

Erasmus Policy Statement of the University of Bonn

Institutional Renewal and Excellence Strategy of the University of Bonn

In 2019 at the end of a multi-year competitive selection procedure, the University of Bonn was named one of Germany's 'Universities of Excellence', a title awarded jointly by the German federal and state governments. The University of Bonn earned the title by landing six high-profile collaborative flagship projects (Clusters of Excellence) and drafting and rolling out a broad institutional renewal and modernization strategy. Building upon the University's core tripartite mission of research, teaching and transfer, the strategy further addresses internationalization, digitalization, equal opportunity and other related issues and themes of relevance. These include in particular the University of Bonn's commitment to sustainability, reflected in procedures introduced for aligning the institution's research, teaching and other operational processes with resource conservation objectives. The institutional renewal and excellence strategy of the University of Bonn is thus closely aligned thematically with the Renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education.

The University of Bonn's internationalization agenda, as part of its overall institutional strategy, includes as a key element the Erasmus+ initiative. Many of the primary internationalization objectives adopted under the Internationalization Strategy 2025 would be unachievable without the Erasmus+ Programme, and thus the measures planned are very closely bound up with the Programme (see section a. below) Erasmus+ is also crucial regarding major objectives in the areas of digitalization, equal opportunity and sustainability at the University of Bonn (see section b. below). The Erasmus+ Programme will thus form a substantial element within the University of Bonn's overall development plan for next seven years.

I. Erasmus+ as a key element of the Internationalization Strategy 2025

As part of its overall strategy, the University of Bonn will be releasing a paper detailing the institution's strategic internationalization plans on a five-year schedule. The current period of 2020–2025 is addressed in the internationalization strategy paper now being released. Involvement in the Erasmus+ program is a core element of the internationalization strategy in its latest form, for which four primary goals have been adopted:

1. Net quantitative increase in international mobility for Bonn students, teaching staff as well as technical and administrative staff

Plans adopted by the University of Bonn are aimed at realizing measurable mobility gains among students, teaching staff as well as technical and administrative staff. **Mobility** (real and/or virtual) **is to be a fundamental aspect of the experience of studying or working at the University of Bonn**. Measurably increasing **student** mobility means better preparing our graduates for the global job market, in part through enhanced foreign language competency (in line with the University's language policy released in 2019 geared toward openness and diversity). The policy reflects and documents our views that foreign language skills, international and intercultural competence and exposure to different scientific approaches and methods are constituent of high-quality academic education. Mobility furthermore means helping students become cosmopolitan citizens who identify strongly with the idea of Europe, in line with the University of Bonn's own understanding of its embedded role and mission. Increasing students' international mobility would not be possible without the international partnership structures and funding opportunities offered by Erasmus+, which furthermore is absolutely essential to the University of Bonn's attractiveness as a place of study for both German and international students, irrespective of the institution's status of excellence. While Erasmus+ is at the core of efforts to internationalize our degree programs, a parallel initiative is in place promoting international exchange for both teaching staff (see point 2.) and **technical and administrative staff**, aimed at achieving a measurable quantitative increase therein. Technical and administrative staff are to take greater advantage of foreign work exchange possibilities to enable them to provide even better support to the University of Bonn's international students and researchers. This initiative is aligned with the official goal of the University's central administration of achieving substantial permanent gains in the area of internationalization by the year 2025 and enjoys broad support, as a 2018 survey expressly indicated that a large majority of technical and administrative staff support comprehensive internationalization at the University of Bonn, unreservedly applauding all gains made in this regard. Erasmus+ is at the heart of the measures implemented as part of this project to internationalize the University's administration.

2. Internationalization of teaching/International degree programs

Increasing mobility among teaching staff is closely tied in with efforts to further internationalize teaching at the University of Bonn under a policy adopted in 2018, which are valid for all organizational units of the University. The policy objectives outlined are to be further pursued on a more specific basis within the framework of the Internationalization Strategy 2025. The initial focus on achieving greater teaching staff mobility is expected to yield lasting gains regarding internationalization and quality in teaching and further expansion of university partnerships. Experience abroad allows teaching staff to hone their foreign language skills while increasing their didactical repertoire in teaching situations with an international audience (an outgoing mobility objective). Secondly, University of Bonn degree programs are to be enriched through the greater inclusion of international elements (incoming mobility objective).

In addition to measures promoting foreign language and didactical skill acquisition for teaching staff, new international degree programs are to be funded and established as well. This will involve in part international collaboration with Erasmus partners to teach individual modules under a blended learning arrangement as well as the development of innovative jointly-taught classes. The University of Bonn is already among the top four German universities with the largest share of master's degree programs with English as language of instruction. Additionally, we are working to offer a greater number of double degree programs in the form of **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees**. Having only offered one such degree program thus far, the University of Bonn is looking to land partnerships to set up at least two more, under its own leadership, in the course of the upcoming Erasmus Programme.

Efforts to internationalize teaching also include expanding the number of undergraduate degree programs taught in English. In the past, undergraduate degree programs at the University of Bonn have been offered almost exclusively in German, missing an opportunity to early on prepare German students for the multilingual job market (as addressed in the University of Bonn Language Policy, likewise released in 2018) and for the many master's degree programs taught in English in Bonn and at other universities, both at home and abroad. Offering more English-language courses in our bachelor's degree programs in particular enhances our ability to attract incoming exchange students. The realization was made in recent years that international students are less interested in spending a semester in Bonn on exchange due to courses being offered in German only. A greater number of exchange students in Bonn in turn affords an intercultural learning experience for University of Bonn students, which itself is a goal connected with the internationalization of teaching and studying.

3. Greater cooperation within the European Union

The University of Bonn is working systematically to enhance cooperation with universities within the European Union. While the University of Bonn's three existing strategic partners – the University of St Andrews (UK), the University of Melbourne (AUS) and Waseda University, Tokyo (JP) – are not (or no longer) in EU countries, already back in 2018 the Netherlands and France were chosen as strategic priority countries to be focused on initially in intra-European cooperation efforts. The University of Bonn intends to add to these existing relationships, intensifying cooperation with European institutions on a university-wide basis as evidenced by the application submitted in February 2020 to become a partner of **the European University NEUROTECH^{EU}**. The aim is for the University of Bonn to be able to utilize and expand the NEUROTECH^{EU} network to coordinate degree programs, summer schools, administrative processes and teaching innovations Europe-wide, especially in the area of digitalization. NEUROTECH^{EU} is also to serve as a model to generate synergies in connection with Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe applications by expanding cooperative study programs to include more joint research and innovation projects.

Partnerships with international business players are to be expanded beyond the scope of the European University itself. The formation of the enaCom transfer center at the University of Bonn in 2019 represented a shift in focus onto the transfer of scientific knowledge into economic and social contexts. This broad concept of transfer is a core element, furthermore, of the university-wide Excellence Strategy. The transfer strategy was designed from the start to leverage international cooperation across sectors, and plans are now in place to grow these partnerships in a substantial way not yet seen through participation in the grant program for **innovation partnerships**, which is a feature of the new Erasmus+ Programme. To make project application filing within the **KA 2** framework more attractive overall, support is to be provided for project design, application completion and subsequent project execution, for which the University of Bonn is strengthening its central administrative infrastructure engaged with Erasmus project coordination.

4. Greater cooperation with the Global South

As the seat of 20 sub-organizations of the United Nations and of numerous governmental and non-governmental developmental aid organizations, the city of Bonn is a primary German center for international cooperation with countries in the Global South. This orientation has been robustly anchored at the University of Bonn in the Center for Development Research (ZEF) and other regionally focused research institutes (such as the Latin America Center, the Department of Southeast Asian Studies and the Collaborative Research Center Rural Africa). There is substantially less focus on university-wide cooperation with scientific institutions in the Global South and the inclusion of study subjects not directly concerned with or conducted in specific countries of the Global South. A key goal in the Internationalization Strategy 2025 is to pursue more partnerships and intensify existing ones with

universities in Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia, which in large part will be done through substantially greater activity in program line KA 107 (171). With Ghana set to become one of our focus countries, in 2020 we filed an initial application for cooperation with two Ghanaian universities. The University of Bonn intends to make extensive strategic use of **KA 107(171)** and **capacity building projects** as part of KA 2 to strengthen interactions in particular with partners in the Global South. Erasmus funding has a critical function for expanding activities in this strategic field, as it enables systematic interaction with non-European partners over the long term.

II. Impact of Erasmus+ on digitalization, diversity and sustainability at the University of Bonn

Beyond the critical nature of Erasmus+ for the University of Bonn to achieve its internationalization goals over the next few years, the Programme will furthermore be **important regarding institutional renewal and modernization**, particularly in the areas of digitalization, equal opportunity and sustainability.

Erasmus+ has a key role to play in the digitalization of the central administration and of teaching at the University. Erasmus administration is digital at the University of Bonn via the Mobility Online database tool, which has yielded a wealth of experience to build upon for digital interface management as part of the central administration. "Erasmus without Papers" is an important pilot project that fits seamlessly into the existing efforts at the University of Bonn to convert over to 100% paper-free processes, as part of its university-wide digitalization strategy. The introduction of the European Student Card as part of Erasmus+ will significantly advance the project to introduce digital student IDs, which in turn is relevant to rolling out a new campus management system at the University of Bonn (HiS-in-One). Collaborative teaching jointly with our Erasmus partners will also drive forward the digitalization of teaching and studying, in line with the Teaching Quality Pact in place at the University for nearly a decade now. A wider range of online interaction options is also beneficial regarding university digitalization, and the International Office has gathered valuable initial experience already with virtual mobility in connection with staff exchange initiatives which will be leveraged for student mobility measures over the next few years.

The broadened array of virtual exchange options will furthermore make international mobility possible for new target groups (see point 1 above). **Erasmus+ will enhance educational equality and diversity at the University of Bonn.** Promoting the acquisition of international experience, via both exchange mobility and "at-home" internationalization, plays into the University's diversity strategy in key fashion, which was adopted after a multi-year diversity audit. This led to the University of Bonn being certified as a diverse university in 2019, concurrent with the formation of our central Diversity Office. The primary objectives to be achieved over the next few years include ensuring equal opportunity among differing student groups, particularly those with an immigration background, disabilities and challenging family care situations, through support measures that facilitate their becoming active in international contexts. The Erasmus Institutional Coordinator will thus be working closely together with the new Diversity Office to outline coordinated inclusion goals and jointly monitor their attainment.

Erasmus+ is furthermore relevant for achieving the University's sustainability goals. The University of Bonn is committed under its Sustainability Strategy 2030 to becoming a climate-neutral organization by the end of this decade. The University outlined its policies on sustainability in international partnerships as part of the sustainability strategy paper released in 2020, which included proposals for structuring international exchange in a manner commensurate with resource conservation goals. Making mobility within the Erasmus+ framework more sustainable will be a very high priority. Specifically, incentives are to be created for using rail for travel within Europe and for organizing international events in alignment with sustainability considerations.

Recap

Erasmus+ will be a key element in the institutional renewal efforts of the University of Bonn during the third decade of the 21st century. The range of Erasmus+ grants and funding options available help enhance quality in our study offerings, research activities and supporting administrative work, having crucial impact across the many areas covered by the University's Excellence Strategy, including internationalization, digitalization, equal opportunity, diversity and sustainability. The University of Bonn is interested in ensuring that the Erasmus+ Programme is implemented in accordance with the objectives set forth in the Renewed EU Agenda for Higher Education.

KA 1 – Learning Mobility (KA 103 und KA 107)

As in previous iterations of the Erasmus Programme, the focus in the years 2021–2027 will be on the internationalization of studying, teaching and the administration by **promoting mobility for students (in studies and internships), teaching staff and other employees through exchanges with Programme countries (KA 131) and, increasingly, with partner countries (KA 171)**. The University of Bonn will be building upon the progress made in earlier Programme generations, adding on new measures that bring about both quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement. The fact that Erasmus+ includes all parties at the University – students, teaching and administrative staff – makes the program excellently suited for the anchoring of internationalization processes across the board at the University of Bonn.

Plans are to keep up the pace of the **quantitative and qualitative progress in the area of student mobility already made** through the now well-ensconced array of services for incoming exchange students. These include pre- and post-exchange and other support, German language courses, ECTS tools for quality assurance and ongoing evaluations of exchange/mobility partnerships. Erasmus internships form an important part of Key Action 1 as an alternative to extended stays abroad for study purposes, particularly for STEM and teaching degree students. The targeted approach taken to ensure inclusion of previously underrepresented groups and academic disciplines (especially STEM and teaching degree students) will be further pursued (see point 2.1). Plans to enhance international mobility include use of such **digital teaching and study options** as blended learning (shorter stay abroad combined with online interaction), web-based courses and interactive virtual exchange formats (topical video or web blogs/vlogs, podcasts, eTandems, digital coffee talks, etc.). Blended learning arrangements will afford the participating universities greater flexibility to handle differing semester dates, examination periods and other organizational specifics affecting the degree programs concerned. The pandemic led to a major expansion in the range of available virtual teaching, study and exam-taking possibilities via the eCAMPUS platform, and further targeted expansion is in store in connection with Erasmus mobility initiatives. The departments, i.e. the respective Erasmus Departmental Coordinators and Deans of Studies, will be developing concepts especially for Erasmus in collaboration with the Vice Rector for Study Teaching and Learning as well as the Bonn Center for Higher Education. Measures are already in both planning and implementation to expand infrastructure (webinars, video tutorials, chat bots, etc.) for digital services including counseling/advising and outgoing/incoming support.

Many degree programs already have international **mobility opportunities** firmly ensconced in their curricula. As the next steps in this regard, policies and models for establishing mobility windows, with a special focus on STEM students, are being decided which will be suitable to pass the upcoming system accreditation procedure focusing on degree program design, and the Teaching division will advise the departments regarding implementation. These measures together with rules ensuring recognition of study credit from foreign countries, which the University of Bonn already largely has in place (see point 2.2), are

aimed at making it more attractive to take advantage of mobility offerings. An introductory undergraduate course in English entitled “Germany in a Global Context” will be offered for incoming social sciences, humanities and other students with insufficient German language competency to take full advantage of the German-language course offering to ensure that they are able to earn the required number of credits.

Another specific objective for degree program internationalization is securing additional funding for **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees** to be offered either exclusively or under a consortial arrangement. The experience the University of Bonn has had in coordinating the Erasmus Mundus degree program AFEPA has demonstrated that the high administrative expenses required are worth it, and that this funding model effectively promotes the creation of innovative education offerings of top quality. The International Office will start investing in 2021 to hire additional application and project support staff to further our efforts toward increased involvement in Erasmus Mundus.

In parallel with student mobility, **teaching mobility and staff mobility** is also a heightened priority at the University of Bonn (see point 1.1 above). Already in the present Programme generation, teaching staff are taking advantage of opportunities to do a stay at a partner university to gain exposure to new teaching methods and discuss curriculum-related issues while further cultivating the Erasmus partnerships generally. Dialogue is ongoing with the Deans and Deans of Studies on how to capture greater potential in this regard, including promoting the advancement of graduate students and the integration of incoming lecturers in regard to ‘Internationalization at Home’ (IaH).

The University of Bonn has had Erasmus Staff Mobility for Training (STT) implemented as part of staff development since its introduction in 2007, embedded in required introductory and follow-up workshops that include elements from the KA2 project Systemic University Change Towards Internationalisation (SUCTI) as well as intercultural training. This project concept was long seen as a model in Germany. The core element of the Excellence Strategy project “Internationalized Administration” is that administrative staff are to enjoy greater mobility in both quantitative and qualitative terms. This will involve for example increased funding for English courses abroad (in cooperation with partner universities; pilot project with St. Andrews) and the involving of doctoral students selected for mobility in connection with the Argelander Competence Center. Flanking physical mobility opportunities, virtual staff exchange is also to be promoted in online group dialogues with partner universities. Lastly, starting in 2021 the University of Bonn will be holding International Staff Weeks, with the involvement of Bonn employees. These various IaH measures are aimed at generating greater participation in international staff exchange.

Numerous system and financial audits and evaluations of the project completion reports conducted in recent years document the high quality of the University’s **implementation activities for Key Action 1** of the Erasmus Programme in the areas of information providing, advice and counseling, pre- and post-support for and integration of mobility students and financial administration. The Erasmus Institutional Coordinator, with a team of five staff members, is centrally responsible for the oversight and management of Programme activities in coordination with the Vice Rector for International Affairs as well as in cooperation with the Finance division and the Student Registry. On departmental level, specifically appointed Erasmus Departmental Coordinators manage and implement Programme activities. In a targeted move to expand activities with partner countries, a new office is to be formed to oversee the realization of further KA 107/171 projects and conduct communications with non-European countries. Increasing mobility to and from partner countries is a key element in the University’s strategy to intensify cooperation with universities in the Global South (see previous section).

The International Study Programs in Bonn section, which is part of the International Office, is responsible for assisting and supporting incoming international students jointly with the individual academic departments. The execution of projects falling within Key Action 1 is based on an established procedure that is transparently defined in policies, checklists and regular meetings involving the Departmental

Coordinators and the International Office. All mobility and scholarship disbursements are centrally administered via the Mobility Online database system, which ensures compatibility with the EWP network and further digitalization of Programme implementation (see point 2.1).

To meet the new requirements, particularly in Key Action 1, **the goal is to get more University-wide involvement in Programme implementation than in the past.** The Vice Rector for Teaching and Studying, the Teaching division and the examination offices of the faculties will be tasked with attainment of the automatic recognition targets; the Vice Rector for Digitalization and Information, the Student Registry, the Campus Management project team and the Digital Science Center (DiCe) will be tasked with implementation of the EWP and the European Student Card Initiative; the Vice Rector for University Equal Opportunity and Diversity and affiliated Diversity Office will be tasked with developing inclusion concepts jointly with the academic departments (see also the previous section and part 2 of the application form); and finally the Deans and Erasmus Departmental Coordinators will be tasked with rolling out new Erasmus activities to their respective faculties. Additional personnel will be hired for both central and non-central positions to facilitate Programme rollout and operation.

KA 2 – Collaboration between organizations and higher education institutions

In Key Action 2 the primary concern is the **application for the European University NEUROTECH^{EU} filed by the University of Bonn in February 2020.** The application is coordinated by Radboud University Nijmegen (NL). Besides the University of Bonn, the other partner are the University of Oxford (GB), Karolinska Institutet (SE), Miguel Hernández University Elche (ESP), the University of Debrecen (HUN), Boğaziçi University (TUR) and Iuliu Hațieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj-Napoca (ROM). The envisioned European University is devoted to neuroscience viewed as a comprehensive transdisciplinary project rather than as a specialized field of medicine.

NEUROTECH^{EU} is conceived based on the idea that neuroscience has a critical role to play in solving contemporary societal problems that concern medicine, healthcare, educational sciences, pedagogy and philosophy. The European University for Brain & Technology (NEUROTECH^{EU}) is to be the backbone of this visionary reinvention of neuroscience. The shared aim of the eight aforementioned university partners and the one hundred associate partners across the private sector, the research community and civil society is to deliver a broad educational offering for undergraduate and graduate students as well as lifelong learning opportunities for all segments of society. NEUROTECH^{EU} students benefit from a program enriched by contributions from all parts of Europe that affords intercultural and multilingual experiences, thus enabling the European idea to be experienced on a personal level.

Involvement in NEUROTECH^{EU} represents a major element in the University of Bonn's strategic development planning, spanning the objectives of expanding mobility through inclusion, maintaining a transdisciplinary stance, digitalization, increasing cooperation with European partner universities, expanding transfer activities, and more. Several individuals from different University units are thus also key staff of NEUROTECH^{EU}, including researchers from the faculties of Medicine, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Arts, Law and Economics, the respective Vice Rectors for Teaching, Research and International Affairs, and staff members of the International Office, the Research and Innovation Services division and the Teaching and Academic Planning division. A coordination office for project implementation is to be opened as a joint effort of the International Office and the Faculty of Medicine, for which the Rectorate of the University of Bonn has committed to provide a high level of support.

The University's planning assumes approval of the application in the summer of 2020, with project start in the fall of 2020. If the project is not ultimately approved, the plan is to move forward together and file a

new application via a specifically formed consortium. These decisions depend however on the findings in the final report and the evaluation by the responsible committees, as well as future policies governing Erasmus+ calls. Involvement in NEUROTECH^{EU} is a major element in KA 2.

The University of Bonn also intends to utilize the funding options under Key Action 2 to a greater extent, partially in connection with the official partnership plans with the Global South (see preceding section). Based on existing best practices in **capacity building** in the fields of medicine and agricultural sciences, among others, joint capacity building projects are to be designed with partner countries and developed to application-readiness in the areas of (a) new learning and teaching methods, with a particular focus on implementing virtual exchange and innovative blended learning models, and (b) quality assurance in administration and operations. Plans include introducing new digital international courses in the field of sustainability research in an open learning format as a consortium member with other Programme and partner countries. The projects falling within Key Action 2 are principally located within the faculties, but the International Office will be involved in an advisory capacity in the design and application filing phases, later providing intensive supervision during implementation. The aim is to further incentivize our researchers to participate in the consortial projects within the Erasmus+ framework. The enaCom transfer center formed by the University of Bonn in 2019 is an important partner in these efforts, whose mission was defined to include cooperation with non-academic international players. Participating in Erasmus+ innovation partnerships will thus remain a priority throughout the next Programme generation.

KA 3 – Supporting political development and cooperation

The University of Bonn also intends to participate in Key Action 3, even though such plans are not yet concrete, in contrast to KA 2. Plans are under consideration to increase cooperation with the United Nations (both in and outside Bonn) and/or United Nations University to promote political dialogue with partner countries.

Impact of Erasmus on the University

As the largest exchange and cooperation program the University of Bonn participates in, Erasmus+ and its associated grant programs promote internationalization on all levels. The previous Programme generations serve as reference points and drivers for structuring, process development and innovation for internationalization and other areas, and future Programme generations will bring about further major changes to internal university processes.

Expanding mobility helps enrich our culture of international exchange and cooperation generally, while student and teaching staff mobility are the main levers for realizing the strategic goal of internationalizing study and teaching. Efforts to increase exchange mobility for Bonn students are supposed to not only stop the slight decline recently observable but take the numbers up to a new high level over the medium term, while significantly reducing the imbalance in numbers between outgoing and incoming exchange students. **Specifically, we are targeting an increase of 10% for outgoing and 20% for incoming student mobility, to be reached by the end of the new Programme generation.** At a traditionally organized university like the University of Bonn, where study-related internships are not part of the curriculum in many degree programs, Erasmus Programme funding makes international internships a more viable and interesting option – one which simultaneously enhances employability of graduates. Internships are often better integrated into the study process or are simply required for STEM and teaching degree programs, which leads to greater international mobility for those students.

In order to remain a sought-after exchange partner, sufficient offerings for incomings must be available which do not require substantial German competency so that studying here is still attractive (in addition to the **comprehensive support offered**, including German courses). Discussions have also advanced regarding classes taught in foreign languages as part of the 'Internationalization at Home' or IaH efforts at the University of Bonn, so that over the next few years students will be seeing an increased number of undergraduate classes taught in English to choose from. Students will thus benefit from early contact with international students, which promotes interest in studying abroad and in turn ultimately enhances international employability.

Teaching staff mobility promotes the acquisition of foreign language and teaching skills for international learning contexts, which is critical for high-quality internationalized teaching, and is of especial importance with regard to non-European countries. As part of the 'Internationalization at Home' efforts, teaching staff of partner universities are to be more closely involved in the regular course offering (including online) in the same manner as has been quite successfully implemented within KA 107 so that students without exchange mobility opportunities can benefit from Erasmus as well. Early-career researchers are to be informed regarding teaching mobility and staff mobility opportunities useful for career-building and expanding their network of international contacts. Thus within the **upcoming Programme generation teaching mobility is to quantitatively grow by 20%, with a focus on incomings**. The faculties are called upon to develop structural plans for the integration of incoming teaching staff. Progress is evaluated annually by surveying the faculties as to their results.

The opportunities afforded by **Erasmus staff mobility** are one reason why the acquisition of international experience by administrative staff at the University of Bonn has become a high priority in recent years (see above). As part of staff mobility efforts we are working to enhance the foreign language and intercultural skills of staff members, inform them regarding the internationalization processes underway at the University of Bonn and further solidify our relationships with partner universities. Enabling international exchange is highly important for technical and administrative staff, who traditionally have had less opportunity to do so in connection with their work roles. **Thus the staff mobility target is an increase of 20%**. Progress made on the measures implemented is continuously monitored in relation to goals under the Bonn Excellence Strategy by evaluating participant numbers and satisfaction surveys for reporting to the Rectorate.

Expanded cooperation in our partner countries is another avenue for target attainment, thus **in KA 107/173 our plans are to identify at least four new universities in the Global South** for long-term partnerships on student and teaching staff exchange and to utilize Erasmus+ KA107 funding to strengthen cooperation with universities in at least one of our five non-EU priority countries: AUS, UK, ISR, JP, USA. We further have the quantitative target of acquiring funding for **at least two additional Erasmus Mundus degree programs**, functioning as coordinator for at least one of these. The primary objective in KA 2 is **securing funding for the European University NEUROTECH^{EU}** (see above), which would allow the creation of university-wide structures to inclusively enable the inherently transdisciplinary approach involved, leveraging digital learning and virtual mobility as fundamental, baseline features of the related study offerings. To realize the cooperation envisioned will require major university policy decisions regarding internationalization, as bilateral relations with our seven consortium partners will take on greater importance university-wide. Neurosciences at the University of Bonn will become more international, as part of which study structures will be harmonized with those of our European partners to a significantly greater extent.

Digitalization efforts connected with the Erasmus Programme will have a profound long-term impact. The pandemic accelerated the process of digitalization at the University of Bonn, which now will be further advanced in the new Erasmus Programme generation. EWP and ESCI will require significant process and

structure changes around student mobility, which will affect how other mobility programs are managed. As outlined above, these changes will be made in alignment with the full digitalization of all administrative processes at the University of Bonn, including student administration, by 2025. The International Office has created the position of a digitalization coordinator as liaison between Erasmus+ and the University units, who is now developing a strategy for digital international cooperation focused on the deployment of digital media for student advising as well as counseling and international exchanges and partnerships. Efforts to expand Erasmus mobility through online classes and pre- and post-exchange support will be further accelerated.

The diversity debate has fueled interest in further internationalization at the University of Bonn, including ways to make **mobility more inclusive**, which will have impact on other exchange and scholarship programs (see point 2.1).

The **Erasmus quality assurance standards** governing procedures before, during and after the student mobility will be applied to other university exchange and scholarship programs in the interest of overall greater quality in the international mobility experience for University of Bonn students. In addition, all of the University's international exchange and scholarship programs will be administered under harmonized standards and processes via the Mobility Online database. This ensures maximum efficiency, a high level of uniformity and rapid evaluation of data relevant to the entire range of international mobility programs.

After reaching the halfway mark of the new Programme generation we will be looking at data to **evaluate the progress made on the above measures, their impact on mobility and satisfaction among the various faculties and departments**. The Vice Rector for International Affairs is discussing potentially needed improvements with the International Office, the faculties and the Vice Rector for Teaching and Learning to enable appropriate measures to be jointly devised.