



Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility

# ICM HANDOUT | 2018-1

**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



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Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research

## From colleagues for colleagues HOW TO MAKE ERASMUS+ ICM (KA107) WORK

### DEAR COLLEAGUES,

At the initiative and invitation of the German Academic Exchange Service, representatives of universities from partner countries (Morocco, Georgia Belarus, and Israel), Germany, National Erasmus+ Offices (Ukraine and Egypt), the European Commission (DG EAC) and the NA DAAD met in Berlin at the beginning of August 2017.

The third round of projects in Key Action 107 (KA 107) has just been approved and the number of participating universities is constantly increasing. At the same time, questions, inquiries, and conflicts are also arising.

We (the participants in the two-day meeting) feel that this is the right moment to start peer counselling at university and management level.

### THE SET LIST OF QUESTIONS AT OUR MEETING WERE

What has to be considered – mainly from the perspective of partner country universities – for a successful project management in KA 107?

- What do newcomers from partner countries need to know if they wish to participate in the programme?
- How can a project be organised and what are the sensitive points throughout the project's life cycle?

Within the given EU guidelines, we aim to offer a variety of possible, practice-oriented approaches for project implementation rather than a single rigid pathway.

This paper is the result of our meeting. The authors understand it as work in progress. As part of the process, we rely on the contribution of all stakeholders in the form of questions, suggestions and additional information. Since our exchange of experiences mainly reflects the perspective of partner countries working with German Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), we would particularly welcome feedback from other countries.

This paper is meant to be a first step towards a peer-to-peer exchange of experiences and best practices on university level.

We hope that this paper may play a part in establishing KA 107 as a fully-integrated and indispensable feature of future European education programmes.

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## EXPLANATION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THIS PAPER

### ... work packages according to the project management cycle

The structure of the document follows the timeline of the project – starting with the choice of partner institutions and ending with the final report. The focus rests on practical advice and usage. This is why it is of particular importance to read the general programme information. The authors have taken on the various positions of all parties involved (HEI from a partner country, a programme country, students and staff) and switch back and forth between them.

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## BEFORE THE PROJECT

### FIND PARTNERS, PREPARE FOR PARTICIPATION

#### 1. INFO SESSIONS

- ▶ Look for information  
(internet, institutions, social media, National Erasmus+ Offices, EU delegations, NA, EACEA)
- ▶ Online partnership search tools
- ▶ Best practices, experienced institutions/colleagues
- ▶ Workshops on Erasmus+ ICM for university staff from central and decentral units (faculties, Research Centres, administration etc.) to explain the structure and incentives of the program and the roles and responsibilities of individual colleagues.
- ▶ Research and higher education networking events

#### Weblinks

##### Erasmus+ general website

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities-for-organisations/learning-mobility/higher-education\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities-for-organisations/learning-mobility/higher-education_en)

##### Erasmus+ on facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/EUErasmusPlusProgramme/?fref=ts>

##### all national agencies

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact\\_en#tab-1-0](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact_en#tab-1-0)

**National Erasmus+ Offices**

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/national-erasmus-plus-offices\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/contacts/national-erasmus-plus-offices_en)

**Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency**

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/study-and-volunteering-in-another-country\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/study-and-volunteering-in-another-country_en)

**Erasmus+ partnership tool**

<http://eupartnersearch.com/Default.aspx>

**Commission brochures** (How to work with European institutions; ICM handbook; Do's and Don'ts) and online tutorials (EACEA, etc);  
**Webinar EACEA**

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/introduction-international-dimension-erasmus-plus\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/introduction-international-dimension-erasmus-plus_en)

**Brochure**

"Work Together with European Higher Education Institutions – Come to Study or Teach in Europe" (EN – FR – ES – PT – AR – ZH – RU)

<http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/the-erasmus-programme-pbEC0414970/>

**All guidelines and supporting documents**

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/guide/documents-applicants\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/guide/documents-applicants_en.htm)

## 2. CONTACTS ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING COOPERATIONS

- ▶ Contact details of staff members (during conferences, for example)
- ▶ Bilateral agreements
- ▶ Other EU-funded programmes (TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus, Alfa, Edulink, Horizon 2020 etc.) and non-EU programmes
- ▶ Alumni networks
- ▶ Visiting professors
- ▶ Contact details of students (for example, members of ESN)

### 3. NEW CONTACTS (THROUGH FACULTIES AND/OR INTERNATIONAL OFFICES, REGIONAL NETWORKING EVENTS)

- ▶ Be precise when you present yourself: What are you looking for? What are your priorities?
- ▶ Be original: Share dynamic content (e.g. if you have a video of your institution)
- ▶ Be aware that many institutions would prefer to get to know you first and establish common goals. Only in a second stage will there be a joint application for funding.

### 4. COMMUNICATE KNOWLEDGE OF ERASMUS+ ICM

- ▶ Concept of Credit Mobility
- ▶ Range of projects
- ▶ Roles and responsibilities of partners in a project

Discuss roles, details, strategy (recommended: in person, via Skype)



#### **Different institutions will work differently ...**

First contacts with other HEIs can be made via faculties and/or international relations offices.

Faculty and IROs will have to communicate to ensure the cooperation is relevant and consistent for the whole institution.



#### **Tip**

Establish an "international circle" including the IRO and a representative of each faculty.



#### **Decide: YES OR NO**

If YES: Start negotiations for the Inter-Institutional Agreement (IIA)

## Principles of credit mobility

Credit Mobility: a temporary academic stay abroad, for studies or traineeship, at a host institution without pursuing a degree (in contrast to degree mobility).

During the stay, a certain amount of credits has to be achieved. The EU recommends 20 to 30 ECTS per term/semester. (One ECTS translates into 30 hours of workload incl. preparation, exams, studying at home).

The credits gained at the host institution are to be recognised by the home institution and will count towards the degree the students are pursuing at their home institution.

### Within the Erasmus+ context, additional principles:

- ▶ No tuition fees
- ▶ ECTS tools are to be applied, e.g. learning agreement

**Credit Mobility for university staff offers short-term mobilities for teaching or training and should follow the same quality standards.**



**Recognition for staff can be implemented**, for example, by issuing certificates to participants confirming the professional qualifications acquired during the mobility.

### This is taken from the Inter-Institutional Agreement form:

The higher education institution(s) located in a programme country of Erasmus+ must respect the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education of which it must be a holder.

The charter can be found here:

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/erasmus-charter\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/erasmus-charter_en)

### "It's an approved best practice:

Negotiate the Inter-Institutional Agreement BEFORE the proposal – this helps for the proposal and you are clear on the conditions. Newcomers should take their time to get familiar with content and principles of the IIA and not just sign it."



## 4. INTER-INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT

### I) Discuss details:

- ▶ Level of education/type of mobility
- ▶ Language of instruction and requirements
- ▶ Subject areas
- ▶ Numbers and duration
- ▶ Selection criteria
- ▶ Recognition (procedures; transcript etc.)
- ▶ Academic calendars, possibly mobility windows
- ▶ Deadlines (nomination and selection)
- ▶ Financial information
- ▶ Services, insurances, accommodation, etc.

= Minimum requirements



You may prefer to detail some technical aspects in a separate document instead of the Inter-Institutional Agreement, which must be signed by the legal representative of your HEI and may be more difficult to update and modify. Here, you may use an additional fact sheet.

### II) Additional fact sheet

- ▶ Level of education/type of staff mobility
- ▶ Information
- ▶ Roles

## READY FOR THE APPLICATION

### PROPOSAL

5. Complete the four quality questions and read supporting documents (Guide for Experts, Do's and Don'ts for Applicants, Handbook on International Credit Mobility)

When answering the four questions, be precise and detailed and include certain phrases from the supporting documents and internationalisation documents of both universities about the selection/strategy.

#### Do's and Dont's for Applicants:

[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/library/credit-mobility-dos-donts\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/library/credit-mobility-dos-donts_en)

#### Guidelines for Experts on Quality Assessment of Erasmus+ KA107 Applications

(scroll down the following page, under Other Supporting Documents):

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents-for-applicants/model-application-forms\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents-for-applicants/model-application-forms_en)

#### Some more useful tips

- ▶ The information shared when discussing the IIA will be used to prepare the application.
- ▶ It is extremely important to include both the perspective of the programme and partner Country HEIs to complete the four quality questions.
- ▶ Make sure you read supporting documents (Programme Guide, Handbook, Do's and Dont's) and recorded webinars (EACEA, UK NA, etc.).
- ▶ Be precise in your answers and incorporate information from your institutional documents (e.g. strategy, selection, catalogue, etc.).
- ▶ We recommend paying special attention to recognition in Question 3.

- ▶ Be imaginative with Question 4. (What do you expect to achieve? How will you measure and share your achievements?)  
Also consider small-scale activities!
  - ▶ Background to the application (more partner countries? several HEIs in a partner country?)
6. Submission (programme country university)

**... CONGRATULATIONS! OUR PROPOSAL HAS BEEN APPROVED!**

7. Communicate results YES OR NO
8. Share feedback from experts (for future application), budget cuts and available budget
9. Inform colleagues about the successful application (e.g. finance, dean, head of department)

## PLANNING THE PROJECT

### WE ARE GRANTED (GRANT HOLDER)

- ▶ Budget
- ▶ Explain if there have been cuts to the proposed budget and specify the scale of the available budget.
- ▶ Number of mobilities and their categories / Flows
- ▶ Share relevant feedback from experts.  
Be aware that if the application from the programme country included cooperation with several countries, there may be only very general and limited feedback on your part of the project.

### COMMUNICATION TO LOCAL COORDINATORS

(IN PROGRAMME COUNTRIES IN VARIOUS FACULTIES, E.G. DEAN, FINANCE, HEAD OF DEPARTMENTS)

#### Evaluation information / partnership / country

- ▶ Number of mobilities
- ▶ Proposal (confidential?)
- ▶ Dissemination of information: website, flyers, etc.

## FUNDING

Grantees receive financial support to help them finance their stay abroad.

The grant is a contribution to cover the extra costs resulting from mobility (travel, accommodation, higher living expenses) and does not necessarily cover all costs.

Participants should ensure they have sufficient means before starting the mobility.

## COMMUNICATION WITH PARTNER COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES I (PROJECT STRUCTURE)

### Information package on project (e.g. SKYPE Meeting)

- ▶ Number of mobilities
- ▶ Preparation or revision /validation of the IIA and official documents (PIC, etc.)
- ▶ IIA: keep it simple and precise and take a more in-depth look at the content of the IIA, making all necessary updates and adaptations
- ▶ Specific information on procedures from beneficiary
- ▶ Roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Organisational Support (OS)
- ▶ Shortlist with contact persons and communication channels
- ▶ Nomination procedures at both partner institutions
- ▶ Deadlines in both institutions

## ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT (OS)

The OS will never cover all your required additional structural (and most probably at least in-kind financial) commitments. The OS is merely a contribution towards your general project management expenses and not a "management fee".

Therefore, the decision to take part in KA 107 also has financial implications for your university.

Make sure that you discuss how the OS will be used or shared, for example, partners can agree what they want to offer/how they want to support their students and staff (strategic approach) and how they use the OS jointly for their common objectives.



Check the provisions for OS in the Programme Guide and discuss how it will be used and whether it will be shared (e.g. visa may be more relevant than language courses for mobilities with certain partners).

In order to avoid subsequent misunderstandings, it is essential that an agreement is reached on the use of the OS before the IIA is signed.

## COMMUNICATION WITH PARTNER COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES II (PROJECT MANAGEMENT)

### Information package on mobility management

- ▶ Evaluation guidelines, eligibility criteria, selection criteria, rules and procedures
- ▶ Procedures for recognition, etc.
- ▶ Roles and responsibilities of the partners
- ▶ Academic calendar and study areas
- ▶ Visa
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Travel arrangements

### Be specific:

- ▶ Agree on selection criteria and procedure (nomination / acceptance)
- ▶ Deadlines:  
Projects last 16 or 26 months: plan mobility dates, allowing time to launch a call, nominate participants and undertake acceptance
- ▶ What is meant by open call: selection committee, transparent procedures

## BEFORE THE MOBILITY

### SELECTION OF STUDENTS

Agree on evaluation guidelines and procedure

#### Programme Guide

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en)

#### For future reference

"Home" institution is the sending institution and "Host" is the receiving institution

- ▶ Call publication, e.g. website, flyers, brochures, letters, info sessions, social media, Erasmus+ App, etc.
- ▶ Definition of eligibility criteria – Who? What? How?
- ▶ Selection and nomination by home institution – Who? What? How?
- ▶ Acceptance by host institution – Who? What? How?

#### Erasmus+ Student Charter

Once students are selected, they should receive from their sending institution the Erasmus+ Student Charter, setting out the student's rights and obligations with respect to her/his period of study or traineeship abroad, and explaining the different steps to be undertaken before, during and after mobility.



## SELECTION OF STAFF

Agree on evaluation guidelines and procedure

### Programme Guide

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en)

### For future reference

"Home" institution is the sending institution and "Host" is the receiving institution

- ▶ Call publication, e.g. website, flyers, brochures, letters, info sessions, Erasmus+ App, etc.  
Ensure openness, fairness and transparency
- ▶ Matchmaking – Who? How? Ensure openness, fairness and transparency
- ▶ Selection and nomination by home institution – Who? What? How?
- ▶ Acceptance by host institution – Who? What? How?

## TRANSPARENT AND FAIR: OPEN CALLS

The selection and grant award procedure for students and staff must be fair, transparent, coherent and documented. It must be made available to all parties involved in the selection process.

Generally, there will be open or restricted calls depending on the objectives and priorities of the project.

In some cases, it may be acceptable to appoint a staff member directly if his or her participation was a specific part of the project proposal.

In all cases, make sure that all criteria are known.

## DEADLINES

During project implementation, you will face many deadlines: for calls, for nomination, for students' applications at the host university, for reporting.

Since every university has its own procedures and time frameworks, outline the most important deadlines in the IIA and your university's fact sheet.

Inform your partners about your deadlines and – if necessary – ask your partner universities to provide you with an overview of their respective deadlines.

## ACCEPTANCE (STUDENTS AND STAFF)

### STUDENTS

- ▶ Nomination / (if agreed) Acceptance letter from the host (feedback letters)



Other adaptations of procedures are possible.

For example, in some cases, the beneficiary (programme country HEI) will request to see the selection results of the partner country university and will submit nomination letters to the future grantees

- ▶ Confirmation
  - ▶ Academic level
  - ▶ Language level
- ▶ Learning agreement
- ▶ Grant agreement and information about grant payment
- ▶ Information package on payments, visa, insurance, and mobility arrangements.
- ▶ Invitation letter (for visa)
- ▶ Additional support letter (if applicable) from the home university probably NEO, EU DEL) and guidance on legal requirements (e.g. taxation, National Service)

Make sure to communicate the details that will be included in the grant agreement (especially payment modalities and amounts).

## STAFF

- ▶ Nomination / (if agreed) Acceptance letter from the host (feedback letters)



Other adaptations of procedures are possible.

For example, in some cases, the beneficiary (programme country HEI) will request to see selection results in the Partner Country university and will submit nomination letters to the future grantees

- ▶ Grant agreement
- ▶ Mobility agreement
- ▶ Information package
  - ▶ Payments
  - ▶ Insurance
  - ▶ Visa
  - ▶ Mobility arrangements (travel, accommodation, what and when to expect)
- ▶ Invitation letter (for visa)
- ▶ Additional support letter (if applicable) from the home university (probably NEO, EU DEL) and guidance on legal requirements (e.g. taxation, National Service)

## VISA AND FURTHER COUNTRY-SPECIFIC LEGAL REGULATIONS

Visa application procedures differ enormously, and this makes our working life even more complex. Not only countries have different regulations but embassies also apply rules in a specific way.

Some embassies require invitation letters indicating the grantee's address in the host country. Others need an additional support letter from the National Erasmus+ Offices or the home university.

Therefore, **we strongly recommend informing your partner about the required documents, the content (examples) of these documents, and the duration and costs of the visa procedure.** Decide with your partner who is responsible for

- ▶ providing what kind of information
- ▶ preparing and sending documents.

Keep the information updated!

Alongside visa regulations, some countries have other legal requirements: e.g. taxation, military service, regulations for professional qualifications.

## FINANCES AND COSTS

Partners have to decide well before the first mobilities about the procedures and timeline of the payments for individual participants: amounts and deadline for individual payments, criteria for payments, e.g. submission of relevant documents.

Grantees should be informed prior to their mobilities of the expected costs, especially in the first phase of mobility (visa, travel expenses, rent and deposits, additional household articles, etc).

Expenses they are required to cover before their first grant instalments are paid should be realistically calculated.

**Note:** It is possible for the programme country institution to make advance payments before mobilities, e.g. by paying for travel expenses or the first monthly rent directly.

This can help participants in the preparatory phase, but it can mean substantial additional work for the programme country HEI.

The procedure should be defined and communicated in time to the partners and grantees.

Procedures should be equal and transparent within one project.

## PRE-DEPARTURE MEETINGS

- ▶ Orientation session
  - ▶ What is Erasmus+? Where do you fit in? What are the modalities? (different for staff and students)
  - ▶ Practical information about the host AND home university and IRO
  - ▶ What to expect upon arrival
- ▶ Language preparation
- ▶ Intercultural training
- ▶ ECTS information
- ▶ Often: pre-departure orientation day (PDO) at home institution or EUDEL.

## DURING THE MOBILITY

### TRAINEESHIPS: STUDENT MOBILITY

"SMP will be part of Erasmus+ ICM from the Call 2018 onwards.

So, an additional component is included, offering your students new opportunities.

Please remember to include this component in your project management."

### UPON ARRIVAL (STUDENTS AND STAFF)

#### STUDENTS

- ▶ Accommodation:  
e.g. organise "moving-in" days, deposit payment, further financial implications (monthly rent)
- ▶ Confirmation of arrival (if applicable)
- ▶ Residence permit or equivalent
- ▶ Legal information:  
e.g. work permit, taxation (home university?), military service (home university?)
- ▶ Enrolment
- ▶ Insurance: proof of insurance/valid in the host country (if applicable)
- ▶ Orientation:  
e.g. welcome event, campus tour, cultural event, information about the study system,  
information on course selection, electronic student portal
- ▶ Course selection

- ▶ Language course and intercultural training
- ▶ Bank account  
(only participants from partner countries in programme countries)
- ▶ Buddy programme/ESN, etc.
- ▶ Grant payment (1st instalment)  
(Only universities from programme countries)
- ▶ Additional information on grant payments  
(e.g. next instalment, explain how to use a bank account).

Different payment methods can be applied.

It is important to explain them and the composition of the grant  
(e.g. if a certain amount is deducted for accommodation)



**Please note:** It is advisable to provide general information about grant payment before the mobility



## UPON ARRIVAL

### STAFF

- ▶ Formalities:  
e.g. grant payment (programme country universities)
- ▶ Accommodation (if applicable)
- ▶ Involvement of the cooperating academic host (if applicable)

## ONE TO TWO WEEKS AFTER ARRIVAL

### STUDENTS

- ▶ Changes of LA
- ▶ Student support and counselling services (to be continued during the semester)

## DURING THE SEMESTER

### STUDENTS

- ▶ Feedback from different members of the university
- ▶ Feedback from students
- ▶ University (home and host) deadline for extension of the stay and, if relevant, procedures for extending the stay

## PRE-DEPARTURE FROM HOST TO HOME COUNTRY (STUDENTS AND STAFF)

- ▶ Confirmation of stay
- ▶ Certificate of attendance/ completion (if applicable)

### STUDENTS

- ▶ General departure information:  
e.g. cancellation of accommodation, bank account, exmatriculation, residence permit etc.
- ▶ EU survey (1)/participant report
- ▶ After completing the EU survey: payment of final instalment

### STAFF

- ▶ Information and support with EU survey

## AFTER THE MOBILITY

- ▶ Additional reporting from participants (mainly to the home university)
- ▶ Home university sends proof of recognition to host university (if required).

### STUDENTS

- ▶ EU survey (2) on recognition

### STAFF

- ▶ EU survey

## RECOGNITION

Recognition and ECTS transfer is a complex field.

Mutual recognition of learning outcomes is an essential part of the ERASMUS+ programme.

Usually, the International Offices ensure that the responsible units/persons responsible for academic recognition are aware of their obligations.

The principles of recognition are explained in several documents, e.g. the ECTS Users' Guide

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/users-guide/index_en.htm)

## DISSEMINATION

### How to disseminate the results of projects and mobilities:

- ▶ Reports from participants including assessment of their period of mobility and suggestions of possible improvements;
- ▶ University websites (sections "News", "Erasmus+ blog" and others);
- ▶ Meetings with colleagues (for staff) and students at home university;
- ▶ Participation in seminars, fairs, congresses;
- ▶ Social networks ...

Dissemination and exploitation of results are crucial areas of the Erasmus+ project lifecycle.

They give participating organisations the opportunity to communicate and share outcomes and deliverables, thus extending the impact of their projects, improving their sustainability and justifying the European added value of Erasmus+.

### Link to the guide

[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/annexes/annex-ii\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/annexes/annex-ii_en)

## THINGS TO BE DONE DURING THE ENTIRE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

- ▶ During the last 10 months of the project: agreeing on remaining grants
- ▶ Internal monitoring on university level
- ▶ External monitoring
- ▶ Update the MT+ every month (programme country university)
- ▶ Dissemination, communication, promotion (e.g. involving alumni/alumnae)

## MOBILITY TOOL+

The Mobility Tool+ (MT+) is both a monitoring and a project management tool.

Full access is given to the project coordinator who can then give access to other persons.

All partner country institutions are connected with the corresponding project in MT+.

The MT+ contains all relevant information on the mobility flows and budget.

15 days before the end of a mobility period,  
the MT+ sends an automatically generated link to the participant so that he/she can complete the EU survey.

The survey is filled in, submitted electronically and can then be viewed by the project coordinator.

Both the interim report and the final report are processed via the MT+.

Statistics on mobility flows and the participants' reports can also be viewed in the MT+.

Project coordinators should update the information in the MT+ every month.

Project coordinators (= beneficiaries) can grant access to partners.

It is planned that view access can be granted according to institution  
so that the partners can only view the relevant mobility data for their corresponding institutions.  
(Up to now access has only been possible for the whole project.)

## END OF PROJECT

### REPORTING

- ▶ Access of the partner country university to the participants' reports
- ▶ Preparing final report to NA:  
contribution of partner country university (impact, dissemination, recognition, best practice, challenges)

## IMPRINT

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