

## **Strategic partnership “Modules in European Regional and Urban Planning (MERUP)”**

*Erasmus+ Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices–Strategic Partnerships for higher education*

Participating organisations:

ALMA MATER STUDIORUM – UNIVERSITA’ DI BOLOGNA – Department of Architecture (applicant)

UNIVERSITE FRANCOIS RABELAIS DE TOURS – Planning department polytechnic school of Tours (partner)

GOTTFRIED WILHELM LEIBNIZ UNIVERSITAET HANNOVER – Institut für Umweltplanung (partner)

RADBOUD UNIVERSITY & RADBOUDUMC – Nijmegen School of Management (partner)

UNIVERSITY OF WEST ENGLAND – Department of Environment and Technology (partner)

### **ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP**

The five partners are part of an established and long-standing network of high ranking Universities that is engaged in reviewing and implementing their planning education approach by the inclusion of an international dimension in their ‘regular’ planning curriculum, promoting cooperation programmes through student and teachers exchanges and through international students workshops. In particular, since, 1991 the group of partners have been committed in implementing a pedagogical approach for the Erasmus Intensive Programmes (IP), with the multiple aim of responding to the need of internationalisation and modernisation of education in the EU, of considering the EU influences on urban and regional planning and of educating planners in comparative planning research.

To date, they have coordinated altogether over 20 IPs, which have led to other activities, such as joint research projects and contributions to each other’s regular education programmes. The themes evolved over time to reflect the prevailing priorities of the planning profession alongside the developing focus of European and national interests: from sustainable planning, to water management and climate change.

### **SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT**

The strategic partnership “Modules in European Regional and Urban Planning (MERUP)” brings together the long and successful experience of the partners in organising and managing IPs in the field of urban and regional planning, with the need to improve the access and quality of teaching and research of each University according to the EU Agenda for the Modernisation of Europe’s higher education systems.

The objective of the project is two folded: on the one hand it undertakes the challenge of addressing the EU planning policies and strategies in the curricula of the participating Universities; on the other hand it aims at improving the quality and the volume of cooperation between higher education institutions, local authorities and enterprises, fostering territorial cooperation and enhancing transfer knowledge to the market more effectively.

The main activity of the project is to develop and test common modules about three different subjects of European interest:

- *Comparative Planning* (comparative analysis of planning policies, going from the EU priorities and interventions to national, regional and local ones)
- *Global City Regions* (the rise of the notion of city-region; the connections to debates regarding spatial dynamics in Europe, metropolitan governance and competitiveness; the consequences of the city-region for urban planning theory and practice)
- *Sustainable Development and Risk Decision Planning* (goals of risks management, defined as a cross-sectors public policy integrating civil security, environmental or health policies; territorial approach of hazard mapping and planning as part of a complex urban network system).

The modules will be delivered through lectures and classroom activities, with the help and support of ICTs. They will provide lessons from different disciplines (e.g. planning, economic, architecture, geography, political science) and will be carried by the international multidisciplinary staff team. Two IPs, to be organised during the first 2 years, will be used to test the modules and an eLearning Platforms will be used to support teaching resources, to promote open and flexible learning and thus to experiment innovative practices of education.

The effectiveness of the international approach to urban and regional planning will be discussed and tested with relevant stakeholders in each involved country (e.g. planning boards and societies, municipalities, cultural association etc.) The project will be widely disseminated via website, newsletters and international events.