

## Triple I – Integration, Interaction, Institutions

Triple I was a mobility program series coordinated by University of Turku, focusing on academic exchange between EU and Russia. The series consisted of 4 successive programs: The **Triple I 2008** founding project and its follow-ups **Triple I 2009, 2010** and **2011**. Triple I was launched within Erasmus Mundus Action 2 Partnerships, a cooperation and mobility scheme implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and funded by the European Commission.

The Triple I series continued from 2008-2015. The partnerships established laid the ground for **Aurora** and **Aurora II**, proceeding EU-Russian mobility programs also coordinated by University of Turku.

The Triple I program involved **21 partner institutions**:

### European Partners

University of Turku (Coordinator)

University of Algarve

University of Bologna

University of Deusto

University of Göttingen

University of Latvia

University of Leuven

Humboldt University Berlin

Masaryk University Brno

Pultusk Academy of Humanities

Middle East Technical University, Turkey

### Russian Partners

Higher School of Economics

Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University

Irkutsk State University

Kazan State University

Petrozavodsk State University

Russian State University for the Humanities

St. Petersburg State University

Udmurt State University

Ural State University

Yaroslav-The-Wise Novgorod State

University

In addition to the partner universities, Triple I associate partner **Baltic Sea Region University Network (BSRUN)** has been a very important strategic partner for the program. BSRUN has e.g. helped with promotion, provided strategic advice and organized seminars together with Triple I.

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### Mobilities

In each Triple I project, academic mobilities for exchange and degree studies have been granted on undergraduate, master, doctorate, post-doctorate and staff level:

Type of Mobility	Triple I 2008	Triple I 2009	Triple I 2010	Triple I 2011
Undergraduate	75	75	77	83
Master	52	69	56	65
Doctorate	38	39	47	47
Post-Doctorate	13	26	19	17
Staff	26	28	34	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>243</b>

From 2008-2015 a total **917 Triple I mobilities** have been implemented for promoting both Russian-EU and EU-Russian mobility flows:

Type of Mobility	RU→EU	EU→RU	Total	Percentage
Undergraduate	211	99	310	33,8 %
Master	179	63	242	26,4 %
Doctorate	151	20	171	18,6 %
Post-Doctorate	72	3	75	8,2 %
Staff	94	25	119	13,0 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Monthly grant amount		Total project funds	
<b>Undergraduate:</b>	1 000 EUR	<b>2008:</b>	4 148 575 EUR
<b>Master:</b>	1 000 EUR	<b>2009:</b>	3 929 050 EUR
<b>Doctorate:</b>	1 500 EUR	<b>2010:</b>	3 991 275 EUR
<b>Post-Doctorate:</b>	1 800 EUR	<b>2011:</b>	3 659 875 EUR
<b>Staff:</b>	2 500 EU	<b>Total:</b>	15 728 775 EUR



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### Background

At the St. Petersburg Summit in May 2003, the EU and Russia agreed to enhance their cooperation by long-term development of four common spaces: The economic space, space of freedom, security and justice, space of external security as well as space of research and education including cultural aspects. The Triple I program followed these topics of common spaces along its main project theme of **Integration, Interaction and Institutions** and included them as major topics of EU-Russian relations.

### Project Objectives

The primary goal of Triple I was to enhance institutional capacity between the EU and Russia for standards and practices of international university cooperation with sustainable impact. The program aimed to create an active network of partner universities, promoting innovative collaboration through joint research and exchange of best practices. It also intended to improve recognition of studies through ECTS. Furthermore, the program was committed to cross-cutting issues promoting gender balance and disadvantaged candidates as well as efficient measures for brain drain prevention.

Triple I emphasized on transparent, democratic and responsible development of joint capacity to promote structured international actions between EU and Russian partner universities.

Within the main agenda embedding the program, each Triple I project emphasized specifically on its own structural theme:

**Triple I 2008** aimed to build the foundation of strategic partnership between European and Russian Universities. The main objective for the first Triple I project was to provide people accessibility to other cultures, languages and academic environments. It was designed to expand academic expertise and international experience of grant holders, leading to a higher degree of innovation in teaching and research to increase international cooperation and capacity building at the institutional level.

**Triple I 2009** continued the strategic approach of Triple I 2008 with particular institutional objectives: The main goal for the second Triple I project was to establish new links and connections between the partners to increase their capacity for a more multilateral and interdisciplinary cooperation. In this context it also aimed to disseminate the social and democratic values of the EU, as well as promote a better understanding of Russia. Furthermore, Triple I 2009 promoted the use of the ECTS system for a better recognition of studies and qualifications.

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**Triple I 2010** maintained the multilateral and multidisciplinary network approach to increase capacity for interdisciplinary cooperation. The project built on the established network and increased capacity of partners to further develop an effective quality assurance system for all project activities. The quality development of the third Triple I project emphasized on further dissemination of best European practices, promoting a transparent and open application process as well as internal and external evaluation and follow-up mechanisms for transparent quality control.

**Triple I 2011** was dedicated to combine the principles and achievements of its preceding projects to foster a sustainable network for future cooperation beyond the Triple I program. The essential theme of Triple I was to disseminate the social and democratic values of the EU and promote a better understanding of Russia. In accordance with this principle Triple I aimed to contribute to the goals of the Bologna process for a mutual cooperation with the Russian educational system and society.

### Project Impacts

The Triple I projects had a sustainable impact on the institutional as well as on the individual level.

#### Partner institutions

- established bilateral and multilateral cooperations on the regional and international scale
- increased capacity for international in interdisciplinary cooperation and joint research
- established new mobility units and services for exchange students
- implemented new teaching/training programs and extended curriculum development
- improved recognition for studies and qualifications

#### Scholarship holders

- enriched their professional and academic development in an international environment
- gained additional credits and qualifications for their studies and work at home
- cooperated in research, publications and course development
- enhanced their language competences and cultural awareness
- expanded their career development, professional networks and employability

Triple I extended the partners' international actions, improved procedures of internationalization and mobility exchange and boosted the network development between EU and Russia. Partner institutions and scholarship holders have overall expressed highest satisfaction with the Triple I program. Under coordination of University of Turku, it was continued with further objectives and additional partners in the proceeding mobility programs Aurora and Aurora II.