



## PRESS RELEASES

# Press Release: More cooperation between the European and Pakistani universities through EU's Erasmus+ higher education programme

Erasmus+, the higher education programme of the European Union, is currently open for applications. The programme funds cooperation projects between Pakistani and European universities and offers scholarships to students and staff to study in Europe. The deadlines for students for full degree masters are in December and January. For universities to participate in Credit Mobility and Capacity building in Higher Education, the deadlines are in February.

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Islamabad, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016: Erasmus+, the higher education programme of the European Union, is currently open for applications. The programme funds cooperation projects between Pakistani and European universities and offers scholarships to students and staff to study in Europe. The deadlines for students for full degree masters are in December and January. For universities to participate in Credit Mobility and Capacity building in Higher Education, the deadlines are in February.

Erasmus+ offers many opportunities for universities. Although the scholarship part of the programme is well-known in Pakistan, the new parts focusing on inter-university cooperation and capacity building need further introduction. "Capacity building projects could be very beneficial for universities in Pakistan. This can include curriculum

development and modernization, upgrading facilities and equipment, or improving university governance. In 2016, only one capacity building application, among 107 selected for Asian countries, involved Pakistan. We need to create more awareness about the opportunities the Erasmus+ offers for Pakistani universities", said Ms. Anne Kofoed, Official from the European Union Delegation during a seminar held at the Higher Education Commission in Islamabad.

The seminar was part of a series of workshops being organised by the European Union in Pakistan in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission. The workshops aim to raise the awareness about the opportunities offered by the programme for Pakistani universities in order to encourage more applications.

Ms. Kofoed shared that the EU's Erasmus+ programme is one of the largest and most diverse higher education programs being offered worldwide, as it includes extensive variety of opportunities at both the individual and institutional level. In addition to institutional capacity building, Erasmus+ also offers short-term scholarships for students (3-12 months) and staff (2 months) under credit mobility action, under which the universities together with European universities can apply for funding for student and staff exchange. Ms. Kofoed highlighted that in 2016, roughly 3,000 scholarships were funded for Asian students, however only 57 of those came from Pakistan. This is remarkably less than could be expected, given the country's size.

Speaking at the seminar, Dr. Mahmood Butt, Consultant Higher Education Commission thanked the EU Delegation for the financial aid opportunities provided to students and higher education institutions through Erasmus+ programme of the EU. He hoped more Pakistani scholars will avail the opportunities being provided through the European Union.

Through the Erasmus+ program, higher education institutions can benefit from strategic improvement of the professional skills of their staff, organisational capacity building, and creating transnational cooperative partnerships with organisations from other countries in order to produce innovative outputs or exchange best practices.

For more information about Erasmus+ program, please visit:

[http://eueuropaeas.fpfis.slb.ec.europa.eu:8084/delegations/pakistan/13087/educationa-l-scholarships-and-academic-cooperation--erasmus-programme\\_en](http://eueuropaeas.fpfis.slb.ec.europa.eu:8084/delegations/pakistan/13087/educationa-l-scholarships-and-academic-cooperation--erasmus-programme_en)

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