

Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)

The *Universidad Internacional de La Rioja* (UNIR), www.unir.net, is a Spanish University established in 2008. UNIR is a 100% online university, which facilitates an exclusive, innovative and high quality virtual model of higher education, leant on a personalized, pro-active, and collaborative distance learning method of instruction. It is established in compliance with the current regulations governing universities, fulfilling all parameters and regulations of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

As it is acknowledged in its legal denomination, **internationalization** is one of the main UNIR inherent characteristics:

1. In relation to the Academic:
 - a. UNIR currently provides more than 190 academic degrees, namely official diplomas like, i.e. bachelor, master and doctorate programmes, and private, non-official programmes. They are delivered in Spanish (mainly) and English (some).
 - b. It comprises an academic community of over 1.500 knowledgeable lecturers from all over the World, along with a strong team of more than 1.000 multidisciplinary staff members (including 200 academic tutors), working on administrative management and support services.
 - c. Their main headquarters are located in Logroño, La Rioja, Spain. It has also premises in Madrid (Spain), Colombia (Bogota), Quito (Ecuador), Lima (Peru) Bolivia (Santa Cruz), Mexico DF (Mexico), Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Miami (USA), along with a number of collaboration agreements with Latin-American and European universities.

- d. Student enrolment keeps increasing exponentially, over 45.000 in 2019. Foreign students at UNIR stands for the 21%, learning from 85 different countries, mainly Germany, Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Chile, China, Colombia, South Korea, Ivory Coast, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador,



USA, France, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Morocco, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, UK, Singapore, Turkey or Venezuela.

2. In relation with Research:

UNIR Research (<http://research.unir.net>), stands for the Vice-rectorate for International Research at Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR, <http://www.unir.net>). UNIR Research groups together all the research activities carried out by UNIR research Groups at the international level. It works on selected scientific and humanistic fields of study as Engineering, with particular focus on information and communication technologies (ICT), Psychology, Education, Law, Communication, Economy and Social Sciences. To do so, UNIR provides support to over 300 researchers in a number of topics organized as research groups.

All the research activities are designed for practical implementation and subsequent exploitation in the market (i.e. end-user, Industry, Academia, and Public administration). Furthermore, the Research Institute for Innovation & Technology in Education (UNIR iTED, <http://ited.unir.net>) develops research projects very much focused on ICT and Technology-enhanced Learning (TEL), eLearning, Open education and Learning Analytics since they are core topics of the university. This institute has contribute to over 30 research projects since 2012.

The international character of UNIR explicitly envisages a comprehensive approach to networked cooperation including teaching and training. It has been reflected in the signature of over a 100 Agreements and MoU with HE institutions all over the world, mainly in Europe and South-America. Such agreements reach not only the promotion of joint academic and cross-border research activities with on-line universities and traditional ones, but the encouraging of bilateral physical and virtual opportunities for mobility actions.

Therefore, and concerning its International strategy, the general objective of the University is to consolidate the international DNA of the University, promoting the quality-based education of students, no matter where they come from, and taking advantage of the potential of Spanish as a language for Higher Education, through the internationalization of its training programs and research activities.

Through the materialisation of this global objective, UNIR aims at:

- To be a real global university, open to people from all over the world.
- To increase the number of students, professors and researchers from different nationalities in order to become more open and global.
- To focus on the international development of the university in Ibero-American countries and adapt our model to the reality of those countries where UNIR is present.

To meet this general objective, UNIR will boost its participation in the ERASMUS+ programme to fulfil the following objectives:

- To foster and strengthen the outbound and inbound mobility of students, professors, researchers and administrative staff, in order to raise the quality, relevance and reliability of services and support provided to them.
- To ensure promotion and support of students and staff mobility in a non-discriminatory way in line with Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental rights of the European Union thereby fighting discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, religion, beliefs, belonging to minority groups

- To exploit the on-line nature of the university by researching, innovating, and supporting blended mobility models.
- To develop further UNIR's existing international partners network, so to reinforce our research international capacity and to establish strategic partnerships with EU and third countries.
- To support a lifelong learning and innovation-driven approach to education and training.
- To attract and commit with new knowledge alliances that will benefit our students, academics and internal research community, linking higher education, research and business for social and economic development, in a local, regional and international level.
- To share knowledge, benchmark good practices, and acquire know-how that result in improved methodologies, procedures, and services for the all the university stakeholders. This will improve University governance through the ongoing adoption of EU funding regulation for international cooperation.
- To contribute to the achievement of the goals of European policies, collected in the overarching Communication on **'Building a Stronger Europe: the role of youth, education and culture policies'** accomplishing the Gothenburg agenda, as well as other strategies that will follow in the 2021 -2027 period.

To achieve these objectives, the UNIR supporting structure will be:

- The **International Mobility Office** (<https://gestor.unir.net/UserFiles/file/documentos/omi/ UNIR OMI dossier.pdf>) will be the responsible for managing the Erasmus + KA1 actions, processing and signing of agreements with different universities from the programme and facilitating the mobility of students and their integration in UNIR. They will provide and overall service to all stakeholders, following the path initiated during the

2013-2020 period. They will add a network of tutors (>200) that will become the reference point and the most common channel of communication for the students to provide hands-on support for all the students, academics, researchers, and internships' participants.

- The **Vice-rectorate for International Research** will handle KA2 and KA3 actions management, through the International Projects Management Office. To provide a decision-making level support, the Vice-rectorate will focus on the life cycle of research and innovation projects aimed towards a practical application of the knowledge generated, always seeking to multiply the social impact of the scientific activity and with special emphasis on international projects. The International Projects Management Office currently designs, executes and evaluates international Research & Innovation, with particular emphasis on competitive European supported activities. It deploys various support, from the administrative side, programs covering all the stages comprised in international projects: design of the proposal, practical implementation, deployment, and knowledge transfer of the results obtained.

In short, UNIR aims at further developing and deepening of its international soul through research and mobility actions. Erasmus+ is therefore a cornerstone on this strategy. Participation in all key actions 1, 2 and 3 of the Programme will reinforce UNIR in an ongoing modernization process which will certainly impact in all the stakeholders involved, and therefore will contribute to the goals of the **European Education Area**, as laid down in the communication on "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture".