

SOUTH AFRICA

FEBRUARY '20

South Africa has strong cultural and historical links to the European Union, it is the EU's largest trading partner in Africa and the EU is South Africa's biggest investor. Its trade relations and development co-operation with the EU are currently governed by the Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement (TDCA), which has established a free trade area that covers 90% of bilateral trade between the EU and South Africa. The liberalisation schedules were completed by 2012.

Source: (<https://ec.europa.eu/>)

Education in South Africa is continuing to take strain as the government attempts to achieve equal opportunities for all. The system is divided into three strata, namely general education and training, further education and training, and higher education and training. Tertiary education and training is provided through a large number of private and state-managed institutions under the overall control of the ministry of higher education and training. Polytechnics train technicians in a wide variety of disciplines while universities award traditional bachelors, masters and doctorates degrees. A wide divide in quality standards between previously “white” and previously “independent homeland” institutions continues to pervade society.



The University of West Attica (UNIWA) has at the moment three valid Inter Institutional Agreements with South African Universities. Namely, with the University of Cape Town (UCT), University of the Witwatersrand - Johannesburg (WITS) and University of South Africa- Pretoria (UNISA).

Two different delegations from UNIWA traveled during January and February 2020 to South Africa, in order to visit the long-distanced partner Universities and meet our partners, many of them for the first time.

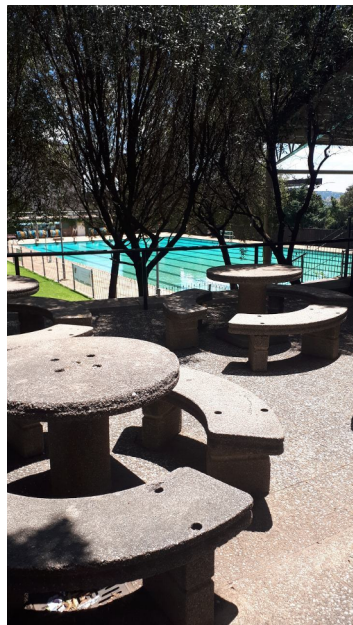




ERASMUS+ INTERNATIONAL CREDIT MOBILITY

UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSRAND WITS - JOHANNESBURG

University of Witwatersrand (WITS), is the first collaboration between the former Piraeus University of Applied Sciences and South Africa. It is a multi- campus South African public research university situated in the northern areas of central Johannesburg. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and diplomas, as well as a range of short courses and online offerings. It has five faculties encompassing the Sciences, Commerce, Law, Management, Engineering, Health Sciences and Humanities with thirty three (33) schools offering over 3000 courses. The common research interest remains the bond between Professor Theodor Ganetsos from Electrical and Electronics Engineering department of UNIWA and Professor Elias Sideras-Haddad from Physics department of WITS University, since 2015 with several successful research collaborations.



In February 2020, two delegations from UNIWA visited WITS. The first one consisted of the Erasmus+/ICM Institutional Coordinator, Associate Professor Konstantinos - Stefanos Nikas from Mechanical Engineering department, Mrs. Fani Papoutsis - Erasmus+/ ICM Staff Mobility Specialist and Mrs. Irene - Athina Vatou - Erasmus+/ ICM Student Mobility Specialist. The mobility included meetings with colleagues and students from the Physics department and the administration staff of the International Office in order to share information about the latest program results and exchange optimistic fair practices for mobilities. Moreover, the expansion of the staff mobilities to the whole range of departments of WITS was decided. Lectures took place on Computational Heat Transfer and Fluid Mechanics by K. Nikas, by introducing and explaining to the audience new practices in several research engineering problems. It was really important to gain such experience from the mobility process and to meet our colleagues again, Professor Elias Sideras Haddad, Professor Daniel Wamwanghi and past Erasmus PhD student, Dr. Francis Otieno.

The results of this mobility included the arrangement of two PhD student mobilities for the next academic year, who will work in common research material and topics as a continuation to Prof. T. Ganetsos lead.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA) - PRETORIA



University of South Africa (UNISA) is Africa's leading open distance learning institution. As a reputable, comprehensive, flexible and accessible open distance learning institution that is motivating a future generation, it offers internationally accredited qualifications and has world-class resources. Its vision towards the African University shaping futures in the service of humanity drives UNISA to find answers to Africa's educational and developmental problems.

Prof. Vicky Katsoni, from Tourism Management department of UNIWA, visited UNISA towards the end of January 2020 for academic and research purposes, presenting a public lecture entitled "Digital Storytelling in Tourism".

Discussions about the possibilities of strengthening ties by collaborating on the education and research practices between the two respective institutions, took place. Moreover, UNISA Erasmus+/ICM Institutional Representative Professor Cine Van Zyle was awarded by UNISA's 2020 Research & Innovation Award, including as one of her success stories, the Inter-Institutional Agreement with UniWA under the framework of Erasmus+/ICM program (see newsletter-photo). Finally, the terms of this exchange program will allow Prof. C. Van Zyle to present a keynote address at the 7th International Tourism Conference, which will take place from 2 to 4 September in Greece. The theme of the conference, co-hosted by the International Association of Cultural and Digital Tourism (IACuDiT), is "Culture and tourism in a smart, globalized and sustainable world".



ERASMUS+ INTERNATIONAL CREDIT MOBILITY UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN (UCT)



University of Cape Town (UCT) is a new collaborator for UNIWA as the Agreement between the two Institutions signed in October 2019. UCT is South Africa's oldest University and one of the top teaching and research institutions in Africa, thriving in research contracts and innovation.

Radar technologies, and the use of digital signal processing and machine learning for application towards coastal, small - boat and drone activity monitoring, environment sensing and automotive safety, are some of the common interests under the new collaboration between the two Universities. A very warm welcome from UCT's Erasmus+/ICM Institutional Coordinator, Professor Simon Winberg, a bright scientist from Electrical and Electronics Engineering Department, including meetings with the academic community and the International Office was the main part of UNIWA's delegation two-day visit. Moreover, several presentations including information concerning the Erasmus+/ICM program and possible ways of research and educational cooperation were also placed in the agenda. Fruitful conversations and networking included common educational interest and team effort build upon one another's strengths in order to enhance this partnership. Meetings went as effective as possible with discussions about receiving PhD Erasmus students in UNIWA during the next academic year related to the Electrical and Electronics Engineering Department research fields.

