



European
Commission



HERE Study Visit
**Inclusive internationalisation:
from good intentions to measurable
outcomes**

3-4 October 2024
Ghent, Belgium

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.



Cover page: Picture inside the circle by @gettysignature and background image by @kasto

The Study visit: institutional, system level and European perspectives

This HERE study visit on inclusive internationalisation will share institutional practises of two higher education institutions, Ghent University and the Artevelde University of Applied Sciences, and the Support Centre Inclusive Higher Education (SIHO), with inputs from staff and students and other important actors and organisations with extensive experience on the topic. In addition, it will also provide some insights on how Flanders as a higher education system¹ is strategising and tackling the topic of inclusive internationalisation. Within the system, but also in collaborations across Europe and internationally, Flanders has been one of the driving forces in making higher education more inclusive. An example are the outcomes of the Inclusivehighereducation.eu project that supports public authorities and higher education institutions across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to implement the EHEA Principles and Guidelines on the Social Dimension.

Hosts

The visit will take place in the city of Ghent, in Flanders, Belgium, which can be reached by train from Brussels, or from Zaventem Airport. It is co-hosted by the Ghent University and Support Centre Inclusive Higher Education (SIHO) and will take place at the latter's campus. Flanders authorities, and other relevant organisations dealing with the topic may be invited.

Participants

The event addresses HERE at all levels of knowledge and experience regarding the topic: institutional leadership, teaching staff and students and, given that this event would address the policy and system perspective, also ministry representatives.

Why the topic?

¹ As Belgium is federal country, competences for higher education are at the level of its regions, i.e. Flanders and Wallonia.

Internationalisation has become a mission of almost all higher education institutions (HEIs). In Europe, it is encouraged and supported also in the framework of the European Union's European Education Area, and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) These have at their core interinstitutional collaboration, including joint programmes, and staff and student mobility, which are also supported by the Erasmus+ programme and many national programmes. While European unity, but also other political and softpower considerations are certainly important motives for the strong policy support of higher education internationalisation in Europe, there are also academic purposes: internationalisation is seen as means but also indicator for the quality of an institution, and its missions. For students, short term (credit) and degree mobility are seen as essential opportunities to enhance their experience, gain additional skills in formal and informal learning important not only for their careers, but also for their personal lives and their ability to become active citizens with a global outlook. In addition to physical mobility, internationalisation at home and also virtual and hybrid exchanges have grown in importance over recent years. Last but not least, the European Union is providing support for European Universities Initiative, which supports larger transnational consortia of higher education institutions in establishing intensive exchange and collaboration on a wide range of activities.

As internationalisation has risen in importance, this also brought up the issue of inclusion and access: how to ensure that staff and students can participate in international activities? A [2020 SPHERE report](#) on inclusive mobility documents obstacle for student mobility, such as financial constraints, educational background and lack of language knowledge, but also coming from a rural area, or belonging to ethnic and social minorities or disadvantaged groups. Access and inclusion are not only about students and mobility, but also considers institutional activities and staff.

Issues to be addressed

The event aims at exploring the follow issues:

1. How do institutions make their internationalisation more accessible and inclusive?
 - mobility and virtual and hybrid exchanges

- internationalisation at home
 - international staff and students on campus
 - key aspects for inclusive international study programmes?
 - support services and peer-to-peer assistance for international students
 - inclusive internationalisation in cooperations with third countries partners
 - differences, and mutually beneficial learnings
 - strong and enduring relations, in consideration of different conditions, capacities and needs
 - cooperation and inclusion perspectives in the European University Alliances?
 - relation in the commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals?
 - Policies, strategies, impact assessment – and who is in charge
2. How can higher education systems promote and support inclusive internationalisation? Examples on how Flanders' policies and measures affect higher education institutions and their activities. Mental health and student well-being will be discussed as a key challenge.
3. What are current EU policies for inclusion and internationalisation, and how they are reflected in EU programmes.
- a. What can be in done by different actors (universities in programme and partner countries, National Agencies, NEOs, Ministries, European Commission and the EACEA) to make International Credit Mobility (ICM) and collaboration programmes more inclusive?

Learning Outcomes

- Become aware and understand better higher education social inclusion and internationalisation, and the links between them.
- Awareness for disadvantage of students and staff, and intersectionality, and ways of how this in institutional and national policy and practice
- Understand the process of defining and implementing institutional strategies for supporting inclusiveness in internationalisation and student mental health, and the related structures and approaches needed to implement it (data collection, student

inclusion offices, student services, etc).

- Be able to contribute to the development and implementation of policies and actions for inclusive mobility and internationalisation, considering work at institutional, national and EU/Bologna Process levels.
- Better promote and use the opportunities offered under the current EU and national (mobility) programmes and their insistence on inclusion and mobility and contribute to making them more inclusive.

AGENDA

3 October 2024

Venue: Support Centre Inclusive Higher Education - Campus Hoogpoort

8:30 Registration and welcome coffee

9:00 Welcome from host and organizers

Speakers

- Coordinator, Support Centre Inclusive Higher Education (SIHO)
- Vice-rector, Ghent University
- Policy Officer, European Commission, DG EAC (Online)
- Introduction to the programme and pre-survey results –SPHERE team

Moderator

- SPHERE team

9:30 Inclusion as a transversal feature of internationalisation: system and institutional perspectives

Speakers

- Coordinator, SIHO, Flanders
- Head of International Relations Office, Ghent University
- Head of International Office, Artevelde University of Applied Sciences

Moderator

- SPHERE team

Description

This session will explore institutional approaches to inclusive internationalisation and mobility through presentations from the speakers. They will share the policies and practices their institutions have implemented to promote inclusive mobility and internationalisation. Additionally, the session

will reflect on current trends and strategic thinking on this topic in Flanders and across the European Higher Education Area.

10:30 Coffee break

11:00 Stepping stones for internationalisation: the Ghent University approach for inclusive international study programmes

Speaker

- International Relations Office, Ghent University

Description

‘Stepping stones for internationalisation’ refers to a particular curriculum design that maximizes opportunities for all students to develop international and intercultural competences—crucial for succeeding in today’s globalized and diverse society and labor market. In this workshop, you will explore a methodology for scaffolding flexible international and intercultural learning experiences throughout the entire study programme. From low-threshold Internationalisation at Home initiatives to short-term and long-term (virtual) mobility opportunities, this approach promotes an inclusive and stimulating model for internationalisation.”

12:30 Lunch

14:00 Supporting international students: support services and peer-to-peer contact

Speakers

- President, Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Ghent
- International Mobility Team, International Relations Office, Ghent University
- Head of International Office, Artevelde University of Applied Sciences

Moderator

- Head of International Relations Office, Ghent University

Description

This session will provide an overview of the existing student support services at Artevelde University of Applied Sciences, Ghent University and by the Erasmus student Network. A panel discussion between the speakers will follow.

15:15 Parallel group discussions: how to make study and mobility more inclusive

- Strategies for inclusive international programmes
- Strategies for support services for international students
- *HERE are divided into two groups to discuss possible strategies for inclusive international programmes support services for international students, using the*

the Flemish approach experience as a reference point. The Flemish universities and universities of applied sciences and students will participate in these discussions.

- Chairs: SPHERE Team

16:15 Coffee break

16:45 Short reports from break-out groups

17:00 Spotighting mental health: implications for international students

Speaker

- Coordinator, SIHO

Description

This session will present how student mental health is addressed in Flanders, what is the available data and what measures are taken for international students to ensure an inclusive study experience for them.

17:45 Closing and group picture

19:30 Dinner – [Brasserie HA', Kouter 29, 9000 Ghent](#)

4 October 2024

Venue: Board Room Ghent University, campus UFO, Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 33, 9000 Ghent

8:30 Registration

9:00 The Global Minds Fund as a leverage for more reciprocal and inclusive inter-institutional partnerships

Speakers

- Global Minds Fund coordinator Ghent University

Description

The Global Minds Fund provides opportunities to the whole Ghent University community to collaborate with partners in the Global South in order to address the global challenges of sustainable development. One of the objectives of the Global Minds Fund is to explore how more reciprocal and inclusive partnerships with academic actors in the Global South can be developed. This presentation will provide some initial insights and practical examples as to how this objective can be achieved.

10:00 Interactive workshop on the potential of online and blended learning at Ghent University and within ENLIGHT European University

Speakers

- Educational developer at Ghent University and ENLIGHT project staff member

Description

This session will address in an interactive way why online international learning is important and what forms of online learning can be used in an international context. The concepts presented will be illustrated by a description of the current situation at Ghent University and conclude with concrete tips for participants on how to get started with online learning.

10:45 Coffee break

11:15 Reporting back from the workshops

11:30 Panel discussion: The European approach towards social inclusion in internationalisation and its implications on the national/institutional levels

Speakers

- HERE1
- HERE 2
- Coordinator, SIHO
- Head of International Relations Office, Ghent University
- Student, Flemish Student Union

Moderator

- SPHERE team

Description:

This session will start with an input presentation on the European Commission's inclusion goals in higher education, priorities for inclusion in internationalisation and of Erasmus+ and the specificities and parameters for inclusive mobility. Followed by a panel, the discussion will explore how these priorities resonate with and actualise among the higher education institutions – both in the Flemish and HERE countries' contexts.

12:30 Summary of the event, next steps of the SPHERE and concluding remarks from European Commission

SPHERE Team

13:00 Lunch

14:45 Departure for cultural tour

15:15 Cultural tour (optional)

Guided Boat trip on the Ghent canals with tourist information

