

The new Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) was founded on 01.01.2014 when the Norwegian School of Veterinary Science (NVH) merged with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB). Both of the former institutions had, and collectively still have, ambitious international visions and plans for the future.

NMBU's vision is to attain and sustain high academic standards, to be internationally competitive and recognized as an institution for advanced learning and research - meeting global challenges through cooperation with educational and research institutions nationally and internationally.

NMBU is a hub of expertise within the life sciences, veterinary medicine, environmental sciences and in the arena of sustainable development.

NMBU has formal collaboration with some 160 universities worldwide, of which approximately 115 are Erasmus+ agreements. NMBU selects its partners based on common research and teaching interests and on the quality of an institution's activities. For example, within the field of veterinary medicine a potential exchange partner must have been accredited by the European Association for Establishments of Veterinary Education (EAEVE). In Europe the university has special partnerships with agricultural and veterinary institutions in the Nordic region (NOVA Network), the Baltic countries (BOVA network), and throughout the continent. NMBU's strategy has thus focused on academic fields, quality, compatibility and reciprocity rather than on specific geographical areas in Europe. One exception, however, is the national focus on Germany, which is Norway's second largest trading partner. NMBU has numerous exchange agreements with German universities and colleges and students are encouraged to take advantage of them.

Outside of Europe, well-known institutions of higher education in so-called "developed" countries such as Australia, Canada, and USA are among our exchange partners. Funding and support of cooperation are also important criteria when choosing partners. Therefore, countries in the BRICS group (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and Japan), which are prioritized by the Norwegian government are also important to NMBU, though not merely for financial reasons.

Many of NMBU's partners have been chosen with regard to international solidarity and development cooperation. Partnerships in this category are not always based on the mutual exchange of students but on capacity building, and teaching and research at doctoral level. Much of NMBU's strategy that is geared towards cooperation with institutions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, originates from the university's Department of International Environment and Development Studies (Noragric). Staff and students at Noragric are engaged in interdisciplinary studies on a wide range of issues concerned with poverty, livelihoods, gender, property rights, environmental management, conflict, peace building and post-conflict development in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South East Asia and South America. Within veterinary Science and related subjects the concept of "One World, One Health" is of increasing importance.

Decades of broad international involvement have permeated NMBU with an appreciation of cultural diversity and it places great value on raising multi-cultural awareness. Mobility is highly encouraged for all degree cycles, and each degree program designates one semester as a mobility window, except for third cycle degrees, where mobility may take place at virtually any time. Staff mobility is encouraged whenever applicable, especially when it relates to international research projects or collaborations.

NMBU has limited experience with double/joint degrees, having only had three such projects since 2007. However, based on the positive experience with these programs, the development and implementation of double/joint degrees at every cycle has become a university focus, and we hope to increase the number of such projects in the coming years.

The Norwegian University of Life Sciences plans to play a more active role in the future and expects to benefit from the three key actions in the new Erasmus + program.

The synergy between research and education in an international context is an area of particular interest. NMBU has already been granted support for a project (in the field of parasitology) from the first call of the Norwegian UTFORSK program - a program which seeks to bring about increased synergy between international research cooperation and international cooperation within education.

The EU Commission has been at the forefront of policy development and reforms in higher education, and our founding institutions have both benefited and contributed from this. Continued participation in Erasmus+ will ensure NMBU's ongoing modernization.