



Challenges of Cooperation with Non-EU countries



How can failures in communication be prevented and smooth implementation ensured?

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Why International Credit Mobility?

Why International Credit Mobility?



- ICM reinforces international cooperation the 33 Member States and associated countries on the one hand and non-associated third countries across the world on the other.
- Erasmus+ KA171
- Enables us to cooperate with organizations from other parts the wo
- Strenghtens global dimension of the European Education Area
- Launches in 2015, opened up the opportunity to fund individual mobilities of staff and students at HEIs



Why International Credit Mobility?



Advantages and Opportunities

Cooperation Beyond the EU – Why Is It So Attractive?

- ✓ Opens doors for students and academics to study, teach, and collaborate across Asia, the Americas, and Africa... all over the world.
- ✓ Offers experiences that still feel new, inspiring, and a little bit exotic for many European institutions.
- ✓ Builds global awareness, intercultural understanding, and fresh perspectives on education and research
- ✓ Gives universities a chance to diversity.

**Different culture,
style of teaching,
social and
cultural life,
different life-style**

Why International Credit Mobility?



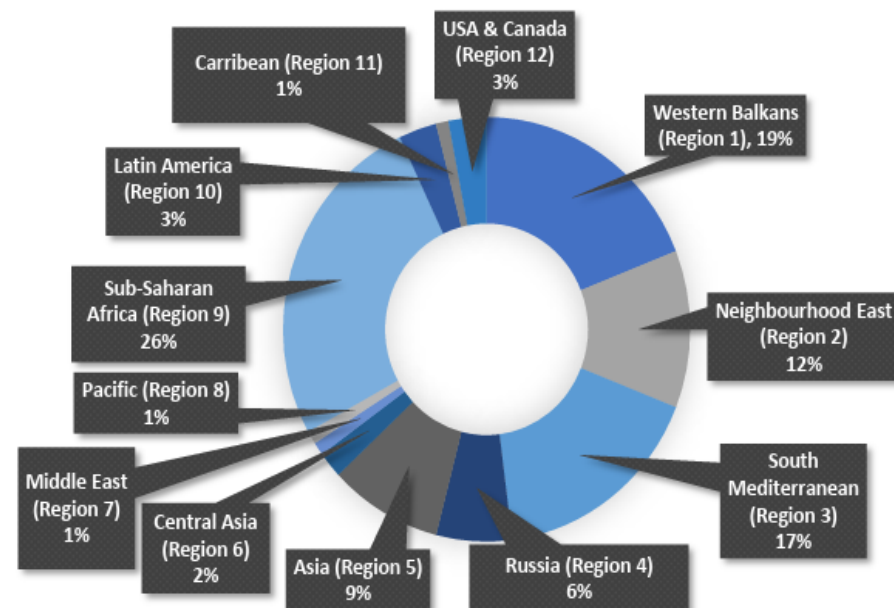
What countries are eligible to take part in ICM and how is the budget split?

According to the to the EU's external policy instruments, countries worldwide are grouped into 14 Regions.

The total budget is split into "envelopes" based on regional priorities.



Figure 1: Budget distribution between different regions of the world



ICM: A long journey with an uncertain result?

ICM: A long journey with an uncertain result?



Project-based cooperation

- Quality project including details is essential.
- Time-intensive proposal preparation.
- Only HEIs in Programme Countries are eligible to apply for and receive funds

What is a typical timeline of preparation?

- **Summer–Autumn:** Confirm partner interest, set participant numbers, draft proposal (until end of November)
- **Jan–Feb:** Adjustments by International Office
- **Feb/March:** Proposal submission
- **July 2025:** Results announced
- **Sept 2025:** Project starts

Project duration: 3 academic years

How can ICM boost your International Strategy?

How can ICM boost your International Strategy?



- New partners beyond Europe → building partnerships beyond Europe, increasing visibility and institutional reputation worldwide
- Diversification of partners
- Access to new project partnerships → synergies with other Erasmus+ and EU-funded actions
- Sharing expertise, know-how & resources (sharing equipment, expertise, and best practices, developing joint projects, research, and teaching innovation)
- Enhancing visibility, innovation & global reach
- Training mobility as flexible cooperation (even with partially matching fields)
- Supporting smaller & less experienced institutions
- Enhancing visibility, innovation & global reach
- Direct impact on university staff – higher motivation of staff to be part of the internationalization process.



How to choose the right partner?

How to choose the right partner?



What is the Strategic Plan for internationalization at my University? → Is extending partnerships a priority at my university?

If yes, then ask yourself:

- Are there any priority regions for cooperation?
- What do I know about the new partner institution?
- How effective is communication? (Do they respond promptly and share information openly?)
- Am I communicating with one person or the wider team?
- Do I have a positive impression of the whole institution?
- How do I perceive their interest in cooperation?
- Which mobilities are they focused on? (Study, training, or both?)



Before making a final decision, discuss the potential partnership with your team.





How to choose the right partner?

"Old" vs. New Partner

Existing ("Old") Partners

Advantages:

Mutual trust and solid understanding of processes (administration, academic calendar, credit recognition).

Stable and well-established communication between coordinators.

Challenges:

Routine cooperation with limited room for innovation — partners often stick to familiar formats.

Risk of “oversaturation” — the same destinations for students, leading to reduced attractiveness over time.

New Partners

Advantages:

New directions and fields, creating opportunities for innovation and interdisciplinary cooperation.

Expansion into new geographical regions, including developing countries.

High motivation and engagement from both sides

Brings fresh perspectives to the university’s internationalization efforts.

Challenges:

Administrative uncertainty — different procedures, delays, and documentation requirements.

Differences in academic culture (e.g., credit recognition, English proficiency, scheduling).

Limited experience with Erasmus or similar projects.

Requires intensive initial support and mentoring.

**What difficulties you may face
during the project preparation and
implementation?**

What difficulties you may face during the project preparation and implementation?



Challenges in Preparing an ICM Project:

- Communication & Cooperation
- Motivation & Project Approach
- Planning & Timing
- Target Groups & Eligibility

Challenges in Preparing an ICM Project



Communication & Cooperation

- Poor communication – do they really want it?
- Do they have local support?
- Can they organize a proper selection process?
- Make sure expectations are clear and mutual understanding achieved

Motivation & Project Approach

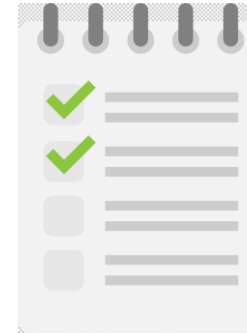
- Lack of ownership or motivation in project preparation
- “Reward trips” instead of purposeful mobilities
- Treat it as a *project* – plan meetings, define KPIs
- Focus on project-based cooperation, not just individual mobilities

Challenges in Preparing an ICM Project



Planning & Timing

- Semester dates do not match
- Length of mobility vs. academic calendar
- Clear plan of mobilities, numbers, and timelines
- Keep reserves – consider potential number of students



Target Groups & Eligibility

- Who are the students? Working adults?
- Is mobility a compulsory part of their studies?
- Are they receiving OS (organisational support) appropriately?



What is your biggest challenge in ICM?



How to avoid the misunderstanding when communicating with project partner?



How to avoid the misunderstanding when communicating with project partner?

Case study 1: Caribbean Region

Challenges observed:

- Insufficient knowledge of project rules on partner's side (funding, selection process)
- Poor communication with partner institution
- Student selection not aligned with curriculum
- Low student initiative
- Urgent issues due to project deadlines

Case study 2: Western Balkan

Challenges observed:

- Targeted student profiles (working students, evening classes, gender, motivation for long-term mobility)
- “one-person show” – wider team not involved
- Not adequate facilities for training mobilities
- Limited English proficiency of academics involved in mobilities

***Always consider different educational and cultural backgrounds
and
Don't forget: communication is the key to success!***



Best Practices

Best Practice – Cooperation with Montenegro



Duration: Call 2015, 2019, 2022, 2025

Activities: Student exchanges, staff training, academic mobilities

Outcomes:

- Incoming students: 28
- Incoming staff: 12+8
- Outgoing staff: 9



Best Practice – Cooperation with Montenegro



2015-2017 – agreement for 4 SMS (in), 2 STA/STT (both in, out)

2019-2022 – agreement for 8 SMS (in), 3 STA/STT (both in, out)

2022-2025 – agreement for 12 SMS (in), 2 SMP (out), 6 STT/STA (in), 4 STA/STT (out)

2025-2027 – agreement for 10 SMS (in), 2 SMP (out+in), 8 STA/STT (in), 4 STA/STT (out)

Best Practice – Cooperation with Canada



Duration: Call 2023

Activities: Student exchanges for training, staff training and teaching mobilities

Cooperation in numbers:

- Incoming students: 5
- Outgoing students: 5
- Incoming staff: 2
- Outgoing staff: 2

Very close partnership expended to project cooperation and mutual support of academics and students ↔ mutual trust, synergies and joint research activities.



ICM Success Checklist

ICM Success Checklist



- ✓ Avoid prejudice – keep an open mind
- ✓ Be aware of cultural and educational differences
- ✓ Make sure your partner institution is genuinely interested in cooperation
- ✓ Inform and involve your team from the start
- ✓ Explain clearly what Erasmus+ ICM is about
- ✓ Confirm students' interest in coming to your university and clarify the planned duration
- ✓ Clarify all administrative procedures related to mobilities
- ✓ Remember: mobility is just the beginning – think about further forms of cooperation

Don't Be Afraid to Explore the World

**You'll be surprised how the individual mobilities of students
and staff can enrich your university culture and inspire
further cooperation beyond EU borders.**

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