Student Mobility

Encouraging mobility for learning and improvement of the international dimension of education, and the development of international relations among educational institutions, is one of the most important strategic goals in BiH. In order to achieve these objectives, a number of instruments were established, of which the most important are funds and programmes of the EU, and intergovernmental bilateral and multilateral programmes and initiatives. BiH benefits Community programmes supporting mobility for learning.

The internationalisation of education, especially higher education is an integral part of all policy documents at national and institutional level. The legal framework is developed in the direction of facilitating and encouraging internationalization in all its aspects, including mobility.

One of the goals of the recently written document, but not yet adopted, Priorities for HE Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina is internationalisation. Its aim is to improve regional and cross-border cooperation through joint registration and participation in projects; actively support the international mobility of HEI’s staff by linking this to career advancement; support the development of study programmes in foreign languages; support the international mobility of students; create conditions for accommodation and other infrastructural capacities for international trade; provide training in foreign languages to staff in HEIs, and enable learning of official languages in BiH to visiting staff; strengthen human and financial resources of services for international cooperation in HEIs; create legal and other requirements for the development of programmes for the acquisition of joint degrees; develop and fund programmes to gain experience abroad for graduates in the field of growth and innovation, on the condition that they return and apply their knowledge in BiH.

On January 2016 a new project “Internationalization of Higher Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina – STINT” has been implementing in BiH. It includes University of East Sarajevo, University of Banja Luka, Džemal Bijedić University of Mostar, University of Mostar, University of Sarajevo, University of Tuzla and University of Zenica. The aim of the project is improvement of internationalization of higher education in BiH and academic mobility through the procedures of academic and professional recognition of foreign higher education diplomas inline with the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

In order to promote academic exchanges between universities in the region, Europe and beyond, universities and colleges in BiH are equal partners in many mobility projects. A unique database of Scholarships for Western Balkans (S4WB) is available to all students in BiH. S4WB offers a wide range of scholarships for students and researchers of the WB, and gives them the opportunity to be informed about financial aid for undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies. The database provides information on scholarships from 17 fields of study in 33 countries across Europe. Education is a key contribution to the integration into the EU. Therefore, this database provides the Western Balkans students easy access to detailed information about the possibilities of studying abroad, as
well as basic information about financial assistance. S4WB will enable students of the Western Balkans to gain new experience in a different cultural environment and to apply this experience upon their return to their homeland.

BiH signed Erasmus + Agreement in June 2014, which replaced all previous programmes in the period 2007-2013, such as: The Lifelong Learning Programme (with its sub-programmes of Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Grundtvig), Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa Edulink. Students from BiH are included in various mobility programs: Erasmus Mundus, CEEPUS, MEVLANA, UNET Network as well as through institutional bilateral agreements.

All 8 public universities from BiH participated in the Erasmus Mundus action 2 projects, including the University of Sarajevo, University of Banja Luka, University of Mostar, Dzemal Bijedic University of Mostar, University of Tuzla, University of Zenica, University of Bihac, and the University of East Sarajevo.

Moreover, eight university exchange networks have been funded (some of them are still running): BASILUES, JoinEU-SEE, SIGMA A, ERAWEB, EUROWEB and STEM. From 2014 there are two new partnerships - exchange networks with participation of BiH institutions: TECH-WB and SUNBEAM.

There were over 150 Joint Erasmus Mundus Masters and some 40 joint PhD programmes for which students could apply within Erasmus Mundus Action 1. All these programmes lead towards joint or multiple diplomas. During the past seven years, around 70 students from BiH were awarded scholarships for attending EM joint Master and PhD courses at prestigious EU universities.

Since 2007, BiH has been involved in the Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies CEEPUS-III, which has provided up to now more than 76,000 monthly scholarships for mobility in 16 European countries participating in the Programme. In 2017/2018, 84 academic scholarships were awarded for academic visits to professors and students at BH universities, while 148 scholarships were awarded to professors and students from Bosnia and Herzegovina for staying at foreign partner universities.

CIP, as ENIC center of BiH, has continued with the presentation of BiH in ENIC/NARIC networks through provision of information about the higher education system of BiH for purpose of the recognition abroad of higher education qualifications obtained in BiH abroad as well as information to the competent BiH authorities for recognition of foreign higher education qualifications obtained abroad in BiH. The CIP website (www.cip.gov.ba) provides all information related to the recognition and academic mobility. In line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention, CIP has published important recommendations: Recommendations on Criteria for Evaluation in the Process of the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications for the Purposes of Employment or Further Education. Recommendations on the use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Process of the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications in BiH and Recommendations on the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications in BiH to the Persons with Insufficient Documentation or without Documentation, Recommendations on the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications Acquired through Cross-border Education and Recommendations on the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications Acquired through Joint Programmes.

Strategic Directions for the Development of Higher Education in the FBiH from 2012 to 2022, state that one of the objectives is to establish a fund for the mobility of students and teaching staff, and see year 2022 as the year in which the FBiH higher education will be a full member of the common ERA and EHEA.

The Strategy of the Development of Education in the RS for the period 2010-2014 also speaks of the
need to establish a fund for the mobility of professors and students (p. 25), and points to the need for the academic community to be intensely involved in international research projects and the use of EU pre-accession funds, and sees the establishment of connections for distance learning with recognized universities in the world as a road to internationalisation. Internationalization of higher education is set as a one of the strategic objectives in draft of Strategy of educational development in RS for a period 2016-2021.

**Academic Staff Mobility**

The mobility of academic staff has been conducted through participation in numerous TEMPUS projects since 1996 in BiH and is further improved with BiH access to Erasmus +, which opens up opportunities for participation and linking HEIs in joint research programmes and projects of the EHEA. Teaching staff in BiH is included in the mobility programs: Erasmus MUNDUS (JOINEU SEE, SUNBEAM), CEEPUS and MEVLANA, as well as through bilateral institutional agreements.