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The Erasmus Programme in the European and Multipolar Educational Space

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Annotation. This article explores the role of the Erasmus Programme in the context of European and multipolar educational space. As a significant instrument of international academic mobility, the Erasmus Programme stimulates cooperation in the field of higher education between the participating countries. The Programme has expanded beyond its original European context to include universities, youth organisations and transnational corporations around the world. The Erasmus Programme not only promotes innovative approaches to education, facilitates knowledge exchange and strengthens international partnerships, but also has a broader political function. The Programme contributes to the creation of socio-economic resources for European citizens, strengthens the EU's political stability and promotes solidarity among Member States. The Erasmus Programme has become a unifying framework not only for European countries but also for a wide range of partner countries, making it an attractive model for regions around the world and a successful instrument of EU foreign policy. The relevance of the Erasmus Programme is reinforced from a practical point of view in the context of reforming Kazakhstan's higher education system and closer integration with European educational models.

Key words: Erasmus programme, education, academic mobility, internationalisation of higher education, exchange programme, multipolarity.

Introduction

One of the best known initiatives in education at the European Union level is Erasmus, the flagship exchange programme in education and training, which was launched in 1987. In 2014, all European Union programmes in the field of education, youth and sport were merged into a single programme called Erasmus+. The decision to use the name Erasmus for all EU education, training, youth and sport projects is not accidental. In 2013, when the European Commission was developing the next generation of education programmes, it was decided to use the Erasmus name as a brand.

"Erasmus" has become the most famous and successful educational programme of the EU, so its name has been taken as a sign of success of the European educational policy. The aim of this article is to analyse only the Erasmus programme in the context of academic mobility. An attempt is made to extrapolate the experience of the programme to the educational reality in the regional dimension. The influence of the programme on the education system of Kazakhstan as an extra-regional participant of the projects of the pan-European educational space is revealed. The relevance of this programme for Kazakhstan is in deeper incorporation of the European model into the educational system of Kazakhstan through the activation of participation of higher education institutions of Kazakhstan. in the Erasmus European grant programme for academic exchanges.

Research Methods

In writing this article, a comprehensive approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis was applied. The literature was systematised, including both scientific studies and analytical reports on the topic of international education policy. Particular attention was paid to the analysis of the policy of educational programmes of the European Union, including the following programmes "Erasmus."

The quantitative analysis examined statistical data on the number of students participating in international educational programmes, as well as their impact on the learning outcomes and career development of graduates. Qualitative analysis included interviews with educational experts, as well as analysis of the results of surveys of students who participated in Erasmus academic mobility programmes.

The study also covers a comparative analysis of the educational systems of the different countries participating in the Erasmus programme, as well as a comparison with mobility programmes implemented in the Eurasian space, including material on the CIS Network University and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) University. This allowed to identify key success factors and challenges faced by students and educational institutions in the different cultural and

political contexts. This multilevel approach contributed to a deep understanding of the topic and provided a comprehensive analysis of international education policy.

Discussion

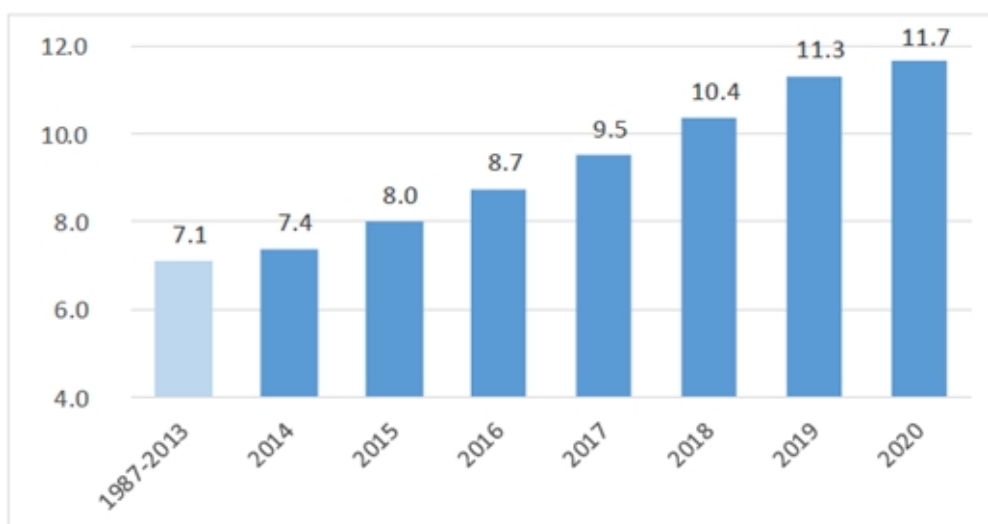
Socio-economic dimension of the Erasmus programme. The analysis of the key aspects of the Erasmus programme and its impact on socio-economic development, promotion of European identity, as well as the prospects of the programme in the context of a multipolar educational space reveals a number of significant trends and dynamics. Particular attention is paid to the socio-economic impact of the programme, its role in the formation and promotion of European identity on the world stage and in the Eurasian space, as well as the analysis of its future in a constantly evolving educational landscape. With regard to the educational landscape of Kazakhstan, the participation of its HEIs in the programme has become one of the important initiatives to engage in the global processes of internationalisation of higher education.

The programme was launched in 1987. In the first year of its operation, more than 3,000 students from 11 European countries took part in the programme [1, p.853]. For more than 30 years of the Erasmus Programme's existence, more than 11 million people have become its participants (Table 1) [2, p.17]. In 1995, the Erasmus programme was merged with the Socrates programme, and in 2007 - with other educational programmes. In 2013, the merger of international educational programmes took place

"Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Edulink, Alpha, a number of bilateral programmes, as well as Youth in Action, with the common theme of lifelong learning.

Table 1

Increase in student mobility since the start of the Erasmus programme



Turning to the history of the programme's development, it is worth specifying that the original intention was to name the EU education programme for the period 2014-2020 "Erasmus for All". Until then, in fact, the name "Erasmus" was applied only to student academic mobility programmes, while all other areas of educational projects had other names. For example, the name "Tempus" was given to the European educational cooperation programme with neighbouring EU countries, the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme was an EU programme focused on vocational education, and "Alpha" was the name given to the cooperation programme with Latin American universities.

Studies of the experience of implementing the Erasmus programme show that it provides a wide range of opportunities for students both in terms of education (in the process of learning) and upbringing (in the process of joining a new social environment) [3; 4; 5; 6].

The students who participated in the 2014 Erasmus impact study confirmed that they had gained a valuable opportunity to live in another country and to learn how to overcome the difficulties they faced there. It turned out that exchange students acquire new intercultural competences, which simultaneously have a positive impact on important indicators such as tolerance level, adaptation to a new environment or empathy, as well as strengthening their own positive image [7, p.183]. The interviewees stated that they became more effectively involved in social relations with other people and noted an increase in their own self-esteem.

Mobility programmes related to cultural enrichment and personal development make a significant contribution to the preparation of learners for professional life [3]. In the context of professional training, learner mobility contributes to the growth of individual employment and the development of skills demanded by the modern labour market [8]. The high level of professional academic and cultural development of Erasmus programme graduates is noted in a number of scientific papers [9; 10; 11].

The experience of participating in the Erasmus programme has a positive impact on the future career and social life of the participants [12]. According to a study on the impact of the programme

"In the Erasmus programme, professionals with experience of academic mobility have more chances for career development. One out of every three Erasmus students who have been employed abroad has been offered a position by the company that hosted them, and at least one out of every ten students who have participated in academic mobility programmes has set up their own company. Erasmus graduates are half as likely to face long-term unemployment compared to those who have not travelled abroad on the programme. The unemployment rate for graduates of the programme five years after graduation is 23% lower than for others [13].

An important aspect, noted by the interviewees participants programme

"Erasmus", concerned their professional development. The interviewees pointed out the importance of putting into practice during mobility the theoretical knowledge they had previously acquired.

knowledge. For example, trainees who had completed overseas internships had better labour skills (30%) than those who had not had such internships (70%). More than 80% of the Erasmus participants surveyed reported an average 42% improvement in the quality of practical skills upon their return to their home countries [12]. At the same time, the interviewees paid special attention to learning new approaches and techniques of professional activity, which were not taught to them in their home countries [14].

The professional value of the Erasmus programme is also confirmed by employers. 93% of surveyed employers in Europe confirmed that the skills acquired through this mobility programme are indeed important in employee selection. According to employers' ratings, graduates with international work experience are more competent not only in the area directly related to work tasks, but also in terms of academic knowledge and skills, as well as general qualities such as adaptability, initiative, determination, perseverance, written communication skills, analytical skills, problem solving, planning, coordinating and organising the work process [15, p.45]. In fact, international experience contributes to the growth of competitiveness in the labour market [16]. At the same time, the impact of participation in the Erasmus programme on the level of income is assessed as rather insignificant, which is associated with differences depending on the country and the specialty obtained [17].

It should be noted that the Erasmus programme, by providing scholarships for training, has a significant impact on the competence development and employment prospects of disadvantaged and socially disadvantaged individuals. This fact is in line with the idea that international educational experience can provide these individuals with an excellent opportunity to develop business skills that they may not have been able to acquire given their social status [18].

Research on the experiences of learners participating in the Erasmus programme shows that the programme contributes to a wide range of their achievements. Students are exposed to a variety of unavoidable situations while studying in another country, such as adapting to different environments, relationships and interactions with different cultures, new life experiences and new opportunities through the acquisition of skills, knowledge and abilities. In a study of the impact and outcomes of academic mobility, R. Bridgstock found that mobility programmes not only help to enrich one's own culture, but also to master a foreign language to a proper extent [3], enhance the desire for personal growth and prepare oneself for professional life. B.M. Kem also argued that international student mobility promotes personal development and global engagement within the walls of higher education institutions [5]. J. Andrews and H. Higson also point out that student exchange programmes promote personal competitiveness and the development of skills in demand in modern labour markets, as well as promote international engagement in the

higher education [8]. In addition to the results of these studies, a number of other studies show that the Erasmus programme contributes to the personal, academic and cultural development of participants [9; 11].

Meanwhile, there is a concern in expert circles that the Erasmus programme stimulates the outflow of talented students from the country, when the best students from one country choose to study abroad and then decide not to return to their home country. For example, referring to other sources, S.Y. Kashkin and A.O. Chetverikov cite the following data: today about every second researcher from the African region lives in Europe; 90 per cent of Indian students who studied at US universities stayed there after completing their studies; 70 per cent of Chinese students who studied at US universities between 1978 and 2006 stayed in the United States. Of Australian international students, no more than a third plan to return home. In terms of established scientists, 76% of patents of US universities are the result of the work of researchers of foreign origin [19, p.25].

For example, in Italy, according to 2015 data, among those who experienced international mobility during their studies, 19% remained abroad four years after graduation, compared to 4.3% of graduates who continued their academic career in Italy but had no international mobility experience [20].

Speaking of the contribution that the Erasmus programme can make to the internal social cohesion of individual EU Member States, the idea of introducing a similar programme between Italian universities - instead of national and international ones, as was the case until recently - should be mentioned. This idea is currently foreseen by a ministerial decree on the academic autonomy of universities, which in turn is being considered for implementation by the competent parliamentary committees [21].

The Erasmus Programme and the promotion of European identity on the world stage.

The Erasmus Programme has become not only an important element in achieving global development goals, but also a way of promoting European identity on the world stage. In the context of the problem of pan-European identity [22], it seems to be one of the few mechanisms that have worked well, contributing to the consolidation of the value foundations of European identity.

In this regard, it must be assumed that the Erasmus programme also fulfils the role of "soft power" in the EU policy. Initially, the EU's educational strategies were based on the promotion of European integration in the European space, as well as the dissemination of European values on external platforms through such an attractive instrument as European education. The Bologna Declaration became the documentation of the measures aimed at the implementation of the EU education policy. Education has become a political tool of the EU to strengthen its position as an international-political actor in global issues.

In connection with the mission to promote European identity, the Erasmus programme can be evaluated from different perspectives. On the one hand, the Erasmus programme contributes to the following

significant contribution to the development of European values and positive attitudes on the part of students. On the other hand, students from non-EU countries (Turkey, Norway, Liechtenstein, etc.) have a stronger awareness of the uniqueness and originality of their countries' culture. This result may indicate that the realisation of a pan-European identity may be an additional advantage for EU citizens, while the development of a pan-European worldview has become a prerogative for those who are not European.

The orientation of the Erasmus programme to Europe is a factor influencing the national identity of students, strengthening in them the awareness of a strong connection with the life values of modern society [23, p.191-194]. At the same time, such perception is especially relevant for EU citizens from Southern and Eastern Europe, for example, Bulgaria, Portugal, Italy, but it was not revealed for UK citizens. At the same time, a significant emphasis on one's own national identity threatens the achievement of some global goals of the programme "Erasmus. A number of programme documents note that the priority of its implementation is the global development of knowledge: "The future lies in a world built not on national identity or kinship ties, but on the understanding of universal values and strategic development without borders" [24]. [24].

Therefore, the Erasmus generation is spoken of as those who identify themselves more with European citizenship than with the nationality to which they belong. However, according to some researchers, it is erroneous to speak about the existence of an entire "Erasmus generation" [25]. According to Eurostat, in 2019 there were more than 50 million people aged between 20 and 24 living in the EU, two-thirds of whom did not attend university. Of the approximately 17 million students studying at European universities, 274,000 were participating in the Erasmus programme in 2019, and around 98% of young Europeans did not participate in Erasmus student exchanges [25]. In addition, the Erasmus programme carries economic obstacles that become the reason for non-participation of entire social groups. Firstly, those who go on exchange receive a grant that is not commensurate with the income of the learner or his/her family or the cost of living in the destination country. Secondly, the rigid selection process and limits on participation noted by Teresa Kuhn [26] continue to apply, with the result that not all talented learners with the necessary aptitudes are given the opportunity to participate in the programme.

All other things being equal, students with a greater awareness of the idea of European integration, better knowledge of foreign languages, etc. are more likely to become participants in the Erasmus programme. International mobility is supposed to foster a sense of European identity. However, the paradox is that in recent years mobility is primarily used by those who need it least [26].

If we consider the international legal subjectivity of the European Union as an aspect of identity, the Erasmus programme can play a supporting role in foreign policy, contributing to the formation of a class of European citizens,

well-informed and open to international co-operation. Students participating in the Erasmus programme can thus become informal ambassadors of the European Union and contribute to a deeper insight into European issues in the process of international cooperation.

It should be acknowledged that prior to participation in the Erasmus programme, Kazakhstan's HEIs did not have much experience in communicating in a multicultural environment within their campuses, especially in contact with European culture. Having joined the Bologna Declaration in March 2010, Kazakhstan began to embrace the best global practices of educational activity, adapting them to its scientific and educational landscape. Having become the 47th member of the European Higher Education Area, Kazakhstan at the same time became the first Central Asian state to be recognised as a full member of the European educational space [27].

The Erasmus programme is in fact an integral part of EU diplomacy. An example is the new Africa-EU strategy with a key role for higher education and youth initiatives [28]. This new strategy, approved in 2020, offers an important framework for strengthening co-operation between Africa and the EU in the field of higher education. It emphasises the importance of higher education in achieving sustainable development and strengthening economic, social and cultural ties between both regions. The strategy calls for the strengthening of partnerships and the exchange of knowledge and experience between African and European universities, as well as the development of joint educational programmes and research projects. It supports the establishment of university networks and the exchange of students, teachers and researchers between African and EU countries. The Strategy also recognises the importance of supporting African countries in developing and improving their national higher education systems, including improving the quality of education, developing professional skills and engaging young people in education [28].

In 2020. The European Commission completed the implementation of the first phase of the Erasmus+ programme as well as the preparatory work for the new financial period (2021-2027). On 30 May 2018, the European Commission submitted a proposal for a new Erasmus programme to the European Parliament and the Council. The European Commission's original proposal was to cover 12 million people, three times the number of participants in the previous phase of the programme. At the same time, the programme budget was only doubled. The current programme, which runs until 2027, is more ambitious, envisages greater student mobility to non-EU countries and plans to involve 50% of students in mobility programmes in the EU area.

On 14 February 2020, the head of the European Council, Charles Michel, presented a draft planning document for the EU budget for 2021-2027. The document provided for the first time a forecast for the subsequent financing of long-term projects, including after 2027. The €21.2 billion budget was a smaller amount than originally proposed by the European Commission and the European Parliament, which caused some disappointment from youth organisations. However, the impact has been taken into account

coronavirus pandemic, which paralysed the economy of European countries [29, p.313- 327], acting as grantors under the Erasmus programme.

Perspectives of the Erasmus Programme in a multipolar educational space. The Erasmus Programme is developing in a highly changing global educational context. International experts note that educational migration flows reveal signs of multipolarity [30]. Alternative models of international academic mobility are emerging, which may be due to significant geopolitical changes that have occurred over the last 20 years, in particular, the terrorist attacks of 2001, the global financial crisis of 2008, the "Brexit" procedure, the coronavirus pandemic [31], as well as the geopolitical situation due to the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. International mobility patterns, in particular, are affected by the growth of regional mobility due to the rapid development of higher education in emerging economies.

As recent studies [32; 33; 34; 35] show, there has been a significant shift in academic mobility patterns, which for decades were dominated by traditional destinations - the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, France. Although these countries still remain the main destinations for international student mobility, their influence has roughly halved compared to previous decades. At the same time, the educational programmes of Turkey and South Korea are increasing their influence. The programmes of Malaysia, India, Brazil, Portugal, South Africa are less influential but have already made a name for themselves. These are basically scholarship programmes funded by the governments of these countries. Russia's educational programmes have a strong influence in the regional dimension. It is also worth mentioning the Gulf States, which are actively investing in transnational trade zones (Qatar, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia), building up their educational potential. China's growing influence over the past few years is due to its role as both a sending country and a new destination for international students.

A comparative analysis of international mobility programmes in a multipolar educational space in general can be made on the basis of the following indicators: academic impact, skills development, personal and professional growth, cultural integration, networks and cooperation, level of student satisfaction, level of integration of the political space.

In this context, it is interesting to compare the Erasmus programme with the CIS Network University and the SCO University.

The Erasmus Programme plays an important role in strengthening European integration and serves as an instrument of EU soft power. It contributes to the creation of a European identity by providing exchange of students and teachers between universities in different European countries. It allows programme participants to experience different cultures, educational systems and approaches to learning, thus contributing to the formation and capacity building of a common European educational space.

The CIS Network University and the SCO University, on the other hand, are oriented towards the Eurasian region and have geographical limitations. The objectives of these projects also resembled those of the Erasmus programme: the integration of political spaces - the areas of each programme. In this regard, they were equally perceived as political strategies for the states that play a key role in the regions where they are spread.

The CIS Network University focuses mainly on the countries of the former USSR, which allows CIS countries to co-operate in education, share experience and resources, and ultimately strengthen interstate ties.

The SCO University, in turn, includes universities not only from the former Soviet Union, but also from other Asian states - China, and in the future India, Iran, and Pakistan, which have become full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. This will expand the geographical boundaries of the programme and allow participants to gain a broader experience of intercultural exchange and cooperation.

The Erasmus programme features make it a transcultural mobility model, the benefits of which in terms of personal development and professional training of students can be identified regardless of their different socio-economic profiles and geographical origin. Thus, from the regions closest to Russia, students from universities of the CIS countries (non-EU countries) actively participate in the programme and successfully show themselves: Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Moldova.

Russia has been participating in European educational programmes since the early 1990s. Initially, the Russian Federation participated in the EU's Tempus programme, aimed at supporting the modernisation of the educational systems of neighbouring countries, then Russian universities began to participate in other EU programmes - ErasmusMundus and Erasmus+. This allowed Russian universities to gain valuable experience of international cooperation in education, facilitated the development of joint educational programmes, the organisation of joint scientific and technical events, the study of the reorientation of the educational system, the development of joint educational programmes, and the development of joint scientific and technical activities.

The Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes have become a good stimulus for strengthening educational ties between Kazakhstan and European countries. Thus, in the period from 1995 to 2013, universities in Kazakhstan became participants in 76 projects totalling more than 54 million euros [38]. Participation in EU grant projects allowed Kazakhstan to introduce advanced European social and technological innovations into its educational system. This, in turn, stimulated scientific and educational co-operation of Kazakhstan with the EU countries. To date, exchange programmes implemented at the expense of EU funding remain relevant for Kazakhstan [39, p.138].

Due to its multidimensional nature, the Erasmus Programme has grown far beyond the individual participants to include universities, youth organisations, and transnational companies in its more than 30 years of existence. In a multipolar world, the Erasmus Programme will continue to play an important role in strengthening the international educational space. It will continue to expand

its geography, including more and more countries and regions, and deepen its influence to cover more areas of education and learning.

The Erasmus programme is expected to continue innovative approaches to learning, including the use of new technologies and methods, to ensure high quality education and learning for all participants.

The Erasmus programme will also continue its work to strengthen links between different educational stakeholders, including universities, youth organisations and transnational companies. This will contribute to the exchange of knowledge and experience, as well as to the strengthening of co-operation and partnerships at the international level, the formation of a global educational space, and the sharing of knowledge, culture and experience between different countries and regions.

Conclusion

The potential of the Erasmus programme is not limited to its educational function. In fact, the latter becomes a resource for the fulfilment of higher, including political tasks. The analysis allows us to draw a number of conclusions.

Firstly, the Erasmus programme is and will remain an important resource for European citizens in socio-economic terms. In the long term, it contributes to strengthening the foundations of EU political stability and solidarity between Member States, especially in situations of divergence between national needs and supranational interests.

Secondly, this function is related to the strengthening of identity by supporting the process of identification of Europeans with EU values. It also indirectly stimulates the ability of Europeans to self-position themselves, which strengthens the EU's international legal personality by pointing to the unified nature of the mentality of the peoples of Europe. The possibility of external projection through the dissemination of EU values is a very important factor for the realisation of European diplomacy.

Thirdly, the Erasmus programme has become a unifying framework not only for European countries, but also for a wide range of countries and regions considered by the programme as partners. In the cases of CIS and SCO network universities, the programme "Erasmus has become an example to follow. It is also attractive to other regions of the world, thus going beyond the "exclusively European" programme in its functions and involving participants from different parts of the world in its orbit. Undoubtedly, in this form, the programme is a successful tool of the EU foreign policy, creating a healthy competition to the established international academic mobility programmes of, for example, such countries as the USA, Canada and Australia. In this regard, we can talk about the formation of multipolarity in the field of global education, and, taking into account the role of "soft power" and the political context of the programme, about multipolarity in the topical issues of the international agenda.

Fourthly, the example of Kazakhstan shows the result of the programme's assistance "Erasmus" to extra-regional participants. Kazakhstan has been able to adapt in a few years

to the global educational space, to become closer to the EU in institutional terms. The fruit of Kazakhstan's integration policy was the activation of student mobility, development of students' competences as future specialists able to easily adapt to the new requirements of the labour market. The Erasmus academic mobility programme has formed a special worldview among Kazakhstani students: university youth became a transmitter of Kazakhstan's values to European countries, while bringing European values and international experience into the social life of Kazakhstan. This state of affairs contributed to the formation of a positive view of Kazakhstan from the EU countries, gaining international prestige not only in the educational sphere, but also in international politics. It is not surprising that Kazakhstan is considered by the international community as one of the most advanced in terms of innovation in the CIS space.

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Doing so will cause the Erasmus Foundation to become unstable and the polar environment to deteriorate. Doing so will cause the Erasmus Foundation to fall in the Europolar and polar regions of the world

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"If you do not use the Erasmus logo, do not place the device in a place where it is not safe to do so and do not place it in a place where it is not safe to do so, Doing so will result in fire or electric shocks and may result in fire or electric shock. "Doing so may cause the device to become unstable and cause the device to become unstable in Kazakhstan.

These are: Erasmus, bildungsroman, academy, academy of education, international bildungsroman, diamond bildungsroman, polar.

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The "Erasmus" Programme in the European and multipolar educational area

Abstract. This article delves into the role of the "Erasmus" Programme within the context of the

European

and multipolar educational spaces. Recognised as a significant tool for international academic mobility,

the "Erasmus" Programme serves as a catalyst for higher education cooperation between participating countries. The programme has grown beyond its initial European scope, encompassing universities, youth organisations, and transnational corporations worldwide. The Erasmus is not only instrumental in fostering innovative approaches to education, encouraging knowledge exchange, and strengthening international partnerships, but also performs broader political functions. It contributes to socio-economic resources for European citizens, reinforces the EU's political stability, and promotes solidarity among the member states. The "Erasmus" Programme has become a unifying foundation for not only European countries but also a wide range of partner nations, making it an attractive model for regions worldwide and a successful instrument of the EU's foreign policy. The relevance of the "Erasmus" Programme is enhanced from a practical point of view in the context of reforming the higher education system in Kazakhstan and closer integration with European educational models.

Keywords: "Erasmus" Programme, education, academic mobility, internationalisation of higher education, exchange program, multipolarity.

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