

## **2021-2027 Erasmus+ Policy Statement (EPS):**

### **Strategy of Istanbul Galata University**

Istanbul Galata University (IGU) is a young foundation university established in 2019 by the Bulut Education Foundation in Turkey. The university is located in Galata that was the center for centuries. Galata is not only a district but the heart and soul of Istanbul. That is where our university name comes from. To be worthwhile, rooted, cross-cultural, to get closer to business networks, to be the flagship university, we work with all our strength to provide international education starting at 2020-2021 academic year with Art, Science, Sports, Health and Social Sciences. İstanbul Galata University's vision is to be an international university that expands the boundaries of science, sport, and art embraces freedom, takes a lead in the development of society, provides a place where students and faculty share a passion for learning, and where all members, both academic and administrative are dedicated to these ends. As a young higher education institution, İstanbul Galata University earnestly prioritizes the goal of internationalization in creating the institutional values that it adopts with the awareness of this reality. Internationalization policy is the most important element for the university to develop and strengthen its intellectual capital and organizational capacity as a young university. With this element, the University's goal of reaching a multinational academic and student community, ensuring international unity in education, academic studies, and research will be realized. In parallel with the objectives of Internationalization policy, to equip our students with key skills and competencies matchings needs of the global world of work. IGU's aims to build international cooperation with all external stakeholders including higher education institutions and the business world. These relations aim to foster our efforts to increase quality in education and research through transnational cooperation with all Programme and Partner Countries. By participating in the Erasmus program in the upcoming 2021-2027 period, IGU would like to achieve sustainable and continuous growth in the University's internationalization and modernization efforts for excellence in teaching, research, service to the community, and learning for life. The Erasmus program will contribute to these processes via projects carry out under Key Action 1,2. Within the context of the Erasmus Programme 2021 – 2027, it is aimed to provide students, faculty, and staff with more effective research, teaching, and service. The primary target group for mobility activities is the undergraduate and students of the vocational studies who participate in both study and traineeship programs. These activities provide invaluable opportunities to the students, especially to those that plan to apply for postgraduate studies at international institutions. Having the opportunity in participating in the Erasmus+ program, the students will have a chance to test both their academic performance and their social skills in competitive international environments. The traineeship mobility has also proved to be a very valuable learning experience thus IGU will emphasize this type of mobility for especially vocational studies in the next cycle. Faculties are encouraged to participate in internship programs even if they do not have a compulsory internship. These students will have a key role as part of a larger vision to work towards a European Education Area, which will help to promote mobility, overcome obstacles to mobility and cross-border cooperation.

IGU's target will be achieving quality assurance in each level including student and staff exchanges, which started from the selection procedures to credit transfer; from staff training planning to implementation of training outcomes; from teaching planning to implementation of new technics in the classes by welcoming international ideas in every cycle. An objective set in

the IGU's 2021-2026 strategic plan is the diversification of international research, education, and training funds. One of the initiatives related to this objective is to develop support mechanisms for academic units so that they benefit more from international research and education funds. IGU prepares students to understand, contribute and succeed in a rapidly changing society. International programs run by International Office to better serve IGU's students during and after their educational life at our university. International Office will provide programs, such as Erasmus +, Bilateral and Short-Term programs abroad to enable an all-encompassing experience to its students. The office will allow students to enhance their strong sense of social responsibility to embrace global and local challenges, with the experience they have acquired through the programs. Students of today are already global, in the sense of technologies within their grasp, but it is always real-life experiences that would help them navigate their way in the world. By creating an understanding of different cultures, languages, histories, our students are given an edge in becoming successful individuals. Employers are looking for employees that not only have the practical skills for their professional career but also looking for intercultural skills that enhance effective teamwork with diverse co-workers and have the ability to communicate with global competitors around the world.

All academic programs at IGU have been designed in accordance with the requirements of the Bologna Process and European Higher Education Area. The ECTS is the internal credit allocation system. It is a value that represents all the studies (theoretical courses, applications, seminars, independent studies, examinations, assignments, etc.) that a student needs to complete to be successful in a course. The participation of IGU in the Erasmus+ Program fits perfectly into this internationalization and modernization strategy because the cooperation among organizations and institutions can be triggered by the short-term visits of academic staff made possible by the teaching mobility grant of the Erasmus+ Program. These visits will help Istanbul Galata University to increase the number of collaborations with other universities. Starting from internationalization at home and individual mobility periods through the exchange of knowledge in education, joint curriculum development and capacity-building in higher education, nurturing of digital and multilingual skills to embracing common values, and encouragement of civic engagement, the Erasmus program contributes to IGU's aim of being an active participant in building the European Higher Education Area and mission to graduate internationally competitive and employable students and to bring together scholars who collaborate at the global level. IGU also plans to engage in Erasmus activities with both program and partner countries. These projects will greatly contribute to IGU's vision to act as a change agent in the modernization of higher education and to its quest to seek excellence in teaching and learning. As part of our strategy under the program, we are also planning to be involved in different cooperation for innovation projects. For the geographical diversity, IGU will firstly focus on European countries and the immediate neighbors of Turkey. In order to achieve these utmost goals internationalization policy are as follows:

- Developing internationalization policy and process administration with the assessments of internal and external stakeholders at the university, faculty, and program level
- To help the students and staff gain new globalization experiences by participating in the Erasmus program
- To help in internationalization-on-campus, which offers opportunities to our students to make international friends at Istanbul Galata University
- To provide Turkish language learning opportunities for international students with the support of the Turkish Teaching Application and Research Center (TÖMER)
- Increasing the number of foreign students and academic staff in its educational programs
- To increase the number of academic programs in English
- Encouraging and supporting its students

to spend at least one semester abroad • Promoting the number of joint/dual degrees at all levels of higher education with the foreign universities, • Assuring the quality of all its programs for international recognition. All of these are valuable assets that will prepare our students and staff to be successful in a tightly interconnected world and global economy.

We aim to mobilize 10 % of our students and 25 % of teaching staff, by the year 2024. Our second goal is to commit to making international agreements. Between the year 2023 - 2025, we will start to initiate strategic partnerships with universities that are research-focused. The partnership should fit within the internationalization priorities of IGU and provide mutual benefit to both partners. Partner selection depends on the disciplines they cover, and the logistics they have for welcoming students and staff IGU'S quantitative indicators for individual student mobility, for both study and traineeship, have been set formally in a Senate resolution. Meeting the targets will monitor and report to the academic higher decision-making bodies. As to the staff mobility for teaching and training, priority will be always given to first-time participants, and the university academic and administrative staff will benefit from the advantage of the opportunities the Erasmus program offers at least once during the project timeline. We would like special efforts in form of improved dissemination of information and support for mobility participants will be undertaken. IGU is a young institution and relatively small in size, so actions under European Universities and Joint Master Degrees we foresee as mid-to-long-term objectives under the program duration. Lastly management of inter-institutional agreements, online learning agreements, and Erasmus without paper by the end of 2022.