



**UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA IN KATOWICE
ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT
7TH MAY 2013**

- 1. Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain:**
 - a) How you choose your partners**
 - b) In which geographical area(s) and**
 - c) The most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles). If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double / multiple / joint degrees.**

Mission of the University of Silesia is to build modern Higher Education Institution of the highest quality of teaching and research, open to the needs of the labour market, region and country, with strong European dimension and ready for all kinds of international cooperation both European and worldwide. Internationalisation plays important role among the university activities and cooperation with foreign partner institutions of different types is crucial to its development.

A complex strategy of the University of Silesia is presented in a document entitled *Development strategy of the University of Silesia in Katowice 2012-2020*, adopted by the Senate of the university on 24th January 2012. The strategy is related to the principle development directions of universities in Europe and world-wide and combines EU targets with national priorities. It is based on the strategic document: *EUROPE 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth* and on national documents: *Poland 2030* and *National Reform Programme*.

The main objectives of the strategy are: modern, open and innovative university, effectively using its human and material resources for sustainable development, international and multicultural.

Internationalization of scientific research and studies and increasing mobility of students and staff is one of the five key tasks set in the university strategy. It will be implemented in particular through joint international research and educational projects and networks, study programmes leading to double or multiple diplomas and facilitation of recognition of knowledge and qualifications gained abroad.

The activities undertaken by the University of Silesia under the programme are part of its strategy and enable its better implementation.

Part of the currently existing international cooperation agreements of the university, both with EU and non-EU partners has been based mostly on common research interests in specific fields of scientific activities. The creation and development of different academic mobility projects



caused the significant change in the cooperation which became based not only on research but also on academic mobility of staff and students. The university strives to develop and widen existing international partnerships. New cooperation links are also created by participation in various kinds of international activities, networks, conferences. In each case, establishing of the cooperation and signing the agreement is preceded by the comparison of didactic offer of both institutions and other aspects of their activity and checking if the cooperation, especially the academic mobility, can be realised in a proper way. The same rules apply to establishing cooperation with non-academic partners.

The quality of cooperation and scientific and didactic interests of students and staff seem to be the most important in creating new cooperation. However, the matter of geographical location of partners also plays an important role in exchange or degree mobility, joint studies and other cooperation projects. The university aims at development and expanding the international cooperation with foreign institutions in all EU countries and especially neighbouring countries. Within the last few years there is an increased interest in cooperation with Eastern Europe e.g. Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan but also China, Japan, USA or Canada. Nevertheless, university is open for cooperation with partners from all geographical areas.

All students and staff mobility activities are directed to all groups of potential individual beneficiaries. The university strongly counteracts all forms of discrimination and attaches importance to enabling mobility activities for students of all cycles and fields of study, academic staff of all disciplines and non-academic employees. The university policy is to encourage young employees, who have not participated in the staff mobility yet, to participate in the staff exchange. In case of students who participate in both study exchange and placement the completing of each activity in different countries is treated as a good practice. The university aims at constant increase of the mobility, the number of outgoing and incoming students (study and placements) and staff (for teaching, training and research), improving the quality of mobility and proper balance of exchange. It is especially important to attract bigger number of foreign students. This number is continuously growing, however, the satisfactory level has not been reached yet. One of the most important objectives is to use the current cooperation links and experiences in the field of common studies (degree and exchange studies) to intensify and develop double and multiple degrees projects. The university also plans to intensify activities connected with cooperation projects of partnerships, knowledge alliances, common activities and others.

2. If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organization and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the programme.

Staff mobility is a very important part of cooperation, as in fact it is not only the way of development of outgoing staff, enriching individual experiences, finding new solutions and good practice and in effect improving the quality of staff and the procedures. The staff exchange, especially in teaching projects, also enables the students who, for different reasons cannot participate themselves in students mobility, to take part in international cooperation and experience the European or international dimension of higher education. For the same reason,



the training exchange is important not only for outgoing staff but also for employees of host institution. Erasmus staff mobility for teaching and training is conducted by the University of Silesia within reliable procedures and with the high level of visibility, equal treatment, high quality and in accordance with all formal rules of the programme. The transparent and widely open recruitment procedures for mobility are realized by departments according to existing agreements and common, institution-wide rules. The number of visits for each unit is defined on the basis of the numbers for staff exchange planned in cooperation agreements, the level of realization of the plans in previous year and in accordance with details and numbers defined in the programme contract. For the training visits, the plans are prepared by each unit and then verified on the central level. The decisive matter for qualification is the quality of a visit and its programme. To avoid the loss of individual activity in case of resignation, the units prepare waiting lists or announce additional recruitment. Detailed programme and dates of visits in case of incoming staff are established directly with a host unit at the university. Formal and practical support for outgoing and incoming staff is provided by Department of International Relation. The university intends to apply for and implement cooperation projects of all types under the programme.

3. Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the programme on the modernization of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the *Modernisation Agenda* in terms of the policy objectives you intended to achieve.

University of Silesia expects that its participation in all types of the programme activities (mobility, joint projects, cooperation projects) will result in further modernization of the university, better adaptation to the needs of region, country and Europe and requirements of labour market. It will enable further development of educational offer and research potential. It should be stressed that the participation in the EU educational programmes and projects during last almost 20 years has exerted a significant influence on the organisation, procedures, educational offer and research potential of the university. It is a process which has been successfully started and which has been continuously providing valuable results. However, the continuous improvement is definitely needed and participation in the programme can be a strong impulse for that. Participation in the programme and close cooperation with different, foreign partner institutions will provide both the examples of good practice, ready, properly tested solutions and necessary knowledge of needs of other labour markets and institutions. It will enable us to improve the educational offer and to attract more students and candidates also from abroad. In effect, both quality of the educational offer and the level of appropriate competences of the graduates will be improved. Other results of cooperation with different partners from the institution's environments will be better and more adequate preparation and better competences of young researchers. Close and strong international cooperation between all partners involved: not only higher education institutions but also enterprises, different business institutions, research centres and others, will be a key action for creating the appropriate level of flexibility and possibility of fast and proper reaction for changing needs of society and labour market. The participation in the programme will also stimulate the improvement of the institution's own didactic and research potential. The challenges connected with the programme will contribute to continuous improvement of the governance and management of the institution's potential, abilities and funds. The potential of the university and possibilities of the programme will strengthen the position and role of the university as



modern centre of knowledge with strong influence on the proper economic development of the region. The participation in the programme will be connected with further development of the organisation of didactic offer and other activities and using new technologies. Adaptation for the programme requirements means the adaptation for the needs of the institutions environment. The effect is bigger number of graduates and researchers, better prepared for the needs of society, labour market and environment, deepened integration into all aspects and development of the modern economy and rising of the level of innovation.