



ASSOCIATE TO BACHELOR DEGREE (A2B) BRIDGE PROGRAMMES IN EUROPE

<p>Awarding institution</p>	<p>Varna University of Management, Bulgaria (VUM) is a private not-for-profit university that offers study programmes in the fields of Business and Management, IT, Tourism, Food Technologies and Culinary Arts. The university is strongly committed to the internationalization of its academic community and study programmes.</p> <p>Currently, over 30% of VUM students are international and coming from more than 40 countries across the globe. All VUM undergraduate and master programmes are fully delivered in English and in collaboration with VUM partner universities based in the UK, the European Union (EU), Brazil, Mexico and the Philippines thus ensuring that successful graduates of these programmes are awarded a double or triple degree. Thanks to VUM's extensive network of strategic partners in Europe, Asia and Latin America, every year VUM welcomes a high number of degree mobility students willing to transfer to VUM for the final one or two years of their studies.</p> <p>In addition, all VUM students are encouraged to engage in one or more student mobilities for studies and/or industry placements at VUM's partner universities and companies across the EU. VUM's outgoing mobile students are supported and motivated both academically and financially through the Erasmus+ programme for student mobility the university is a proactive participant in.</p> <p>Last but not least, every year VUM accommodates a high number of incoming credit mobility students too thus securing for a third year in a row VUM's first place worldwide in the EU's U-Multirank ranking system in terms of student mobility.</p>
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>The Associate to Bachelor Degree (A2B) Bridge Programmes in Europe designed and offered by VUM provide eligible graduates of two-year higher education programmes with an opportunity to obtain a Bachelor degree from VUM by combining studies at least two European universities with industry placements in EU-based companies. By completing successfully a VUM offered A2B Bridge Programme, registered students will obtain a Bachelor degree from VUM within a time span of two calendar years.</p> <p>In addition, students in VUM's A2B Bridge Programmes are granted access to substantial Erasmus+ funding allowing them to spend one or two semesters on a credit mobility to an EU-based partner university of VUM and to</p>

	<p>additionally engage in one or two internships and experiential learning opportunities at EU-based companies.</p> <p>The provision of Erasmus+ financial support and grants amounting to up to 10 000 USD makes the A2B Bridge Programmes an ideal choice for students coming from disadvantaged social backgrounds who are at the same time highly motivated to gain global skills and knowledge and to obtain hands-on international experience thus improving their employability.</p>
Eligibility	<p>The A2B Bridge Programmes are accessible to students in study programmes leading to award of an Associate degree in the fields of Business and Management, Tourism, IT, Food Technologies and Culinary Arts who have completed successfully two academic years and have acquired at least 120 ECTS or equivalent at their home institutions. The A2B students benefit from opportunities for recognition of prior learning at VUM and are expected to enroll in Year 3 of the VUM undergraduate programmes in International Business Management, Software Engineering, International Hospitality Management, Food Technologies and Culinary Arts.</p>
Duration	<p>The A2B Bridge Programmes of VUM have a total duration of two calendar years covering two semesters of academic studies at VUM, one or two semesters spent on a credit mobility to an EU-based partner university of VUM, and one or two Erasmus+ funded internships at EU companies located outside Bulgaria. The maximum total duration of the A2B students' Erasmus+ studies and placements to be funded under the Erasmus+ programme is 12 months.</p>
Benefits	<p>Successful graduates of VUM's A2B Bridge Programmes in Europe will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain of an Associate and a Bachelor degree within four calendar years • Receive access at VUM to Erasmus+ funding amounting to up to 10 000 USD for the purposes of credit mobility, experiential learning and industry-based internships with a total duration of up to 12 months • Gain exposure to global knowledge and will improve their intercultural competence through academic and practice-oriented studies in at least three EU countries (Bulgaria as well as another two EU countries where the student will conduct an Erasmus+ funded credit mobility and will complete one or two Erasmus+ internships).
Partner institutions sought	<p>U.S. community colleges offering study programmes that lead to Associate degree award in the fields of Business and Management, IT, Tourism, Food Technologies and Culinary Arts.</p>
Contact person	<p>Christina Armutlieva Director of International Cooperation Varna University of Management www.vum.bg Email: christina.armutlieva@vumk.eu</p>