad for the competencies of our graduates

and strives to integrate international experiences into the curriculum. The formulation of learning agreements arranging the recognition of study abroad is therefore an important part of the preparation of our mobile students. At the same time the university tries to minimise the obstacles for incoming foreign students as well as for its outgoing mobile students, at least in so far as it has the (legal) capacity to do so.

Leiden University regards knowledge transfer to society as an integral part of its academic responsibilities, and acknowledges and rewards the activities of its researchers in this area. Partnerships with external parties, such as businesses, NGOs and governments, is seen as an important vehicle to infuse a culture of innovation into our research and education activities. Respect for academic integrity is, of course, a key factor in this process.

Leiden University actively works to achieve these ambitions through a university culture characterised by collegial decision making and respect for professional and academic autonomy.

Participation in the Erasmus for All programme is considered an essential condition for achieving the university's internationalisation and modernisation ambitions. The programme re-affirms the importance of diversity, it stimulates us to strengthen the ties with the labour markets of our graduates and it enables us to extend our collaborative networks to other countries and other sectors.