



## ERASMUS+ POLICY STATEMENT

In the community of Bulgarian universities Medical University-Sofia ranks number one medical higher education institution on the basis of academic staff qualifications, participation in international co-operation activities, number of papers published in national and foreign referred journals, teaching programmes developed in compliance with the requirements of the EC standards. The university has internationally recognized achievements in many fields of medical practice and scientific research in neurosurgery, cardio-vascular surgery, ophthalmic surgery, high-tech diagnostics of human diseases, medical genetics, development of new compound of synthetic and natural origin, laboratory research etc. During the years all university departments were involved in building strategic partnerships and working with international projects financed by the EU Framework Programmes, ESFRI, EUROCORES, NIH, as well as other technological and scientific projects financed by institutions and research centers from the USA, Belgium, Japan, Australia, Germany, India, UK etc.

Since its foundation in 1917, over 60.000 students have graduated from the Medical University – Sofia. Currently, there are 10.000 students of whom over 4.000 come from different countries of the world.

The University sees its top priority for the future in continually expanding its international relations in the academic and research field, in developing interdisciplinary research and studies, thus building strong scientific partnerships and making the path of medicine to a better future.

The University has been awarded the Erasmus Charter for higher education by the EC, thus undertakes to respect the principles set in the Programme for the European Credit Transfer System. When participating in European and international cooperation projects the institution ensures that cooperation leads to sustainable and balanced outcomes for all partners, fosters its academic staff and students to participate in these activities and maximizes the impact of participants by encouraging peer learning with the wider academic community.

The main issues of the institutional strategy for internationalization for 2019-2023 will be:

- to work for and enhance the spirit of international academic cooperation through collaboration in the education of foreign students
- to further build inter-institutional partnerships
- to work for increasing academic/staff exchange and participate in joint projects of the programme
- to develop collaboration with partner universities and identify new ones that match the priorities of the institution and be willing to be involved in mobility exchange projects and mutual scientific research

- to increase partnership with EU institutions, neighboring and non-EU partner countries
- to expand cooperation and make agreements with EU and non-EU universities, especially at postgraduate level, thus increasing the opportunities for PhD students participate in mobility exchange programmes
- to work for the development of joint master degrees with other European universities
- to encourage academic and non-academic staff to participate in various EU projects, intensive courses, thematic networks and other scientific events
- to improve the overall management of incoming/outgoing student and staff mobility and develop study programmes in English for all faculties and departments
- to search for additional financial support to foster students and staff mobility

Medical University – Sofia complies with the goals and values of the European Commission to promote scientific and technological progress, to enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among EU countries, to respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity. The EU values are common to the EU countries in a society in which inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination prevail. These values are an integral part of our European way of life: such as human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, human rights. The Medical University – Sofia will contribute through education and research to improving and maximizing the quality of teaching, thus supporting the common idea for stability, mobility and growth. Our participation in the program of internationalization will have a positive impact on the following areas:

- improving the quality and the relevance of medical higher education, so that the curricula meets the needs of individuals, careers of the future and the labour market, as well as stimulating and rewarding excellence in teaching practice and research
- increasing the number of graduates, attracting a broader cross-section of society into higher education and reducing the number of drop out students
- strengthening the links between education, research and business to promote excellence and innovation
- ensuring more opportunities for students to gain additional skills through study or training abroad, and encourage cross-border cooperation to boost higher education performance
- training more researchers to ensure skilled specialists for future industries
- providing efficient education governance and investing in education of high quality to meet the needs of business

The European story is one of peace, democracy, solidarity and freedom, but also of prosperity, equality, well-being and sustainability. At this critical juncture in history, it is worthwhile remembering the principles that unite us as Europeans, and the shared successes we have enjoyed together. Medical University – Sofia and Erasmus+ Mobility Programmes will be that motive force to contribute to peace, diversity, integrity and well-being.