



University of Pécs
1367

From Mobility to Regional Innovation

The University of Pécs Approach

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Parallel session: International student mobility as a driver of regional
research and innovation ecosystems

Tróia, Portugal | 24 June 2026





Mobility is not the impact – connection is
International mobility creates regional value when students are connected to research, organisations and recognised outputs.

25,000

students

5,500+

international students

146

countries represented

The strategic question is not only “How many people move?”
It is “What do they become connected to?”

THE VALUE-CREATION LOGIC



International exposure

new knowledge, perspectives and networks



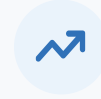
Deliberate connection

research team, regional challenge or partner



Recognised output

credit, thesis, internship, seed project



Regional outcome

innovation, employment or long-term cooperation



Four student flows, one regional ecosystem





Four bridges are already in place

The building blocks exist; the next step is to connect them into one institutional journey.



EDUC

Mobility and shared learning

- Physical, blended and virtual mobility
- Challenge-based and short intensive formats
- Regional knowledge-transfer ambition



EDUC-WIDE

Research collaboration

- Research pillar of the EDUC Alliance
- Seed projects and research-manager networks
- R&I Infrastructure mobilities and EDUC Fellowship Scheme
- Access to teams, infrastructures and follow-on proposals



PANNÓNIA

Study, research and traineeship mobility

- Short- and long-term opportunities
- Research, study and professional placements
- Full recognition of credits



APPLIED LEARNING

Regional and entrepreneurial engagement

- OpenUp, Centre for Applied Learning and Simonyi BEDC
- Real business challenges, mentoring and incubation
- iExpo and student-facing industry connections

Opportunity: connect mobility, research, applied learning and regional partners as one coherent pathway.



EDUC-WIDE: seed funding as an ecosystem connector

3

of 8 funded Seed Projects include the University of Pécs

Seed projects create more than research outputs:

- cross-university teams
- student and doctoral entry points
- follow-on proposals and infrastructures

92

panel score

Prediction Errors and Social Perceptions

University of Potsdam + UJI + UPécs | 18 months

Behavioural and psychophysiological research with links to psychopathological susceptibility.

87

panel score

Dual Antiviral Screening for CCHF

MUNI + UPécs | 18 months

A cross-border platform bridging biosafety levels for antiviral screening.

84

panel score

EDUC BRIDGE

MUNI + UNICA + UPécs + UJI | 18 months

Building relationships for inclusion, diversity, growth and equity.

Design principle: attach mobility places, doctoral tasks and regional partners to each seed project from the outset.

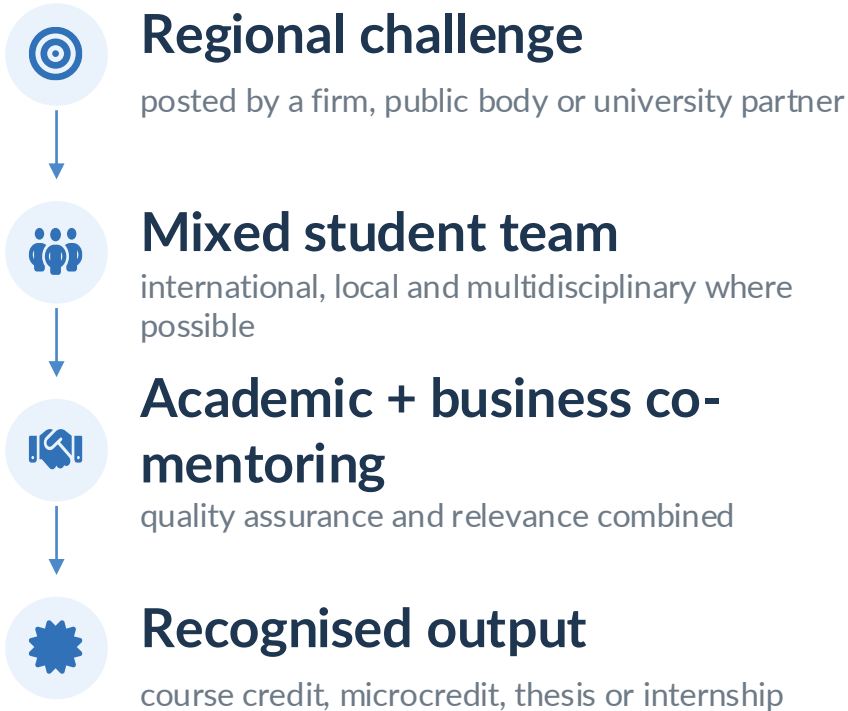




Applied learning turns mobility into recognised value

A faculty-level proof of concept that can inform a university-wide model.

THE PRACTICE PATHWAY



EVIDENCE FROM UP FBE



600 students in the microcredit programme
~40,000 microcredits → 3,000+ academic credits



80 students supporting local SMEs
Nine businesses addressed through practical projects



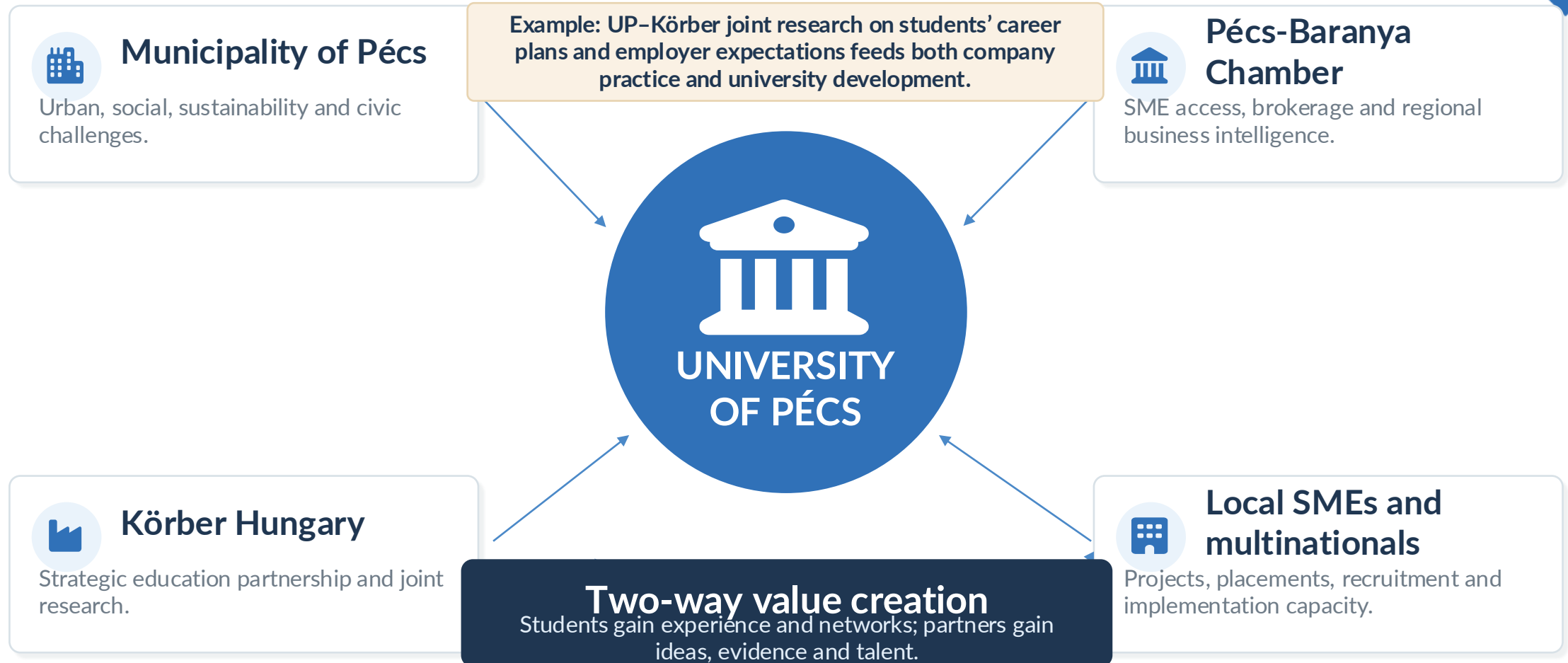
90 experts from 50 companies at iExpo
Students presented projects in a reverse job fair

OpenUp provides the digital matching layer: projects, mentors, internships, jobs and company challenges.



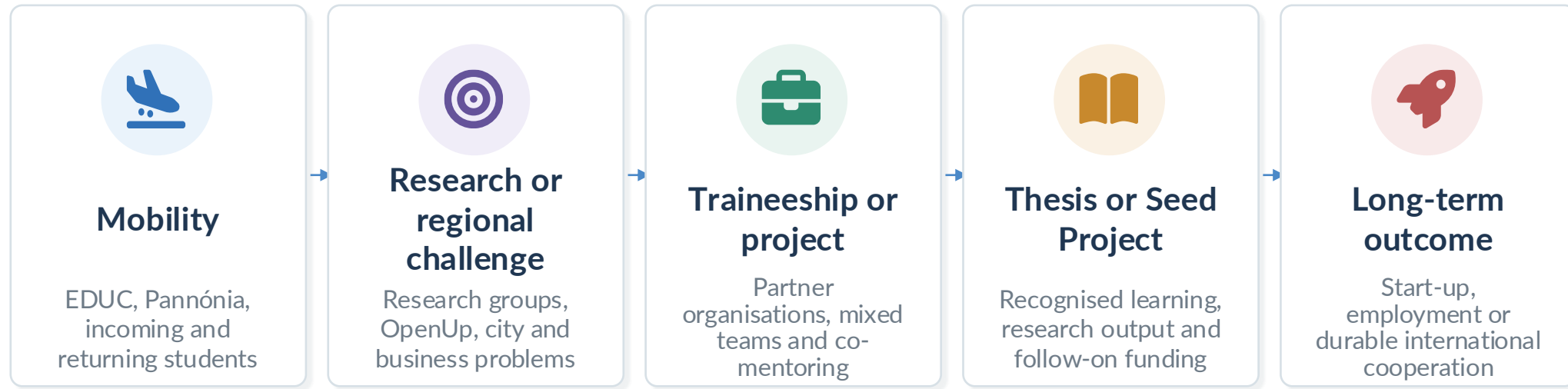


Regional anchors make the ecosystem real





A pathway already exists – but not yet as one system



Missing integration layer: one gateway, early matching, common recognition rules and longitudinal data.

The components operate today; the institutional experience is still fragmented across units, programmes and funding streams.



What is working – and what remains fragmented

WORKING

- ✓ A large and diverse international student community
- ✓ Multiple mobility, research and entrepreneurial instruments
- ✓ Real regional partners and challenge-based learning
- ✓ Credit and microcredit recognition in selected settings
- ✓ Seed funding and emerging pathways to innovation

NOT YET SYSTEMATIC

- ⚠ Responsibilities remain spread across institutional units
- ⚠ Matchmaking often depends on local champions
- ⚠ Academic incentives for partner-facing work are uneven
- ⚠ Long-term regional outcomes are weakly monitored
- ⚠ Mobility, research and innovation funding have operated in parallel

↔ The recent period of restricted direct access to parts of Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe made the cost of parallel systems more visible.





Six ingredients for success

Design the connection — not only the mobility.

1



One institutional gateway

Scale the OpenUp logic into a university-wide portal for students, researchers and regional partners.

2



Early matchmaking

Match skills, interests and partner challenges before arrival or departure.

3



Challenge-based learning

Use real regional problems and multidisciplinary international teams.

4



Academic + partner co-mentoring

Combine academic quality with implementation relevance and professional networks.

5



Seed-to-scale funding

Link small grants to mobility places, follow-on proposals and access to infrastructures.

6



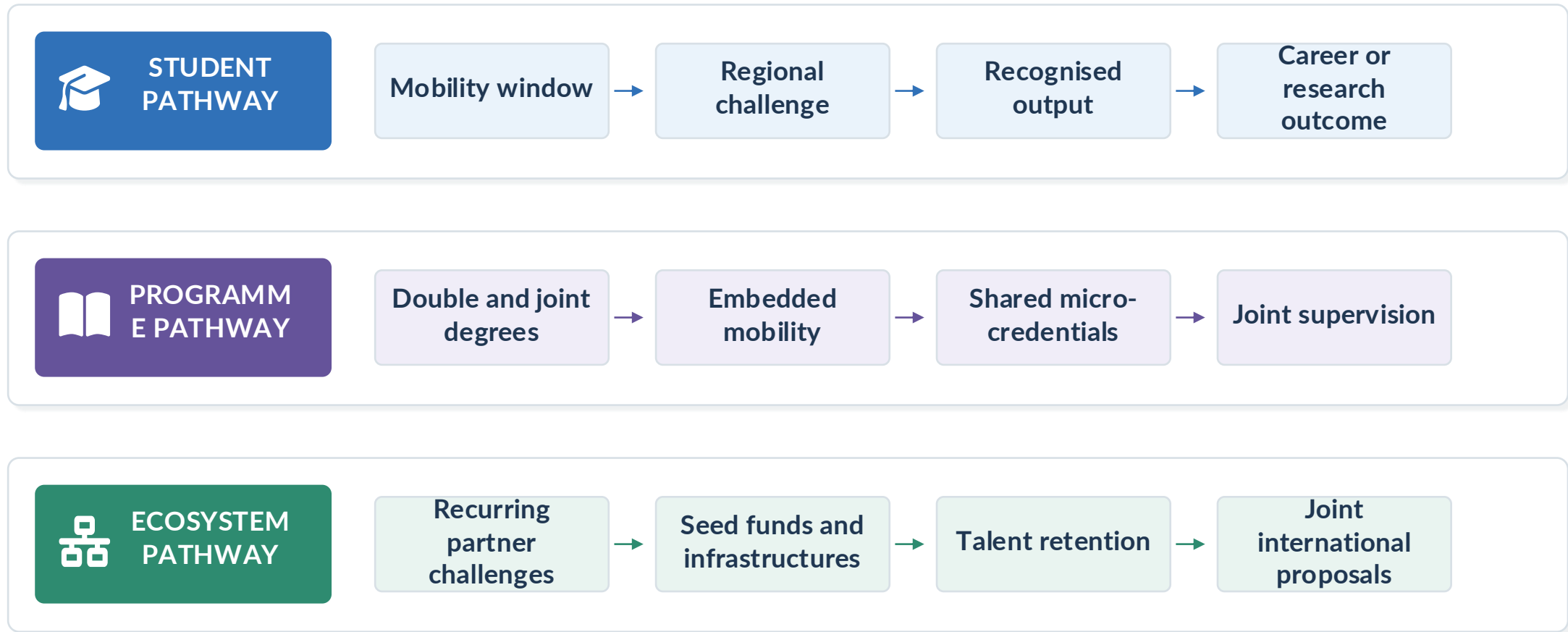
Recognition and tracking

Credits, micro-credentials and theses — followed by longitudinal outcome data.



The next stage: integrated international pathways

From one-off projects to durable student, programme and ecosystem connections.



Double and joint degrees can transform repeated mobility into durable institutional and regional cooperation.



Three takeaways

1

Mobility is a connector, not an outcome.

Its value depends on the research, regional and professional relationships it activates.

2

Regional impact requires deliberate institutional design.

Matchmaking, mentoring, recognition and tracking cannot be left to chance.

3

The University of Pécs already has the building blocks.

The next task is integration, scale and credible evidence of longer-term outcomes.

A practical test: every mobile student should leave with at least one meaningful connection – to a research team, a regional partner or a recognised project.

Thank you

From mobility to regional
innovation:
what should we scale first?

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Appendix: University of Pécs in EDUC-WIDE Seed Projects

Project	Lead and partners	Duration	Score
How Prediction Errors Shape Social Perceptions from Behavioral and Psychophysiological Correlates to Psychopathological Susceptibility	University of Potsdam; UJI; University of Pécs	18 months	92
Bridging Biosafety Levels: A Dual Antiviral Screening Platform to Combat Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever Virus	Masaryk University; University of Pécs	18 months	87
EDUC BRIDGE – Building Relationships for Inclusion, Diversity, Growth, and Equity	Masaryk University; University of Cagliari; University of Pécs; UJI	18 months	84



Appendix: evidence base and selected sources

- University of Pécs, International Programme Guide 2026–27.
- University of Pécs Strategy 2023–2030.
- EDUC Alliance and EDUC-WIDE project pages; EDUC-WIDE Seed Project results.
- University of Pécs Pannónia Scholarship Programme page.
- OpenUp and Simonyi BEDC, University of Pécs Faculty of Business and Economics.
- “How this University Ensures Business Students Gain Practical Experience”, 29 April 2026.
- UP–Körber joint research project: Career Plans and Employer Expectations.

All web-based facts were checked against official University of Pécs or EDUC sources in June 2026.