

# Erasmus Policy Statement

University of Economics in Katowice has been awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (**ECHE**) for the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2021. The following Erasmus Policy Statement sets out our institutional strategy in relation to the Charter.

**I.** The strategic objectives of the University of Economics in Katowice (hereinafter, the UEK) within the scope of Erasmus activities focus on the following:

**1.** Internationalization of education through curricula development toward joint degrees, availability of more courses and degree programs in English, modernization of curricula to integrate business environment, new knowledge, innovative e-learning forms of study and multicultural issues, faculty involvement in organization of international weeks, intensive programs, summer schools, workshops and seminars, increasing the number of visiting professors from abroad.

**2.** Enhancing student and staff mobility by means of expanded credit mobility for studies and work placements and participation in intensive programs, scholarships for outgoing and incoming students, increased enrollment of incoming exchange and degree students from participating and non-participating countries, support system for incoming students via International Relations and student organizations, development of opportunities for experience sharing among academics and administration (teaching and training activities).

**3.** Internationalization of research through establishment of strong international research teams, development of a motivation system for staff engagement in EU research programs, enhanced dissemination of research output in international indexed journals, promotion of research mobility, reinforcement of administrative units for support in launching and implementing research projects.

**4.** Strategic partnerships through review of existing cooperation agreements, focus on collaboration with institutions with similar profiles, involvement in national and international university networks, strong cooperation with local and regional authorities, social partners and enterprises.

**5.** International promotion through website reconstruction, enhanced presence in social media, production of promotional materials (leaflets, flyers, student guides) and distribution in partner institutions, attendance at international student recruitment and go abroad fairs, organization of conferences and other international events to disseminate academic and research project outcomes, membership in international networks, information meetings and presentations, active presence in local and university press, public media and rankings.

Prerequisites for the attainment of these strategic goals are modernized university structure and complex management system to be implemented with the help of additional, external funding the university has received. The UEK is also running new property and infrastructure investments that will

considerably support academic internationalization and research.

The UEK aims for its international partner institutions (whether in bilateral relations or multilateral projects) to represent the highest quality standards in teaching and research. International agreements are subject to review by the Senate Committee for International Relations, taking into consideration the information and cooperation plans presented by the person who has established the contact. Agreements concerning student and staff exchange are concluded with HEIs with a similar academic profile, in order to ensure the best possible recognition of learning outcomes and transfer of credits.

The UEK also collaborates with over 300 enterprises hosting its students and alumni for work placements. The university steadily expands its cooperation with institutions in participating as well as non-participating countries, with the aim to increase access to a more comprehensive exchange offer that would meet both, European priorities and a wider demand by students and academics.

Plans are made to develop further double/multiple/joint degrees with the main priorities being an increased cross-border collaboration with Slovak and Czech partners and establishment of transnational networks and consortia for international study programs such as International Business already taught at the university. An important part of the strategy is a gradual increase in the number of e-learning courses, which in the long run should considerably facilitate development of joint degrees with partners outside Europe.

Mobility activities are addressed to students enrolled in all study cycles as well as to both, academic and administrative staff. While aiming at internationalization, the UEK observes the policy of opening opportunities to the under-represented groups and less advantaged in accessing all forms of Erasmus activities: students with disabilities receive additional care and supplementary financing from the Rector's fund. Similar support is provided to students with social and economic barriers. Effective measures have been planned to ensure fair and equitable opportunities to all potential participants and to fight discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic/social origin, language, religion, political views, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.

**II.** Plans are made for the UEK to become involved in all types of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects foreseen within the program, including:

- establishment of strategic partnerships for a more intense cooperation between institutions and across sectors not only promoting individual student and staff mobility, but, above all, encouraging involvement in academic and training projects of student organizations, academic departments, administrative units, representatives of the 3rd age university (senior citizens), social partners, secondary schools, municipalities and enterprises;

- establishment of knowledge alliances promoting university-business cooperation in the following spheres of activity: joint development of new or review of existing curricula, business experts invited to teach classes, introduction of innovative, practice-based teaching methods, further promotion and

recognition of domestic and international placements for students, improvement of practical and academic skills of university staff through teacher training, continuing education for companies, implementation of research outcomes in practice through newly developed, innovative solutions;

- international cooperation and capacity building projects with third countries, including student and staff exchange, joint programs, short-term activities (workshops, seminars, study visits), knowledge transfer and research projects with the objective to support the modernization and internationalization of higher education worldwide.

**III.** All of the university's initiatives listed above contribute towards the achievement of the objectives behind the 5 priorities of the European Union's modernization and internationalization agenda in higher education, in the following manner:

- increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs through the provision of quality teaching and research, and cooperation with relevant partner institutions;

- improving the quality and relevance of higher education through the development of new and adjustment of the existing study programs to market expectations, internationalization of curricula, development of alumni career monitoring system, provision of relevant language policy for both, incoming and outgoing students, internationalization of research, and active membership in international networks;

- strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation by way of increasing student and staff mobility for teaching and training purposes, reviewing existing partnerships, developing joint study programs, elaborating cohesive recognition rules for international study mobility and placements;

- linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development with the help of newly created strategic partnerships and active engagement of business experts in the teaching process and methodology;

- improving governance and funding with the introduction of a complex university management system and with obtaining additional, external funding towards UEK's operations.

The university's international cooperation has been dynamically evolving for many years and, owing to the support offered by the authorities and commitment of the employees, it has resulted in achieving a stable position in both, domestic and international academic markets. With the new EU budget perspective in sight, the university is determined to intensify those efforts in order to be fully fit to welcome the new challenges faced by the European higher education, as defined in the Europe 2020 Strategy.