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POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF ERASMUS+ B.I.P. PROJECTS ON UNIVERSITIES' ACTIVITIES AND REGIONAL TOURISM

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Summary. The article is devoted to the study of the role of the Erasmus+ Program in promoting the intensification and deepening of international cooperation within the framework of the European Union. The purpose of the article is to present the results of a study of the potential impact of the Erasmus+ Program and one of its projects B.I.P. (Mixed Intensive Program) to expand the educational opportunities of universities based on this program. It has been proven that Erasmus+ B.I.P. has become an important tool for innovative activity and promoting the development of cooperation between universities. It is emphasized that Erasmus+ B.I.P. facilitates the deepening of short-term and intensive educational activities through online meetings that bring together partners (participating universities) for the effective implementation of their projects. It was noted that the special value of programs in which universities from different countries and different fields participate is that such programs allow specialists of different specializations to come together to solve urgent regional problems and achieve the large-scale goals of sustainable development of the United Nations. Attention is focused on the expected additional value of these projects for existing educational programs of higher educational institutions. The potential consequences of the implementation of these projects for regional tourism are considered. These positive effects were made possible by increasing the visibility of tourist recreation facilities for tourists and increasing the level of cultural awareness among members of host communities. The main method of the presented research was the use of secondary data sources, which emphasized the multifaceted influence of B.I.P. projects and shed light on their transformative potential in higher education institutions, as well as in regional and international tourism activities. Features of strategies for better integration of knowledge about the country with the curriculum are determined. The process of developing such programs has been developed, which is divided into five stages: analytical, design, pilot, adjustment and further implementation. The importance of financial support for the implementation of the listed strategies and programs was emphasized, in particular through the receipt of scholarships and grants.

Key words: Erasmus+ Program, B.I.P. Projects, International Educational Activities University, Regional Tourism.

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ПОТЕНЦІАЛЬНІ ЕФЕКТИ ПРОЕКТІВ ERASMUS+ B.I.P. НА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ ТА РЕГІОНАЛЬНИЙ ТУРИЗМ

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Резюме. Стаття присвячена дослідженню ролі Програми Erasmus+ у сприянні інтенсифікації та поглиблення міжнародної співпраці університетів у рамках Європейського Союзу. Основною метою

статті є висвітлення результатів дослідження потенційного впливу Програми Erasmus+ та одного із її проектів В.І.Р. (Змішаної інтенсивної програми) на розширення освітніх можливостей університетів на основі цієї програми. Доведено, що програма Erasmus+ В.І.Р. стала важливим інструментом інноваційної діяльності та механізмом сприяння розвитку співпраці між університетами. Наголошено, що Erasmus+ В.І.Р. сприяє поглибленню короткотермінової та інтенсивної навчальної діяльності через онлайн-зустрічі, які об'єднують партнерів (університетів-учасників) задля ефективного виконання їх проектів. Доведено, що особливою цінністю програм, у яких беруть участь університети з різних країн і з різних галузей, є те, що такі програми надають змогу фахівцям різної спеціалізації об'єднатися для вирішення нагальних регіональних проблем і досягнення масштабних цілей сталого розвитку ООН. Акцентовано на очікуваній додатковій цінності цих проектів для існуючих навчальних програм вищих навчальних закладів. Розглянуто потенційні наслідки від реалізації цих проектів для регіонального туризму. Ці позитивні наслідки стають можливими завдяки збільшенню видимості туристичних рекреацій для туристів та підвищенню рівня культурної обізнаності членів приймаючих громад. Основним методом представлено дослідження було використання вторинних джерел даних, у яких висвітлено багатогранний вплив В.І.Р. проектів та проливається світло на їхній трансформаційний потенціал у закладах вищої освіти, а також регіональній і міжнародній туристичній діяльності. Визначено особливості стратегій для кращої інтеграції знань про країну з навчальною програмою. Розроблено процес розроблення таких програм, який поділено на п'ять етапів: аналітичний, проектний, пілотний, коригування та подальше впровадження. Наголошено на важливості фінансової підтримки реалізації перерахованих стратегій і програм, зокрема завдяки отриманню стипендій та грантів.

Ключові слова: програма Erasmus+, В.І.Р. проекти, міжнародна освітня діяльність університету, регіональний туризм.

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Introduction. Erasmus + B.I.P. Projects simply stand for «Blended Intensive Program» Projects. These brief, intense programs take advantage of cutting-edge teaching and learning strategies, such as online collaboration. One of the possible program offerings is challenge-based learning, in which multidisciplinary and transnational teams collaborate to address issues such as those related to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations or other social issues that have been recognized by enterprises, regions, or cities. In comparison to the current courses or training provided by the participating HEIs (Higher Education institutions), the intensive program should give value and may be presented twice a year. Blended intensive programs seek to reach all sorts of students from various backgrounds, study disciplines, and cycles by enabling new and more flexible mobility formats that mix physical mobility with a virtual element.

Higher education institution groups will have the chance to plan, brief, intensive blended learning, teaching, and staff training sessions. In these blended-learning intensive programs, teams of students or staff will go overseas for a brief period of time while also participating in an obligatory virtual component that promotes cooperation and cooperative online learning. In order to work collaboratively and concurrently on specific tasks that are integrated into the blended intensive program and contribute to the overall learning goals, the virtual component must bring the learners together virtually.

Review of the latest research and literature. The problems on the role of the Erasmus+ Program in promoting the intensification and deepening of international cooperation within the framework of the European Union have been paid great attention to by a number of scientists, namely Brown P., Lesjak M., Juvan E., Ineson E., Yap M., Axelsson E., Maggi W., Leung H. and many others.

Main purpose of the article is to present the results of a study of the potential impact of the Erasmus+ Program and one of its projects B.I.P. (Mixed Intensive Program) to expand the educational opportunities of universities based on this program.

Task setting. To achieve the set goal, the following scientific tasks are defined: to reveal the potential impact of the Erasmus+ Program and one of its projects B.I.P. (Mixed Intensive Program) to expand the educational opportunities of universities based on this program; to

prove that Erasmus+ B.I.P. has become an important tool for innovative activity and promoting the development of cooperation between universities.

Statements of main issues of the study

Impact of Erasmus+ B.I.P. Projects on Universities

First of all, it should be said that staff and students of Higher Education institutions may be able to enroll in blended intensive programs. The collaborating Higher Education institutions' capacity to create and execute cutting-edge teaching and learning approaches is increased through blended intensive programs (Erasmus+ Mobility Projects for Higher Education Students and Staff, 2023). To mention about statistics out of the participants had started a mobility activity in 2022; 96% consider they have benefited from their participation in learning mobility (EU commission, 2022) participants are either satisfied or very satisfied with their mobility; 98% of participants some of the advantages offered by B.I.P. Projects for universities are as follows:

- Internationalization of Universities: B.I.P. project's initiatives frequently entail collaboration between universities from various countries. This promotes globalization and cultural interchange among the partner universities;
- Improved Educational Quality: Collaboration in B.I.P. projects may result in the creation of novel teaching techniques, resources, and curriculum. This can help to improve educational quality across cooperating universities;
- Staffs' Professional Growth, for example, Faculty and staff participating in B.I.P. projects frequently have possibilities for professional growth, learning new skills and experiences. This can have a favorable influence on the expertise available at the university;
- Student Mobility and Enriched Learning Experiences: B.I.P. projects encourage student mobility by allowing students to visit partner institutions. This enhances their academic experience, introduces them to new cultures, and broadens their viewpoints;
- Innovation and Collaboration in Research: B.I.P. projects frequently incorporate joint research endeavors. As a result, information and research discoveries may be shared, and creative solutions to shared problems may be created;
- Networking and Partnerships: Universities that participate in B.I.P. projects, establish networks and alliances with other academic institutions, companies, and associations. Opportunities for upcoming partnerships, cooperative initiatives, and resource sharing may arise as a result;
- Improved Language Skills: Because B.I.P. projects entail cross-border cooperation, participants frequently get the opportunity to enhance their language proficiency, which adds to an academic atmosphere that is more varied and multilingual;
- Promotion of Inclusiveness and Diversity: Universities have a role in advancing inclusiveness and diversity by taking part in international projects. A more diverse and internationally conscious academic community is fostered by exposure to other viewpoints and cultures;
- Meeting Physically Matters: One of the Blended Intensive Programme projects had an onsite gathering held in Kaunas, Lithuania in May, 2023. Students collaborated online with lecturers and coaches for eight weeks as scheduled in the project. The actual gathering in Kaunas, where the concluding workshops, discussions, and cultural festivities took place, concluded in the last week of the project. Erasmus+ supported this Mobility Week as part of a Blended Intensive Programme. One of the primary coordinators of the project, Katja Auffret, an INSA Toulouse teacher, provided an explanation. *«We wanted the students to apply the concepts they had developed about Green Cities to a specific city, in this case – Kaunas. As it is difficult to develop real intercultural relationships online, the students had an opportunity to meet offline to discuss their work further and participate in intercultural group work».*

Mano Schrowange, an INSA Toulouse student, highlighted the significance of mobility among the attendees. *«I joined a very diverse group: students gathered from different universities, cultures, study fields and even study levels. Meeting physically definitely has big advantages: you can build relations, read the body language and experience full conversation dynamics. It is hard to get to know people in Zoom meetings»* (ECIU University, Learn News, 2023).

Educational and Cultural Exchange Benefits

Projects for Blended Intensive Programs, which incorporate both online and in-person elements, provide several advantages for education and cross-cultural interaction. Here are a few main benefits:

- Intercultural Dialogue: Participants in blended programs come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, creating a rich setting for cross-cultural learning. By exchanging viewpoints, concepts, and life stories, participants can foster greater comprehension of other cultures;
- Flexible Learning and Adaptability: Online educational resources and materials are made available to participants in blended programs, providing them with flexibility about the time and location of their learning. This flexibility is particularly beneficial for people with varying schedules and obligations.

Development of International Networks and Partnerships

Projects including blended intensive programs are essential for the growth of global networks and alliances because they encourage communication and cooperation between individuals, institutions, and organizations. These initiatives support the development and expansion of global networks in the following significant ways.

Cross-Border Cooperation. Participants from many nations can collaborate more easily in blended learning programs. People may collaborate and work as a team across boundaries by working on projects together using shared web resources and face-to-face interactions.

Interdisciplinary Participation. Participants in B.I.P. projects frequently come from a variety of backgrounds and specialties. By fostering the interchange of ideas and viewpoints, this multidisciplinary interaction can result in the creation of global networks spanning several areas.

In conclusion, by establishing channels for cooperation, cultivating multidisciplinary connections, and encouraging the worldwide interchange of information and ideas, blended intensive program initiatives act as catalysts for the growth of international networks and collaborations.

Enhancement of Academic Programs and Curriculum

By combining online and in-person components, blended intensive program projects can greatly improve academic programs and curricula. These initiatives enhance the academic offerings in the following ways, to name a few.

Accessibility and Flexibility. Flexible online learning resources let students access course materials at their speed as part of a blended learning programs. Since it accommodates learners who may have other obligations or a job, this flexibility is especially useful for students with varied schedules.

World Views. International cooperation and cross-cultural exchange are frequent features of Blended Learning Program projects. Students have a more thorough grasp of their field and develop a global worldview as a result of this exposure to many viewpoints, which enhances the curriculum.

Effects of Erasmus+ on Student Mobility and Retention

Before delving into the characteristics of the anticipated positive effects of participating in the Erasmus+ program, we believe it is appropriate to conduct a brief analysis of the essence of the key terms we use to describe these programs, namely: mobility and academic mobility.

The first of these is important in terms of general personality characteristics. Since the 1980s, such characteristics of a person as mobility has become increasingly important, mainly in the context of his or her ability to be successful, including through the ability to adapt to changes in the environment. In the explanatory dictionary, mobility is defined as a process associated with a person, individual, or family changing their place in the social structure of society (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2024). Given that humans a social creature, we should also mention the definition of the term «social mobility» – a form of social reproduction, a process of social (horizontal, vertical) movements, the transition of individuals from one social class, social group, or strata to another, associated with both social uplift and social decline (Brown, 2015). It follows that only a person who can be guided by experience and social values, who is aware of his or her aspirations and empowers himself or herself, can successfully adapt to the modern world of rapidly changing events and meet its requirements. The process of forming a mobile specialist involves the organization of a certain «field of opportunities», educational and upbringing environment, and life activities that orient the future specialist towards a diverse choice of self-manifestation, status growth, professional development, quick orientation (adaptability), and the desire to actively change unfavorable situations.

The former paragraphs prove the outstanding role of academic mobility in the formation of a modern specialist. Academic mobility is the movement of students and teachers of higher education institutions for a certain period of time to another educational or scientific institution within or outside their country for the purpose of studying or teaching (Maggi et al., 2017). In our opinion, the scale of the positive effects of academic mobility, in general, and participation in the Erasmus+ program, in particular it can be considered at the level of direct participants and the meso-environment of the program (primarily a particular region or industry). The first benefits from the program's implementation are experienced by its direct participants: universities, students, and teachers.

The literature widely describes the benefits that universities participating in the Erasmus+ program receive, including improved international project management skills, improved organizational capacity, new horizons for the internationalization of higher education at all levels, etc. (Souto-Otero et al., 2014). In addition to the above, in our opinion, an important additional benefit is the improvement of the university's image in the educational services market, and thus its attractiveness, especially for talented and ambitious students. After all, these are the students who understand well that international experience and language skills will be a strong argument in their favor for employers, thereby contributing to their competitiveness in the labor market.

Among the benefits for students is the opportunity to study unique subjects and disciplines that the mother university does not offer; gaining new knowledge in an international environment, which in turn helps to develop skills to overcome cultural, socioeconomic and academic barriers; increasing employment opportunities and career prospects; improving self-esteem and self-improvement; motivation to participate in education or professional training after studying abroad, etc. (Perez-Encinas et al., 2021).

It is safe to say that most of the benefits that students receive also apply to teachers, adjusted for age and qualifications. The most commonly mentioned benefits for teachers are: professional development (teaching, training, youth work, etc.); better understanding of existing practices, reforms and systems in education, training and youth in other countries; developing capacity to implement changes in the context of reforms and international cooperation of educational organizations; increased opportunities for professional and career growth; improved foreign language skills, etc. (Vidal-Suárez et al., 2021).

In fact, in addition to those mentioned here, each participant can gain much more benefit by formulating their own list of individual goals that would be in harmony with the main (education and training) goals.

The benefits that can be gained from the functioning of the Erasmus+ program at the second level (meso-level) are derived from the benefits of the first level, so they require a certain time lag, to manifest. At the same time, the most important condition under which the benefits of the second level can be obtained at all is the interest of regional counterparts. In this case, representatives of both regions – both the region of origin of the program participant and the region where the host university is located – can become beneficiaries of the program. The main beneficiaries of this level are the education system, business (including tourism), historical, cultural and other objects. In the long run, the socioeconomic, technical and technological, and even political and legal environment may also improve due to the multiplier effect.

We believe it is appropriate to justify the realism of obtaining so many benefits, explain their essence for each of the named second-tier beneficiaries, and at the same time warn against overly optimistic expectations.

The first beneficiary is the education system, by which we mean the union of curricula and educational institutions. Its improvement begins with the host university through the efforts of all three direct program participants.

The university should make certain efforts to participate in the program: conclude agreements, make adjustments to the curriculum and organization of the academic schedule, motivate teachers to develop unique, innovative courses, and the Department of Mobile Activity (DMA) to create programs for the adaptation of foreign students. The DMA or any other body that performs the relevant functions should help to eliminate all possible barriers (primarily cultural, psychological, and organizational) to the adaptation of foreign students to a new environment.

This doesn't involve excessive patronage or attempts to replace students in doing the necessary introductions and psychological work to integrate into a new team in another country, potentially with significant differences in mentality.

We believe that the adaptation program developed by the DMA should include the following key elements: familiarization with the university's structure (including its development stages) and the roles of departments involved with program participants; excursions, weekend tours, lectures, and informational training to introduce visiting students to the region's historical and cultural heritage; opportunities for studying certified programs or internships at regional enterprises aligned with the student's field of study, and more. These activities aim to spark participants' interest in expanding their knowledge, not only of the academic content but also on the region's unique characteristics and atmosphere, while encouraging them to share positive information about the program.

Teachers should conduct thorough research to ensure that the subjects they develop are relevant, innovative, and engaging for students. In addition, they should focus on mastering teaching methods suited to the subject matter, while also studying the cultural characteristics of participating students to better understand them. This approach will enhance student involvement and, ultimately, create the conditions for more effective mastery of the subjects.

The students selected for the program will be regarded as top representatives of youth who consistently strives for academic success. They can be seen as sources of fresh ideas, drivers of innovation in education and business, and catalysts for new perspectives on familiar concepts.

It is evident that the collaboration of Erasmus+ program participants (described here in somewhat idealized terms) will significantly benefit curriculum development, particularly at the host university. Over time, by sharing positive experiences with other educational institutions, evolutionary changes are likely to occur throughout the region's education system. However, the scope and pace of these changes will depend on the level of support – or opposition – from universities, businesses, and government administrations.

We have identified businesses as another major beneficiary of the Erasmus+ program, especially as they are the future employers of students in economic, technical, and many humanitarian fields. Several arguments support this view. First, participation in the program develops leadership skills, which are crucial for young professionals to succeed in a competitive labor market, start their own businesses, and more. Second, in a globalized market, businesses require professionals with strong foreign language skills to effectively represent their companies and products in meetings. Third, the ability to integrate into an intercultural environment is invaluable for working in international companies, managing multinational teams, and entering foreign markets. Finally, faculty members involved in the program can also gain practical experience and qualifications that allow them to advise businesses in their home countries, particularly if an enterprise internship program is in place.

This generalized list could be expanded, but we find it crucial to explore in more depth the potential benefits for regional tourism development. We believe that this sector has a significant chance of receiving an additional boost from the implementation of the Erasmus+ program. It's worth noting that Erasmus+ covers 32 countries, including the 27 EU nations as well as Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, and Turkey (Lesjak et al., 2015). These countries, with their diverse geographical locations, climates, recreational attractions, and unique characteristics – historical, cultural, socioeconomic, demographic, and technological – collectively offer not only educational and scientific opportunities but also vast tourism potential.

To better integrate learning about a country with the curriculum, several strategies could be employed:

- Country-Specific Content – Include lessons, case studies, and projects that focus on the target nation. Assign tasks that encourage students to research the country and share their findings;
- Guest Speakers and Seminars – Organize lectures or seminars with national experts to provide firsthand perspectives. If in-person meetings aren't feasible, utilize recorded content or virtual sessions;
- Cultural and Linguistic Studies – Integrate language, history, and cultural courses related to the nation. Offer language workshops or cultural awareness training within the curriculum;
- Experiential Learning and Field Trips – Arrange educational trips to significant sites or events related to the nation's history, culture, or economy. Encourage students to engage in practical experiences that expose them to different aspects of the country;
- Case Studies and Current Events – Incorporate national current events into discussions and case studies to examine the impact of national and international developments on one another;
- Integrative Methodology – Promote cross-disciplinary collaboration on projects related to the target nation, linking different subjects to provide a holistic understanding.

These strategies should be tailored to the curriculum's goals and objectives of the university, considering students' learning styles and educational backgrounds to ensure effective engagement.

A bridge between potential tourists – students of the parent university and other citizens of their country.

The following strategies should be taken into consideration in order to build a bridge between prospective tourists (parent university students) and other people of their nation.

- Travel Club or Association – Create a club or group at the university with an emphasis on tourism that is open to both students and the general public.

Plan frequent conferences, events, or seminars to exchange knowledge, advice, and travel experiences.

- Travel Planning Done Together – Encourage the formation of cooperative travel planning groups where residents and students may meet to discuss and make travel plans. Make connections with others who have similar travel interests by using social media groups or internet platforms.

- Common Web-Based Platforms – Establish a specific online space (website, forum, social media group) where citizens and students may exchange travel advice, itinerary ideas, and firsthand accounts.

Add functions such as photo-sharing areas, discussion boards for travel, and guidance on trips.

- Language Exchange Programs – Create programs where students may assist other residents who speak the same language as them in return for information about places to visit in the area.

Organize sessions for language study or language exchange.

- Cultural Exchange activities – Plan activities that facilitate the sharing of travelogues, customs, and cultural insights amongst students and other citizens.

Incorporate components such as storytelling, cultural performances, and food sampling.

- Workshops and Seminars on Tourism – Organize sessions or conferences centered around tourism, inviting professionals to share their knowledge.

Urge residents and students to get together and take part in the conversations.

- Collaborative Travel Packages – Assist travel companies in crafting trip packages that are especially tailored for citizens and students.

Provide special offers or discounts to those who take part in group travel plans.

- Community-Based Tourism Initiatives – Take part in community tourism projects that include students and other residents working together to promote tourism in the area.

Create and advertise distinctive community events or attractions.

- Campaigns for Local Tourism – Start regional tourism initiatives that engage locals and students highlighting the region's assets and attractiveness.

To raise awareness, make use of local events and social media.

- Alumni Engagement – Invite seasoned university graduates to speak with students and the general public about their travels.

Organize networking opportunities so that former students and residents may get in touch.

Boosting Regional Tourism through Cultural Exchange Erasmus+

The list of the above activities and their content is determined by local representatives of the tourism industry, universities, government agencies and other stakeholders. We are sure, one of the priorities of the Erasmus+ programme should be the development of regional tourism through cultural exchange. From this point of view, the above-mentioned activities can contribute to the transformation of each region of each host country into an attractive tourist destination. An important factor in this transformation is the creation of properly formed tourist centers on the basis of host universities.

The implementation of this task should be, on the one hand, phased and, on the other hand, multi-vector. The algorithm proposed below provides for the existence of three initial conditions necessary for project implementation: 1) the desire of local authorities of each specific region and a critical mass of local entrepreneurs to promote the tourism product on a professional level; 2) the removal of well-known barriers on the part of the state and introduction of a mechanism of responsibility of representatives of state bodies for creating artificial obstacles to the development of tourism entrepreneurship; 3) the presence of interested employees of host universities – representatives of the Erasmus+ program, who would be drivers in the implementation of regional tourism development programs.

In our opinion, the process of developing such programs can be divided into five stages.

The first stage is preparatory (or analytical). Initiative groups of those interested in tourism development in the region are created, which should include Erasmus+ programs, representatives of science (local historians, guides, marketers, etc.), business (tourism, hotel, restaurant, etc.). Conferences or roundtables summarise the information available on the region's tourism advantages and agree on common areas of action. If necessary, this stage may have several sub-stages, including: idea generation, SWOT analysis of ideas, ranking of ideas (for example, by the criteria of attractiveness to consumers, amount of investment required, profitability, risk level, sequence of implementation, etc.). The importance of this stage lies in its fundamental nature, as the success of the entire program depends on the correct choice of the core of the region's tourism product.

The second stage is the design stage. Based on the analysis, a cooperation program is developed and agreements on mutually beneficial projects are reached. The main strategy at this stage for most regions of the host country is concentrated marketing. In the absence of resources to implement large-scale programs, a prerequisite for success is to focus on developing one or two offers. The project should include the most important characteristics of the attraction core: differentiate from the offers of other regions, accessibility, and harmonization with other tourist offers.

The third stage is a pilot one. This is a practical test of the developed tours in real conditions. All efforts of the participants should be focused on attracting the attention of not only Erasmus+ participants, but also other consumers, as well as on their involvement. The decisive role in achieving success at this stage will belong to tourist information centers, which should be created to perform the following functions: information (about local attractions, tours, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, etc.); advisory (for travel agencies – on the sale of a tourist product, and for consumers – on its receipt); research (collection of information to adjust the developed programs), etc. In addition, a comprehensive educational program should be launched with the possibility of further development to foster social responsibility towards guests for their impressions of the tour, not only at the level of employees of the enterprise and its partners, but also at the level of every ordinary citizen. This program will involve the broad participation of the media, educational institutions (including host universities), other Erasmus+ participants, businesses, government agencies and social movements.

The fourth stage is the adjustment and further implementation of the program for creating tourist centers, which will eventually acquire the following features: comprehensiveness (the ability to meet the full range of needs of selected consumer segments at the level they expect); compliance with the declared position (can be achieved by providing truthful information and guaranteeing the commitments undertaken); ability to «self-deploy» (the presence of variable components in tourist products that will develop depending on the changing situation); socioeconomic feasibility (in terms of economic development of the region and preservation of its natural resources, as well as social protection of the population); cultural and psychological effectiveness (harmlessness to local cultural characteristics, as well as the ability to cultivate pride in the population for belonging to this region and the corresponding desire to attract a wider range of tourists).

The fifth stage involves adjusting and further implementing the program to create tourist centers, which will eventually possess the following features.

Comprehensiveness – the ability to meet the full range of needs for the target consumer segments at the expected level.

Consistency with the stated goals – achieved by providing accurate information and guaranteeing commitments.

Self-sufficiency – the inclusion of adaptable components in the tourist offerings, allowing them to evolve with changing circumstances.

Socio-economic feasibility – supporting the region's economic development while preserving its natural resources and ensuring social protection for the local population.

Cultural and psychological effectiveness – being respectful of local cultural characteristics and fostering pride among the population of their region, thus encouraging a desire to attract a broader range of tourists.

To participate in the tours, consumers of tourism products must have sufficient funds. It is worth noting that Erasmus+ participants (students and teachers) have the opportunity to receive scholarships and grants. This financial support is primarily intended to cover expenses related to education, accommodation, and insurance. However, if the amount (determined by the limits set by each country) also covers the described tourist activities, these scholarships could serve as an additional incentive for participants to engage in the proposed program. Given their age and the inherent characteristics of young people – such as fewer restrictions compared to older generations, ease in decision-making, and a desire to explore new countries and cultures – Erasmus+ participants are a highly mobile group. They are likely to take the initiative to travel. Therefore, the proposed program could serve as an additional and decisive stimulus for the development of regional tourism.

Conclusions. On the basis of the conducted research, the advantages that each university that implements Erasmus + B.I.P. projects receives are systematized, as well as the entire education system of the country in which these universities operate. The most important advantages include: Internationalization of Universities, Improved Educational Quality, Staffs' Professional Growth, Student Mobility and Enriched Learning Experiences and many others.

Educational and Cultural Exchange Benefits and approaches to the formation of Erasmus+ Effects from Student Mobility, Retention Development of International Networks and Partnerships are also defined.

The features of the strategies to better integrate learning about a country with the curriculum are outlined, namely: Country-Specific Content, Guest Speakers and Seminars, Cultural and Linguistic Studies, Experiential Learning and Field Trips, Case Studies and Current Events, Integrative Methodology.

Strategies are also proposed, which should be taken into consideration in order to build a bridge between potential tourists – students of the parent university and other citizens of their country: Travel Club or Association, Travel Planning Done Together, Common Web-Based Platforms, Language Exchange Programs, Cultural Exchange activities, and others.

The process of developing such programs divided into five stages: analytical, design, pilot, adjustment and further implementation was developed. The importance of financial support for the implementation of the listed strategies and programs was emphasized, in particular thanks to receiving scholarships and grants. Prospective areas of research are the development of methodological recommendations for the implementation of the strategies mentioned in the article, taking into account the specifics of the country and the university.

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