

Erasmus Mundus – for Cultural Explorers and Global Citizens

8.1.2026

Rising requirements in the world of work and rapid political, environmental and societal changes around the globe emphasize the value of multidisciplinary and multicultural skills and competencies for those who want to be ahead of the curve. Globalization and the great development of the free movement in the European Union and beyond have also built an interesting set up to create cross national cooperation and joint master level degree programmes via Erasmus Mundus programme. Erasmus Mundus is a part of the Erasmus+ organization, focusing clearly on quality assured joint master level degree programmes (European Comission, 2024a).

Erasmus Mundus Programme started in 2004 and is described as “a flagship educational initiative of the European Union” (European Comission, 2024a). The initiative has developed in four different stages. The ongoing focus is on “the development of new, innovative, high-level integrated transnational study programmes at master’s level. This is particularly focused on underrepresented countries or thematic areas under Erasmus Mundus. The program is designed focused on especially situations where higher education institutions are not yet ready to offer a full Erasmus Mundus Joint Programme but wish to engage in joint programmes and explore the opportunities offered by the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes” (European Comission, 2024b).

SEAMK Master School is part of The Erasmus Mundus Design Measures project Automotive Computing for Mobility Innovation (ACMI). Coordinated by Škoda Auto University (Czech Republic), ACMI brings together partner institutions from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Finland, and Romania, who all have remarkable milestones along the history of the automotive industry. The partner universities are continuing the tradition by educating engineers for those positions and needs. Through collaboration, the programme will offer a broad

and timely approach to computing, mechanical engineering and management.

The Erasmus Catalogue (European Comission, n.d.) shows that Finland is currently part of 32 Erasmus Mundus programmes. Overall, there are more than two hundred programmes from various fields, countries and universities. There are several reasons why this kind of programme can offer an unique opportunity for those seeking an individual way of differentiate themselves on the job market: joint degree programmes are highly innovative, they offer the possibility to discover multiple countries, take part in internships, research projects and fieldwork and strengthen the career opportunities through multicultural and country based networks (European Comission, 2024a).

It is important to acknowledge that combining various strengths of the partners and understanding the potential of combining cultural, environmental and academia related experiences the Erasmus Mundus has a clear place within the higher education institutions. The added value which comes from strong quality assurance of the education, international collaboration and the development of aligned practices and administration especially in Europe creates more trustworthy documentation of skills and competencies and builds trust to academia related achievements in these hectic societies and working life we have around us (European Comission 2024b, 117).

For me as a Study Counsellor for master level students, this opportunity presents a unique approach for those cultural explorers and global citizens who wish to work on solving global challenges. The added value comes from the experiences of having networks and access to projects and real-life working environments across the countries which cannot be achieved when completing a national master's degree. At SEAMK we are truly excited for the future of ACMI!

This project is funded by the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) can be held responsible for the content of this publication.

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