

BIP “Insularity and Sustainable Futures - Identities and Economies of European Islands”

Call for Students Applications

Introduction

The University of Parma, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, University of Zagreb, and the University of Zara offer their students the opportunity to participate in a Blended Intensive Programme (BIP).

BIPs are one of the new and innovative formats of student mobility introduced by the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027 Programme. These programmes, 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 programme, 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.

Description of the program

Islands represent only 5% of the Earth's surface but are home to 20% of the world's bird, reptile, and plant species, as well as more than 40% of highly threatened creatures. Despite contributing less than 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions, islands are disproportionately affected by climate change. Their geographical characteristics make them especially susceptible to disasters, whose frequency and impact have escalated dramatically.

At the same time, island populations are constantly under pressure to develop their economies while building resilience to issues such as climate change and natural disasters. The lack of resources, visibility, and support can be a challenge for the sustainable development of islands.

Sustainability in insular areas should be considered according to four main pillars (economic, social, environmental, and governance) to involve all key stakeholders.

The present BIP program aims at examining the interconnection between sustainability, socioeconomic development, and environmental preservation, and how these aspects manifest in the specific case study of Gran Canaria.

The aim of the course is to encourage students to theoretically study and practically provide solutions to sustainability challenges involving the island of Gran Canaria in the following 6 domains of particular concern:

1. Tourism Development and Territorial Balance
2. Natural Risks and Resilience in Island Territories

3. Cultural Heritage and Island Identity
4. Sustainable Water Management in Island Environments
5. Coastal Management and Climate Adaptation
6. Renewable Energy

Students will learn, in a class environment, from professors at the partner University specialised in the aforementioned areas of expertise, as well as from local actors and stakeholders on the ground in an attempt to formulate – in cross cultural and cross institutions working groups – sustainable solutions to the problems presented to them during the BIP.

Sustainability will be intended as composed of four pillars: economic (profitability); social (contribution to harmonious relationships in society and with all stakeholders in particular); environmental (net impact on the natural environment in resource usage and waste disposal) and governance (the process of aligning and managing the stakeholders towards the common goal of improving the existing situation/achieving the goal).

By taking this course, students can improve their understanding of some of the most pressing issues involving the local development of insular areas as well as proposing strategies for a sustainable development of the same areas. Moreover, students will acquire and practice cross-cultural competency, analytical and international team building skills, as well as engage in online communication and group management tasks, which constitute valuable life-long capabilities with a transferrable nature.

Language of teaching: English.

The BIP awards 6 ECTS credits to the students at the University of Parma and allows the participation of **5 participants, 3 from the Department of Economics and Management and 2 from the Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Cultural Industries.**

Eligible students are enrolled in the following Master Degrees at both Departments:

For the **Department of Economics and Management**

- **Master Degree in Economics and Management of Sustainable Food Systems (EMSFS/EMSAS)**

For the **Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Cultural Industries**

- **Master Degree in Journalism, Editorial Culture, Environmental and Multimedia Communication**
- **Master Degree in Philosophy**

Program location(s) for in presence lessons: University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Campus del Obelisco -35003 - Las Palmas De Gran Canaria, Spain.

Eligibility criteria

To apply for this program, students must be regularly enrolled at the University of Parma.

Please note that because the University of Parma is a Mobility Partner in this BIP, University

of Parma students currently on an exchange mobility are not eligible to participate in this call, because the cumulation of simultaneous mobilities is not allowed.

At the time of the application submission, applicants must possess an English language competence at the B2 level (CEFR), or above.

How to apply

Students interested in participating should submit their Application Package, in one single PDF file, to protocollo@unipr.it by the deadline set on May 10th, 2026 at 23:30.

The following documents must compose the candidate's Application Package:

1. A PDF scan of a current Identity Document
2. A Curriculum Vitae in English, from which it is possible to gauge – among others – the candidate's participation in international educational programmes and the knowledge of languages different from English
3. A Motivation Letter not exceeding a page in length
4. Transcript of Records/A certificate of enrolment at the home University with a list of passed exams and grades
5. The Screenshot, from Esse3, of the calculated average grade of the exams taken so far

Students shall prepare a single PDF file with the documents above, in the order suggested above (i.e., Identity Document, Curriculum Vitae in English, Motivation Letter, Transcript of Records and the Screenshot of the Average Grade) and save it with a filename "Surname.Name.pdf". Please note that the requirement on the type of the file (i.e., PDF only), file organisation (i.e., one single PDF file) and the naming convention (i.e., "Surname.Name.pdf") are mandatory and failure to comply with this will lead to applications being disregarded.

Students will be notified of their acceptance by May 14th, 2026 and are expected to take part in the first online session of the BIP, scheduled for Saturday, May 16th 2026 @ 10:00 CEST. Please note that participation in the online sessions foreseen by the programme is compulsory.

Selection criteria and procedures

An appointed committee, formed by Prof. Mario Veneziani, Prof. Filippo Arfini and Prof. Martina Giuffrè will carry out the selection procedures based on the following criteria:

- Criterion 1: Average Student Grade (up to 50 points out of 100)
- Criterion 2: Language Competence (up to 20 points out of 100)
- Criterion 3: Curriculum Vitae (up to 20 points out of 100)
- Criterion 4: Motivation Letter (up to 10 points out of 100)

Financial support

The University of Parma awards financial support to the five selected students according to the rules presented on pages 16 to 19 of the following document:

https://www.unipr.it/sites/default/files/2025-11/Bando%20unico%20SMS%202026-2027_prot.pdf. Travel contributions are a function of the distance travelled and the amount

per day is related to the Short Mobility schemes.

Contacts

For the **Department of Economics and Management**: Prof. Mario Veneziani,
mario.veneziani@unipr.it

For the **Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Cultural Industries**: Prof. Martina Giuffrè, martina.giuffre@unipr.it