



Information

on Blended Intensive Programmes (BIP)

in the EUPeace Alliance

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BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES

What is a Blended Intensive Programme?

An Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) is a funding offer within the Erasmus+ program family for higher education institutions. It allows students and staff to participate in short, intensive courses with international involvement.

A BIP combines virtual and physical mobility phases:

Virtual Phase: The course takes place partially online, enabling collaboration with participants from other universities.

Physical Mobility: In addition, there is a shorter on-site phase abroad (5 to 30 days) where participants can learn and exchange ideas together.

Participation in a BIP by students and staff of EUPeace Alliance members can be financially supported through an Erasmus+ mobility grant. Organizational Support (OS) funds can be applied for the implementation and coordination of a BIP.

What can be funded?

BIPs can be used to fund short, intensive and internationally-oriented learning projects in particular. These are designed and implemented jointly by at least three partner universities from Erasmus+ programme countries.

The format of a BIP is flexible and can be designed for specific disciplines. For example, compact seminars, workshops, excursions or summer schools are conceivable. In terms of content, BIPs can cover the entire spectrum of university teaching.

Each BIP combines a virtual phase with a short physical learning phase (5-30 days) at a location (in the country of the host university) of the participating partner universities. The virtual phase enables collaboration and exchange in online format, while the physical phase provides space for intensive group learning and experience.

Coordinating universities can apply for organizational funds (OS) of €4,000 to €8,000 for the organization and implementation of a BIP. These funds can be used, for example, to finance a framework program, student assistants or travel expenses.

The sending universities can fund the mobility of their mobile participants (teaching and learning mobility) from their Erasmus+ mobility budget (e.g., KA131 projects). The amount of the individual mobility grant depends on the university's approved Erasmus+ project and the available budget.

Advantages of BIP projects:

- Promotion of innovative teaching and learning methods
- Strengthening international cooperation
- Intensive exchange and networking between students and teachers
- Acquisition of intercultural skills

Examples of possible Blended Intensive Programmes

Blended Intensive Programmes offer a wide range of opportunities for international cooperation and the exchange of students and lecturers.

Example I: Economics	
Topic	International Marketing
Partners	University A (Germany), University B (France), University C (Spain)
Virtual Phase	3-week Virtual Phase including lectures, discussions and case studies Note: <i>The type and scope of the virtual phase are not specified, there are no minimum requirements!</i>
Physical Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-week summer school at University B in Limoges Workshops, guest lectures and excursions Topics: International branding, social media marketing, business development
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth knowledge of international marketing Ability to develop marketing strategies for international markets Intercultural competences
Explanation:	In this example, all three partners involved can theoretically take on the role of coordinating the BIP. The French university is the host institution.
BIP II: Linguistics	
Topic	German as a foreign language
Partners	University A (Germany), University B (Italy), University C (France)
Virtual Phase	5-week virtual phase including grammar exercises, vocabulary expansion and conversation courses on the topics of German in everyday life, business German, regional studies Note: <i>The type and scope of the online phase are not specified, there are no minimum requirements!</i>
Physical Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-week language course organised by University B in Calabria, whereby the course takes place in a youth hostel in Rome, Italy Intensive German courses, conversation groups and cultural activities
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement of German language skills and the ability to use German in study and work; intercultural experience in a German-speaking country
Explanation:	In this example, all three partners involved can theoretically take on the role of coordinating the BIP. The Italian university is the host institution.
BIP III: EUPeace BIP - Peace and Justice	
Topic	Peacebuilding in fragile contexts: theory and practice
Partners	University A (Italy), University B (Czech Republic), University C (France), University D (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Virtual Phase	1-week module (two sessions) as introduction to peacebuilding theory, peacebuilding methods, case studies
Physical Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-week summer school at university A in Italy Workshops, guest lectures and excursions Topics: Peacebuilding practice, conflict management and mediation, excursions to NGOs and international organisations
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth knowledge of the theory and practice of peacebuilding Ability to analyse fragile contexts Application knowledge of various peacebuilding methods
Explanation:	<u>In addition to at least three universities from three programme countries, other universities from partner countries can participate in a BIP.</u> However, mobile participants from partner countries do not count towards the minimum number that is relevant for the Organizational Support funds.

	In this example, all three programme country partners can theoretically take on the role of coordinating the BIP. The Italian university is the host institution.
Example IV: Physics	
Topic	Cosmology and the early universe
Partners	University A (Czech Republic), University B (France), University C (Spain)
Virtual Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly online forums for discussion and Q&A with lecturers • Collaborative assignments exploring specific aspects of cosmology
Physical Mobility	1-week module at University C in Spain including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures: Renowned cosmologists present current research topics • Workshops: Hands-on experience with data analysis software • Practical sessions on the interpretation of observational data from telescopes and satellites
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth knowledge of current cosmological theories • Critical thinking when analysing data and interpreting results • Improved teamwork and communication skills in a collaborative research environment
Explanation:	In this example, all three partners involved can theoretically take on the role of coordinating the BIP. The Spanish university is the host institution.

Note: Flexibility and freedom in the design of blended intensive programmes

The hybrid design of Blended Intensive Programmes offers a wide range of opportunities to innovate teaching and at the same time improve quality and flexibility.

There are **no (!) specifications** regarding the scope or form of virtual teaching. Virtual and face-to-face phases can be organised in a variety of ways. However, the physical mobility phase must last at least 5 to 30 days (excluding travel days).

Requirements for funding (coordinating Higher Education Institution)

In order to receive funding (organizational funds of up to EUR 8,000) for a BIP, the following criteria must be met:

- Participation of at least **three** partner higher education institutions:
 - The partner higher education institutions must come from at least three different programme countries of the Erasmus+ programme.
- Minimum **number of participants**:
 - At least 10 mobile learners from Erasmus+ Programme countries must participate in the physical learning phase of the project
- Awarding of **ECTS** points:
 - All participants in the learning unit must be awarded at least 3 ECTS points.
- **Recognition** of achievements:
 - The ECTS points earned during the BIP must be recognised.
 - Recognition should ideally take place by embedding the BIP project in the curriculum of the respective higher education institution. A waiver of recognition is possible, but should not be the rule.

Requirements for funding (individual mobility grant)

In order to receive a mobility grant as a student for participation in a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP), the following requirements must be met:

- **Enrolment**: Participants from the first and second study cycle must be enrolled at their sending institution. Participants from the third study cycle must either be enrolled or prove that they have been accepted by the doctoral committee of their department and that they are actively pursuing a doctoral project.
- **Credits**: Participants must have at least 3 ECTS credits recognised if this has been agreed in the Learning Agreement.
- **Participation**: Participants must take part in the virtual and physical mobility phases of the BIP.
- **Learning Agreement (LA), Grant Agreement (GA), Confirmation of Stay (CoS), EU Survey, etc.**: the administrative requirements for participation in a BIP are identical to those for Erasmus+ long-term mobility.

The Individual Mobility Grant

The amount of the individual mobility grant (teachers and learners) for participants in a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) is influenced by various factors:

- **Funding duration**: physical short-term mobilities that take place as part of a BIP are funded for a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 30 days, whereby local regulation at each EUPeace partner must be considered
- **Daily allowances**: the daily allowance is determined by the project-specific rules of the Erasmus+ projects approved by the universities, whereby days 1-14 of a mobility are funded at a higher flat rate than days 15 to 30.
- **Travel allowance**: the travel allowance is determined by the project-specific rules of the Erasmus+ projects approved by the universities, whereby it is possible that this is dependent on factors such as the *Fewer Opportunities Top-up*.
- **Sustainable travel**: the top-up is determined by the Erasmus+ projects awarded to the universities.
- **Travel days**: an allowance for extended travel is determined by the Erasmus+ projects awarded to the universities.
- **Top-ups**: the requirements for the Top-up for participants with fewer opportunities are determined by the Erasmus+ projects approved by the universities of the EUPeace Alliance

The Roles of the Higher Education Institutions in a BIP

A Blended Intensive Programme is implemented by at least **three** higher education institutions from **three** programme countries. All participating higher education institutions have a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE).

There are three roles in a BIP. One of the higher education institutions participating in a BIP is responsible for overall coordination and applies for Organizational Support funds from its Erasmus+ National Agency. However, all participating higher education institutions must take on at least one of the following three roles in the implementation of a BIP, whereby it is possible for a Higher Education Institution to have a dual role:

- **Coordinating Higher Education Institution**

is responsible for the overall coordination of a BIP and is also either the sending or hosting higher education institution. The coordinating higher education institution applies for and manages the Organizational Support (OS) funds of the BIP and usually takes care of the contractual background, i.e. the creation of so-called Inter-Institutional Agreements (IIA) and the maintenance of the project in the EU project database (Beneficiary Module).

Advantages of this role: administrative security, as the Organizational Support funds are managed directly

Disadvantages of this role: higher coordination effort

- **Sending Higher Education Institution**

finances, plans and coordinates the mobility grants for its applicants participating in the physical mobility phase of a BIP. This includes implementing, documenting and reporting the mobility grants in accordance with the Erasmus+ programme requirements (Grant Agreements, Learning Agreements, Confirmation of Stay, etc.).

Advantages of this role: participation in a BIP is made possible and internationalisation is strengthened

Disadvantages of this role: mobility grants are paid from the Higher Education Institution's project budget, increased administrative effort.

- **Receiving Higher Education Institution**

carries out the BIP at its location (or in the country) and usually organises the courses and accommodation for the mobile participants.

Advantages of this role: internationalisation of teaching

Disadvantages of this role: greater coordination effort, language barrier

Cooperation between the participating Higher Education Institutions

The smooth running of a Blended Intensive Programme requires a structured organisation and a clear definition of the responsibilities of all those involved.

Both the distribution of tasks between the partner universities and the internal organisation within each participating institution should be clearly regulated.

The most important points that should be clarified in advance include:

- **Proposal submission:** who is responsible for preparing and submitting the proposal?
- **Financial management:** Who manages and is responsible for the Organizational Support funds?
- **Coordination of the online phase:** Who is responsible for the technical implementation?
- **Organisation of the Physical Mobility phase:** Who is responsible for organising accommodation, catering and activities for the mobile participants?
- **Academic responsibility:** Who is responsible for the learning content?
- **Communication and marketing:** Who is responsible for internal and external communication?
- **Mobility documents:** Who is responsible at the respective universities for the correct and timely submission of the mobility documents of the mobile participants?

In a BIP consortium with three participating partners, it is advisable to ensure that the two sending Higher Education Institutions each fund approx. 10 mobile participants in order to guarantee the eligibility of a BIP (see minimum number of participants).

Organizational Support (OS) Funds

Organizational Support (OS) funds can be used for various purposes to support the implementation of a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP). The coordinating Higher Education Institution is responsible for the financial management of the project and must provide evidence of the use of the OS.

Eligible expenses (examples):

- **Student assistants:** top-up funding
- **Teaching assignments:** Funding for teaching assignments
- **Materials:** Purchase of materials for the course
- **Room rental:** Rental of rooms for the course
- **Translations/communication:** Financing of translations and communication with partner universities
- **Equipment:** Financing of equipment for the course
- **Excursions/trips:** Financing of excursions and trips
- **Entrance fees:** Financing of entrance fees for museums, etc.
- **Teaching materials:** Preparation of teaching materials and financing of printing costs
- **Accommodation costs:** Proportional financing of accommodation costs for participants
- **Preparatory visits:** Financing of preparatory visits to partner universities
- **Catering:** Financing of catering for the course

Expenses not eligible for funding:

- **Mobility grants:** OS funds may not be used to top up the funding of BIP mobilities.
- **Direct payments:** OS funds may not be paid out pro rata to the participants in the project.

Important

The use of OS Funds must be in line with the budget principles of the coordinating Higher Education Institution. The coordinating Higher Education Institution is obliged to provide evidence of the utilisation of the OS Funds.

How do I apply for a BIP (as the Coordinating Higher Education Institution)?

The coordinating Higher Education Institution plays a central role in the application for and implementation of a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP). It is the one that submits the application on behalf of all partners and bears the main responsibility for the organisation and implementation of the BIP.

The coordinating organization applies centrally at the National Agency as part of the award procedure of the Erasmus+ funding line KA131. Those who would like to implement a BIP as a coordinating university should contact the Erasmus+ coordination team at their institution as early as possible to make respective arrangement.

How do I apply for a BIP (as a Sending Higher Education Institution)?

If you would like to participate in a BIP with your students as a sending institution, you do not apply for the BIP directly. The coordinating institution is responsible for this. You should contact your local Erasmus+ coordinator to clarify, if funds are available to pay for Erasmus+ mobility support.

How do I apply for a BIP (as a Receiving Higher Education Institution)?

If you would like to participate in a BIP as a receiving, but not as a coordinating Higher Education Institution, no formal coordination is necessary. It is the responsibility of the sending Higher Education Institutions to ensure that the contractual basis of the mobility (Inter-Institutional Agreements) is secured.

Please note

To ensure a smooth implementation of the BIP, the following points should be considered:

- Coordination with the coordinating Higher Education Institution
 - Conditions of participation: number of participants, selection criteria, deadlines, etc.
 - Content and organisation: curriculum, learning outcomes, on-site support, technical infrastructure, enrolment, etc.
- Preparation at your own Higher Education Institution
 - Contact persons, resources (premises, technical equipment, accommodation and catering if necessary)
- Selection of your own students
 - Transparent and fair selection criteria, application process
- Communication
 - Exchange with partners about the process, possibility to spend Organizational Support funds, clarify support tasks

Suggestions for sustainable internationalisation

The rotating coordination of BIPs is a possible approach to the sustainable internationalisation of teaching. It promotes efficiency, continuity and the development of sustainable partnerships between universities. Only one edition of the same BIP (with the same title, the same learning outcomes and the same composition of the partnership) can be applied for and subsidised per call year (Erasmus+ project) (even in the case of alternating coordination).

Example I: BIP series on climate change

- University A, year 1: Scientific foundations of climate change
- University B, year 2: Political and social consequences of climate change
- University C, year 3: Strategies for adaptation and mitigation of climate change

Example II: BIP series on digitalisation

- University A, year 1: Focus on technical aspects (AI, Big Data)
- University B, year 2: Focus on social aspects (media ethics, data protection)
- University C, year 3: Focus on economic aspects (digital transformation, business models)

Organising a BIP as a (larger) summer or winter school

You can publish your planned programme on the Internet at <https://blendedmobility.eu/web/> and advertise specifically for participants.

Further Information

Higher Education Mobility Handbook:

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/NAITDOC/Higher+Education+Mobility+Handbook>

Information from the **EU Commission** can be found here: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/de/programme-guide/erasmus-programme-guide/introduction>

Contact

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International Affairs

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Attachments

- Letter of Intent

Blended Intensive Programme (BIP)**Letter of Intent**

This statement is to confirm that the undersigning Institutions are willing to be partners within the **Erasmus+ funded Blended Intensive Programme (BIP)** entitled:

which consists of a **virtual** component lasting from _____ to _____ and a **physical** one lasting from _____ to _____.

Both Institutions undertake to apply all the principles of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and commit to the respective Blended Intensive Programme short mobility rules.

Expected participation (sending Institution):

_____ will participate with a number of _____ students and _____ academic staff

Commitment of the parties

Receiving Institution: _____

Name of the signatory: _____

Position: _____

Signature:

Sending Institution: _____

Name of the signatory: _____

Position: _____

Signature:

Date:

Date: