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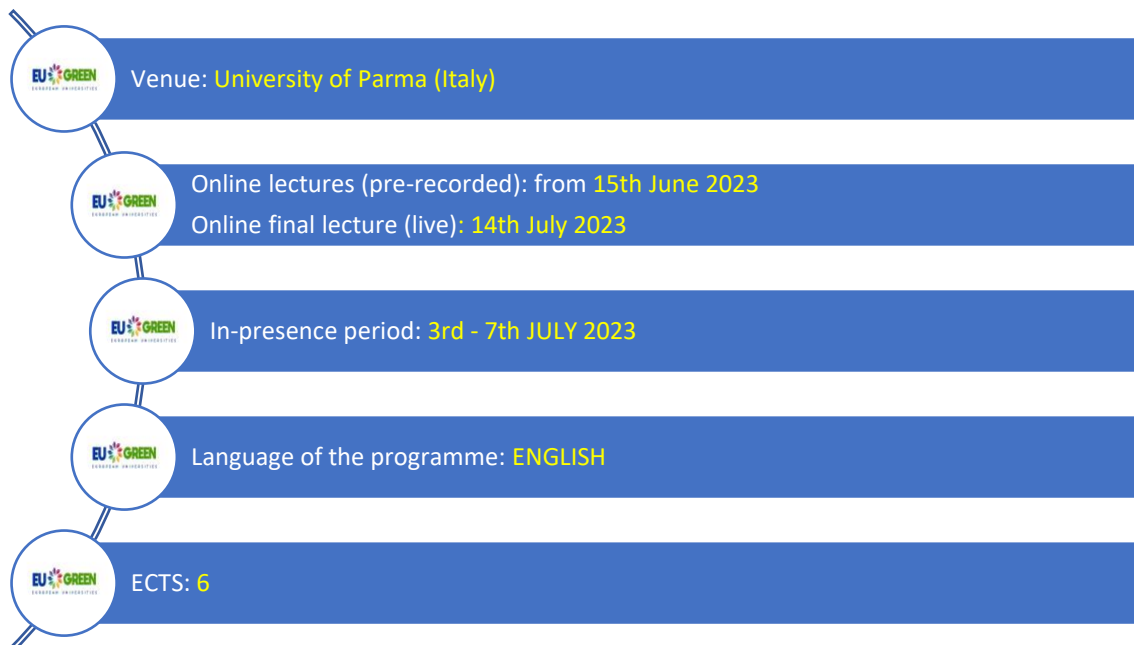
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Food Sustainability

ERASMUS+ Blended Intensive Programme call for applicants

Contract n.: 2022-1-IT02-KA131-HED-000061117



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INDEX

Introduction	3
Total number of participants per institution:.....	3
BIP calendar (both virtual and physical periods)	3
ECTS credits.....	4
Teaching methodology	4
VIRTUAL period of attendance	4
IN-PRESENCE period of attendance.....	4
The call for applicants.....	4
Description of the program	4
Motivation at the basis of the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP).....	4
Program learning objectives.....	4
Programme content, detailing physical and virtual components	5
IN-PRESENCE MODULE	5
Ecological module (6 hours)	5
Foods (8 hours)	5
Management (4 hours)	5
Law module (6 hours)	6
VIRTUAL MODULE.....	6
Language of teaching.....	6
Eligibility criteria	6
How to apply.....	7
Selection criteria and procedures.....	7
Financial support	8
Services at UNIPR.....	8
Contacts.....	8

Introduction

The University of Parma (UNIPR – Italy), jointly with the University of Angers (UA – France), the University of Extremadura (UNEX – Spain), the Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences (UPWR – Poland), the University of Gävle (HiG – Sweden) and the University of Oradea (UO – Romania)

offer their students the opportunity to participate in a Blended Intensive Program (BIPs). The Blended Intensive Program is officially approved by the EU in the framework of the ERAMSUS+ 2021/2027 and is developed in the framework of the EU GREEN Network.

BIPs are one of the new and innovative formats of student mobility introduced by the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027 Program. These programs, jointly developed by multiple higher education institutions, feature advanced and innovative pedagogical approaches that combine short-term face-to-face (physical) mobilities with portions of virtual learning.

BIPs are inherently transnational and transdisciplinary, as curricula are developed and taught together by partner institutions in different countries. The combination of in-person and virtual learning spaces allows students and professors to experience and exchange highly collaborative, challenge-based, and research-steeped methods of teaching and learning.

Through the required virtual part of the program, students and professors alike have the opportunity to develop and hone their digital knowledge and skills, reflecting the European Commission's priority to harness the potential of digital technologies for teaching and learning and to develop digital skills for all.

Total number of participants per institution:

The Blended Intensive Program is open to a limited number of participants from each partner institution, and to an overall number of students. The numbers of participants agreed by the program partners are the following:

- University of Parma (Coordinator) 5 students
- University of Angers (co-organizing university) 5 students
- University of Extremadura (co-organizing university) 5 students
- Wroclaw University of Life Sciences and Environment (co-organizing university) 5 students
- University of Gävle (co-organizing university) 5 students
- University of Oradea (co-organizing university) 5 students
- Otto von Guericke Universität Magdeburg (partner university) 5 students
- Universidade de Evora (partner university) 5 students
- Atlantic Technological University (partner university) 5 students

The Blended Intensive Programme is open to a maximum of 45 participants. In case one of the above Universities should have less students than the maximum allowed, the places left will be made available to other universities in order to reach the planned number of participants.

BIP calendar (both virtual and physical periods)

The BIP calendar consists of 3 phases:

- A **virtual** program, starting on June 10th, 2023, consisting of pre-recorded lessons;
- A **physical (in presence)** program, starting on July 3rd and ending on July 7th (University of Parma as hosting institution);
- An online final lesson which will be held on July 14th 2023

ECTS credits

The successful completion of the program, both in its physical and virtual parts, awards 6 ECTS.

Teaching methodology

Pre-recorded online lectures, face-to-face lectures, on-field class, case-studies presentations, self-learning, and online group meetings for data analysis and discussion.

VIRTUAL period of attendance

The programme consists of 8 hours of pre-recorded short lessons that will be made available to all participants by the 10th of June.

A final additional online lecture will be provided on the 14th July 2023

IN-PRESENCE period of attendance

The physical part of the programme is planned in Italy at the **University of Parma, (Italy)**. All lectures will be held in Aula C of the Department of Economics and Management, Via Kennedy, 6 – 43124 Parma.

The call for applicants

Description of the program

The world population has reached the mind-boggling number of 8 billion people. Food production is running into an increasing demand for quantity and quality, but agro-livestock activity and the processing industry have a heavy impact on the environment and on Earth's health. With this BIP we aim at making students conscious of the problems that must be tackled from different perspectives: environment, food production, management, and law. The programme will be divided in four sections: the ecological, the food, the management, and the law modules. The **ecological module** supports students in understanding how to produce an inventory of pressures at the watershed scale, organized in a database and connected to a GIS, how to calculate soil system budgets and water pollution risk through real case studies and field trips and how to contrast such risk with nature-based solutions. The **food module** addresses the topics of sustainable food production integrating solutions for wastes recovery, efficiency and sustainability of food production, food safety and food security, while also considering the environmental impact. Key issues of the **management module** will be the concept of transition in terms of potential contribution of innovative policies, localised production and distribution approaches, novel technologies and foods, and alternative consumption scenarios. The **law module** aims at familiarising participants with the holistic approach the European Union (EU) is undertaking towards food sustainability and climate change.

Motivation at the basis of the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP)

The BIP is born with the idea of sharing competences and skills present in the four organizing Universities that participate in this initiative and share them with students coming from four different regions in Europe so that they will take home and possibly adapt to their reality what they will learn in Parma.

Program learning objectives

Attending this BIP programme the students, as well as the teaching staff, will have the chance to exchange experiences and knowledge. In all four modules students will be driven by teachers through a *knowledge to action* path, where they will learn how to deal with the complexity of the above issues

and with the conflicts that they often produce, improving education, awareness-raising and human, professional and institutional efforts. In addition, they will actively participate in work groups in a field sample collection, in the data analysis, and, after the week in Parma, they will also have to collaborate through on-line meetings.

Programme content, detailing physical and virtual components

IN-PRESENCE MODULE

The programme will consist of 24 hours in physical presence at the University of Parma, of a one-day field trip in which they will collect data, and a follow-up, on-line, in which the students divided in groups will have work on data elaboration. The content is the following:

Ecological module (6 hours)

The ecological module analyses how the conversion entire natural watersheds into agroecosystems in most Europe has generated a significant amount of waste, liquid and solid, produced by agro-livestock activity and the processing industry. The resulting reduction in biodiversity, functionality and provision of ecosystem services threatens the functional balance of soils, the efficiency of depurative processes, the retention and transformation of nutrients and favours the invasive potential of some species. The dispersion of chemicals and excess nutrients in surface and groundwater has impaired their chemical and biological quality. Water pollution threatens the possibility of use for productive and drinking purposes, the achievement of community conservation objectives and agriculture is in danger of becoming a cause of degradation of the resources on which it depends. Such risk is exacerbated in the present period of climate change, where the timing of precipitation is going to be more and more different and unpredictable as compared to historical records. The ecological module will support students in understanding how to produce an inventory of pressures at the watershed scale, organized in a database and connected to a GIS, how to calculate soil system budgets and water pollution risk through real case studies and field trips and how to contrast such risk with nature-based solutions. Students will be finally driven by teachers through a *knowledge to action* path, where they will learn how to deal with the complexity of the above issues and with the conflicts that they often produce, improving education, awareness-raising and human, professional and institutional efforts.

Foods (8 hours)

All around our planet, food production is running into an increasing demand for quantity and quality, which is partly connected to the increase in population, and - not last - to the continuous change in people's lifestyle. The food module addresses the topics of sustainable food production integrating solutions for wastes recovery, efficiency and sustainability of food production, food safety and food security, while also considering the environmental impact. Key issues of the module will be the understanding of different food production systems (Animal and plant-based foods), the new approaches to possibly reduce the impact of food production on the environment, food waste and food by product recovery and valorisation, and the introduction of Novel Foods in our diet.

Management (4 hours)

Sustainable food systems are needed to ensure appropriate food production and reduce waste, while also safeguarding human and environmental health.

The management module addresses the topics of sustainable food production and consumption models in contexts of high population density and socio-economic heterogeneity where concerns are growing around the economic and political dimensions of food systems, including concentration in the industry and retail sectors, power imbalances, lack of transparency, and issues concerning access to and control over natural resources, including land, water, energy and genetic resources.

Innovative approaches are thus increasingly called upon to play a greater role to connect environmental sustainability and social innovation, production and consumption, global concerns, and local dynamics.

Key issues of the module will be the concept of transition in terms of potential contribution of innovative policies, localised production and distribution approaches, novel technologies and foods, and alternative consumption scenarios.

Law module (6 hours)

The *Law module* aims at familiarising participants with the holistic approach the European Union (EU) is undertaking towards food sustainability and climate change. In this respect, classes (sub-divided into two lessons of two hours) will delve into the most recent non-legislative and legislative acts the EU Commission is proposing. Regarding the former, specific attention is devoted to an overall analysis of the EU Green Deal alongside the Farm to Fork Strategy as the cornerstones of forthcoming EU actions, linking together sustainable development, climate change, food sustainability and health protection. Regarding the latter, a critical assessment of the recently adopted regulation on climate neutrality is proposed to understand how this piece of legislation fit within the broader scheme of international obligations the EU commits to respect. One lecture titled "Food Sustainability, Innovation and Law: Novel Foods and Edible Insects in the EU", assessing the EU Regulation on Novel Foods linking it to food sustainability.

VIRTUAL MODULE

The programme consists of 8 hours of pre-recorded short lessons that will be made available to all participants by the 10th of June. The contents of the online lectures are the following:

- The multiple dimensions of Sustainable Development” focusing of the European approach to SD and on its intrinsic interdisciplinarity;
- Introduction to International Law and European Union Law;
- LC Life cycle assessment: introductory aspects;
- Introduction to sustainable eating – a public health perspective;
- The agri-food system of Emilia-Romagna Region between conventional and alternative models

A final additional online lecture will be provided on the 14th July 2023, on the following topic:

- Soil system budget: source of data. Realization of the input and output database;
- Calculation of Nitrogen budget at the municipality scale;
- Evaluation of nitrogen use efficiency in arable land and of the risk of water pollution

Language of teaching

Both online and in-presence lectures will be taught in ENGLISH, and a B2 level is required to have a successful learning experience.

Eligibility criteria

To apply for this program, students must be regularly enrolled at one of the participating universities. Applicants must be enrolled in a Master's (*Bachelor's fourth year students from Spain are accepted*) or PhD level degree.

At the time of the application submission, applicants must demonstrate proof of English language competence at the B1/B2 level (CEFR). This can be certified by **the applicant's home University** (see application procedures below). Level B2 will be a preferential criterion.

Participation to the program is open to students of the following disciplines and/or degree programmes:

- **University of Parma applicants (IT)**
Law; Political Science and International Relations; International and European Relations, Ecology, Environmental Sciences, Food science and technology, Gestione dei Sistemi, Alimentari di Qualità e della Gastronomia (FOOD Quality), Food Safety and Food Risk Management, Food Sciences for Innovation and Authenticity
- **University of Angers applicants (FR)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP
- **University of Extremadura applicants (ES)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP
- **Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences applicants (PL)**
Food Sciences and Environmental Sciences
- **University of Gävle applicants (SE)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP
- **University of Oradea applicants (RO)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP
- **Otto von Guericke Universität Magdeburg applicants (DE)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP
- **Universidade de Evora applicants (PT)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP
- **Atlantic Technological University applicants (IRL)**
Any discipline related with contents related to the BIP

Selected students must communicate their acceptance or withdrawal **within 10 days from the publication of the selection results** by contacting their university program coordinator (see below). Selected students will be contacted with further instructions upon completion of the selection procedures.

How to apply

Students interested in participating should fill out the **application form** at https://www.unipr.it/eplus_bip by **5th MAY 2023**, as well as send the required documents to the address bip@unipr.it.

The application form must contain the following attachments:

1. Copy of valid ID or passport;
2. Transcript of Records (A certificate of enrolment at the home University with a list of passed exams and grades);
3. Language certificate (If not already present as an exam in the Transcript of Records)
4. Motivation letter (containing, if any, experiences abroad)
5. Other documents and certificates (optional)

Selection criteria and procedures

An appointed Committee formed by Prof. Tullia Tedeschi, Prof. Maria Cecilia Mancini (UNIPR), Prof. Ana Isabel Andrés Nieto (UNEX), Prof. Gaele Pantin-Sohier (UA), Prof. Cezary Kabala (UW), Prof. Mikaela Willmer (HiG), Prof. Adrian Timar (UO) will carry out the selection procedures. Selection is based on the following criteria:

- Academic performance
- Motivation

- English language competence
- Evaluation of further qualifications and skills

Students should expect to hear back about the result of their application by **15th MAY 2023**. Selected students must communicate their acceptance or withdrawal within 5 days from the publication of the selection results by contacting their university program coordinator (see below). Selected students will be contacted with further instructions upon completion of the selection procedures.

Financial support

The attendance of the Blended Intensive Programme may be covered by an **ERASMUS+ SMS Short Mobility Grant** for all **mobile students** (excluding students from the hosting University). This financial support may only be guaranteed by the selected student's home University. The University of origin of each selected student is fully responsible for the management of the financial aspects of the mobilities in accordance with the provisions of the competent ERASMUS+ National Agency.

No financial support is foreseen for University of Parma students as they will not be travelling for the purposes of participation in this program (non-mobile participants).

Please refer to your local coordinator or Erasmus/International Relations Office for any further information related to the financial support made available.

Services at UNIPR

Services available to students during the in-person part of the program (examples might include):

- Administrative Support
- Accommodation Support
- Social events (ESN)
- University services (Wi-Fi, library access, lab access, etc.)
- Visa Support, if needed

Contacts

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