

NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS



European Educational
Programmes Office



State Scholarships
Foundation



EULIST NTUA
TEAM



9, Iroon Polytechniou St., Zografou Campus 157 72, Athens, Greece

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES

BIP Regulation and organization procedures

SHORT-TERM MOBILITY

Short-term mobility is part of Key Action 131 of the European Educational Programme ERASMUS+. It follows, just as long-term mobility, the guidelines and general rules of ERASMUS+, related to transparency and equal opportunities. These have been defined by the European Commission and are part of the General Grant Agreement established between each European Higher Education Institution (HEI) and its National Agency. For Greece, the National Agency is IKY (State Scholarships Foundation).

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES

Blended Intensive Programmes (BIP) are short, intensive programmes that use innovative ways of learning and teaching, including the use of online cooperation. These programmes may include research-based learning and challenge-based approaches where transnational and transdisciplinary teams work together to tackle challenges, for example those linked to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals or other societal challenges identified by regions, cities or companies.

BIPs should have added value compared to existing courses or trainings offered by the participating HEIs. By enabling new and more flexible mobility formats that combine physical mobility with a virtual part, BIPs aim at reaching all types of students from all backgrounds, study fields and cycles.

Groups of HEIs will have the opportunity to organize short BIPs. During these programmes, groups of students and/or staff as learners will undertake a short-term physical mobility abroad combined with a compulsory virtual component facilitating collaborative online learning exchange and teamwork. In addition, BIPs can be open to student and staff from any HEI, including local students and local staff. They take place in the HEI which is the organizing institution and coordinator of the BIP.

Blended intensive programmes build capacity for developing and implementing innovative teaching and learning practices in the participating HEIs.

As stated in the "ERASMUS+ Programme 2021-2027 Higher Education Mobility Handbook":

"Blended intensive programmes aim to open up more opportunities for learners to take part in blended mobilities. They will foster the development of transnational and transdisciplinary curricula, as well as innovative ways of learning and teaching, including online collaboration, research-based learning and challenge-based approaches in order to tackle societal challenges.

BIPs can be part of the HEIs' curricula or complementary to them. They can be an entirely new programme or they can be an enhancement of an existing programme with additional features such as the delivery mode in a blended format.

In addition, BIPs can be a good opportunity to reach out to new groups of students, for example those in study fields where mobility opportunities have been limited or those who lack confidence to go abroad alone, potentially paving the way for their participation in long-term individual mobility later in their studies."

PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES

A BIP can be organized by one or more Schools/Departments of a HEI, within a cooperation of at least 3 HEIs, awarded with an ERASMUS+ Charter for Higher Education (ECHE), coming from at least 3 Programme Countries.

BIPs take place in the HEI which is the organizing HEI and coordinator of the BIP.

BIPs can originate from various European programs in the wider context of ERASMUS+ such as the "European Universities" program.

ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITY

The organization of a BIP is the responsibility of the academic staff of the coordinating HEI, whereas the supervision of the financial support is the responsibility of the ERASMUS+ Office of the coordinating and participating HEIs.

The structure of the BIP, the distribution of the workload and the ECTS correspondence are within the academic field and responsibility, which are not covered by the ERASMUS+ Programme Guide.

ONLINE / PHYSICAL MOBILITY

Short-term physical mobility, to be eligible, must be combined with a proven virtual mobility before and/or after the physical component. For example, the virtual component can bring the learners together online to work collectively and simultaneously on specific assignments that are integrated in the BIP and count towards the overall learning outcomes.

The physical activity can take place at the BIP coordinating HEI or at any other venue in the country of the coordinating HEI.

DURATION

According to the ERASMUS+ Programme guide, to be eligible, the organization of a BIP must include the physical presence of students from min 5 to max 30 days and mandatory virtual presence before and/or after the physical. No eligibility criteria are set for the duration of the virtual component.

Academic staff participating in a BIP are required to teach at least 8 hours during the physical mobility component of the program to have their mobility funded by ERASMUS+.

ECTS

Basic obligation of a BIP is that the combined virtual and physical component must award a minimum of three (3) ECTS for the participating students. There must also be a written commitment to assign the agreed ECTS to all participating students, funded and local non-funded. This commitment is recorded in the Learning Agreement.

PARTICIPANTS

An approved BIP must include min 15 to max 20 participating students who carry out educational mobility in the respective receiving country, in the specific BIP coordinating HEI. Participating professors from partner HEIs and participating students and teaching staff from the local BIP coordinating HEI do not count towards the minimum required number of 15 participants.

Each participating student must have a Learning Agreement approved and signed by the Academic Coordinator.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

- Students enrolled in a HEI of the EU Member States,
- Staff of a HEI of the EU Member States,
- Teaching Staff involved in delivering the programme.

MOBILITY RULES

In order for the organization of a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) and the mobility of its participants to be funded, the ERASMUS+ mobility rules must be respected in accordance with the Programme Guide and the General Grant Agreement.

BIP procedures at the coordinating HEI

APPROVAL OF BIP ORGANISATION

The approval of the upcoming BIP is needed by the responsible supreme body of the respective School/Department of the BIP coordinating HEI. The approval decision should include:

- the dates of the mandatory virtual presence and the number of days and dates of physical presence,
- the full name of the participating HEIs, which must be at least three, from three different countries,
- the commitment to grant at least 3 ECTS to all participating students,
- the total number of participating students.

INTER-UNIVERSITY AGREEMENT

The Inter-University Agreement of the BIP coordinating HEI with the HEIs participating in the BIP should be concluded if no relevant agreement exists.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS – ANNOUNCEMENT

The School/Department which is the organizer and coordinator of the BIP must promptly communicate the relevant Call for Applications, including an Announcement of the organisation of the upcoming BIP, to all the students of the coordinating HEI, as well as to all participating universities, so that they can inform their students to submit the relevant application for participation.

The Call for Applications must include:

- participating HEIs,
- topics addressed - content - learning outcomes,
- ECTS upon successful completion,
- structure - dates of the online and physical components – timeline,
- participation profile,
- entry requirements – evaluation criteria,
- support and student services.

The Call for Applications must be timely:

- posted on the HEI's central website,
- disseminated to all BIP organising HEI Schools/Departments,
- sent to the cooperating HEIs for the information of their interested students,
- sent to the ERASMUS+ Office to be posted on the central website of ERASMUS+ of the coordinating HEI.

APPLICATIONS SUBMISSION

The submission of applications by all candidate students should include all the documents mentioned in the long-term mobility process, including the Learning Agreement, and in particular:

- Certificate of studies,
- Language proficiency accreditation,
- Curriculum vitae,
- Letter of intent,
- Learning Agreement.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND SELECTION

All candidate students are assessed and selected by their home universities based on documented criteria. The participating HEIs then subsidize their students for their participation in the short-term mobility. The BIP coordinating HEI should not be involved in the selection of the participating students from the partner HEIs, since it does not subsidize their mobilities. Any involvement of the BIP coordinating HEI in the evaluation and selection of participating students from the partner HEIs in the BIP it organizes, must be pre-agreed by all participating HEIs and recorded in the inter-institutional agreement. In this case, the evaluation and selection of students is proceeded by the ERASMUS+ committee of the coordinating School/Department and communicated to the ERASMUS+ Office of the BIP coordinating HEI.

TIMELINE

In order to be able to subsidize the organization of a BIP, the organization must be notified to the ERASMUS+ Office and the relevant documents must be submitted two months (2) before its implementation.

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

Once the BIP is implemented a certificate of attendance is provided to all participating students upon completion of the program, including:

- the full name of the participant and the sending HEI,
- the dates of the mandatory virtual presence and the number of days and dates of physical presence,
- the full names of the coordinating and participating HEIs,
- the ECTS granted,
- the grade received.

The certificate is issued by the ERASMUS+ Office in cooperation with the secretariat of the BIP coordinating School/Department, signed by the BIP coordinator and the ERASMUS+ academic coordinator.

BIP procedures at the participating HEIs

MANAGEMENT

Each HEI participating as a partner in a BIP follows the guidelines of the Management Guide of the European Commission and the General Grant Agreement concluded with its National Unit.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Call for Applications by students in the specific BIP must include documented evaluation criteria. The Call must be sent to the ERASMUS+ Offices of the cooperating HEIs to be posted on their ERASMUS+, central and departments' websites.

APPLICATIONS SUBMISSION

The submission of applications by all candidate students should include all the documents mentioned in the long-term mobility process, including the Learning Agreement.

STUDENT EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Each participating HEI evaluates, selects and finances by its own documented criteria, the short-term mobilities of its participating students in each BIP.

The evaluation and selection of students is proceeded by the ERASMUS+ committee of each participating HEI and more specifically of the respective School/Department.

Any involvement of the BIP coordinating HEI in the evaluation and selection of participating students from the participating HEIs in the BIP it organizes, must be pre-agreed by all participating HEIs and recorded in the inter-institutional agreement.

The selection must be communicated to the ERASMUS+ Offices of the BIP coordinating HEI, and the ERASMUS+ office of each participating HEI, so that the necessary actions can be taken to finance the selected students.

MOBILITY FUNDING PROCESS

The official approval by the selection committee with the names of the selected participants must be sent to the ERASMUS+ Offices of the participating HEIs, at least one month before the start of the mobility, so that the necessary actions can be taken to finance the selected students.

The mobility funding process only concerns the selected outgoing students and is similar to the classic ERASMUS+ long-term mobility. For this purpose, the selected students must visit the ERASMUS+ Office to complete the contract and the relevant documents of their funding.

BIP funding NTUA

GENERAL

The BIP coordinating HEI, after a request submitted to the European Commission, is funded for the organization of the BIPs by ERASMUS+ KA131 organizational support funds, but the participating HEIs must use their own ERASMUS+ KA131 funds to subsidize the mobility of their participants.

MOBILITY GRANT

The grant of staff mobilities for their participation in a BIP is generated in accordance with the ERASMUS+ mobility rules for training and teaching.

Short-term mobilities of incoming students to a BIP coordinated by another HEI are funded by their universities. The students in question must also timely submit all the documents required by the receiving HEI's regulations for incoming ERASMUS+ students to the BIP coordinating HEI.

No form of personal compensation is eligible for participating students and staff from the BIP coordinating HEI. However, they are included in the benefits of the BIP organization budget (e.g. meals-coffee, etc.).

ORGANIZATION GRANT

According to the ERASMUS+ General Grant Agreement and the ERASMUS+ Programme guide, the total amount of the grant for the organization of an approved BIP is obtained by multiplying the number of participating students by 400€. However, all participating students and staff of the BIP coordinating HEI, as well as the invited staff from the participating HEIs, are excluded from the calculation.

Eligible expenditure for the BIP is anything related to its organization, e.g. meals, consumables, gifts to the participants, supervisory material for the presentation, rental of lecture space, etc. However, the available amount, which corresponds to the financing of the respective BIP, must always be taken into account.

In case the BIP is implemented outside the headquarters of the coordinating HEI, the travel and accommodation expenses of its students and staff can be covered from the funding budget of the organization corresponding to the respective BIP. A basic condition is that there is an available cash balance, in the BIP financing budget, according to the priorities budget that has been drawn up. In this case, the travel expenses will be disbursed according to the financial rules of the Research Committee of the BIP coordinating HEI.

It is proposed to make a prioritized budget, for the successful management of the amount corresponding to the financing of the BIP.

PRE-APPROVAL PROCEDURE

In order for the costs related to the organization of the BIP to be eligible, a pre-approval request to the Research Committee of the BIP coordinating HEI is required, which is submitted by the ERASMUS+ Office, when the coordinator of the BIP submits to the above office the documents required for each expenditure.

No commission is implemented before the approval of the pre-commitment request by Research Committee, otherwise it is not financed.

In order to be able to pre-approve any expenditure related to the organization of a BIP, all pre-approval requests must be accompanied by:

- the approval decision of the respective School/Department responsible for the organization of the BIP,
- selection document(s) including list with the full names of all participating students,
- BIP Curriculum/Program including the full names of the participating staff.

Travel pre-approval is needed if the BIP will be implemented outside the headquarters of NTUA, and provided it is foreseen in the BIP organisation budget to cover the travel expenses of the participating students and professors at the coordinating School/Department.

PRE-APPROVAL DOCUMENTS

Basic documents for all pre-approvals

- Approval document from the respective BIP coordinating School/Department for the organization of the BIP, which should include:
 - the dates of the BIP,
 - the full name of the participating HEIs, which must be at least three, from three different countries.
 - the total number and full names of participating students and staff from participating HEIs,
 - the total number and full names of participating students and staff from NTUA,
 - the commitment to grant at least three (3) ECTS to all participating students.
- Finalized BIP Calendar Program - Agenda

Procurement pre-approval documents

- E-mail of the coordinator of the BIP organization to the respective supplier to send his offer in detail.
- Reply email from the supplier with an exact prorated quote.
- Supplier tax information:
 - Official Business Title,
 - Address, City, Post code,
 - Business activity (officially declared scope of activity of the supplier),
 - Tel., e-mail
 - IBAN
 - url (website if available)
 - VAT NUMBER, Tax Office.

BIP travel pre-approval

It refers to the case where the BIP will be implemented outside the headquarters of NTUA, and provided it is foreseen in the BIP organization budget to cover the travel expenses of the participating students and professors at the organizing School/Department.

Travel pre- approval documents

In order to request travel pre-approval, BIP participants must submit to the ERASMUS+ Office, prior to their trip, a completed excel form for ERASMUS+ trips and the relevant approval of their participation from the competent body of their School/Department.

COST APPROVALS

All supplies and travel planning are implemented only when approved by the Research Committee of NTUA. Travel expense authorizations are sent to beneficiaries for their travel planning. The supply cost approvals are sent to the person in charge of the organization of the BIP, who must forward them to the suppliers in order to proceed with the implementation of each supply order.

BIP ORGANIZATION GRANT DISBURSEMENT PROCESS

To disburse any amount related to the organization of the BIP, all the documents certifying its implementation must be submitted to the ERASMUS+ Office.

Basic document for all disbursements

- In order to disburse any amount related to the organization of the BIP, all the documents certifying its implementation must be submitted to the ERASMUS+ Office:
 - certificate of BIP implementation,
 - final BIP Curriculum / Program / Agenda,
 - list of final attending BIP student participants

Documents for commission disbursements

In order to disburse the amounts corresponding to the supplies carried out, all relevant receipts - sales invoices, service invoices, etc., - must be presented to the above office, in original form, where the exact amount of the corresponding pre-authorization will be indicated. Only invoices issued by an online electronic system, to be saved in a file on the PC before being printed, are accepted in digital form. These invoices are considered as originals and are to be sent via email to the ERASMUS+ Office. Invoices from cash registers must be presented exclusively in original form.

In case the BIP is implemented outside the headquarters of the coordinating Institution, and it is foreseen in the priorities budget of the BIP organization to cover the travel costs of the participating students and staff of the organizing School/Department, then each of the participants must submit to the above office the following documents.

Basic documents

- Certificate of participation in the BIP (e.g. general attendance sheet),
- Permission to participate in the BIP (for staff),
- Research Committee mobility order with original signature of the participant (this form is provided by the ERASMUS+ Office).

Hotel documents

- Receipt of hotel payment,
- Booking voucher.

Documents for Tickets

- Boarding pass,
- Electronic ticket reservation/ Ticket (except boarding pass),
- Proof of sale from the airline (ask for it from the airline),
- Ticket payment receipt (bank payment receipt or travel agency payment receipt),
- IBAN of the be

After the disbursement of the travel expenses, in order for the Research Committee to implement the deposits of the corresponding amounts in the bank accounts of the beneficiaries, the participants must send the IBAN of their bank account. For the Research Committee, the IBAN printed from e-banking showing the Bank and the personal details of the beneficiaries is accepted. The Research Committee must ensure that the money is deposited into the beneficiaries' account.

DOCTORAL CANDIDATES

The short-term mobility of Doctoral Candidates can be implemented for studies or internships without the existence of a Blended Intensive Programme and without the mandatory addition of a virtual component, as well as without the obligation to award 3 ECTS. It can be implemented as a short-term simple mobility of 5-30 days in one of the cooperating Universities. The procedure of granting the short-term mobility of Doctoral Candidates follows the rules of long-term ERASMUS+ mobility.