

**D****Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)*****D. Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)***

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) on its website within one month after the signature of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education by the European Commission.

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. (max. 5000 characters)

Original language [EN]

Internationalisation has been declared the most important strategic goal for the next 10 years. A strategic project involving cooperation, student & staff mobility as well as internationalisation at home is currently being defined in order to shape the profile of TU Graz as an international university, a reliable partner for HEIs, research centers, enterprises. The following measures have been identified: Cooperation agreements/Study program taught in English/Joint & Double Degrees/Outgoing student and staff mobility/Incoming student and staff mobility/Intercultural & foreign language competence. TU Graz works on establishing 10 strategic partnerships over the next 2 years. These partnerships are based on already existing research & higher education cooperation. Envisaged activities comprise joint research projects, joint/double degrees, student & staff mobility, governance. Entering into partnerships and defining the partnership will be one of the major goals in the next years. The strategic partnerships will cover Europe, North-America & Asia. However, an international university needs a great number & variety of international partners in order to enable international research, teaching collaborations, student & staff mobility. TU Graz already cooperates with numerous partners in the framework of projects in higher education & research and will actively search for more in its areas of interest. Strategic target countries/geographical areas have not been defined, as the most important factor is not the location itself but already existing co-operations in higher education and research and/or a demand by students/teachers/researchers. Evaluation is the key for successful cooperation. TU Graz is in the process of evaluating all existing partnerships in order to create sustainable partnerships focusing on the quality of cooperation. The process started in 2011 and is understood as an ongoing process. Separate evaluation processes were defined for Erasmus agreements and other mobility agreements. Erasmus agreements are evaluated by the respective departmental coordinators with the support of the IRO; based on the evaluation, TU Graz decides which partnerships to continue/cancel; in addition, the coordinators are responsible for acquiring new partners. Other bilateral agreements signed with partner institutions outside of the Erasmus program are evaluated by a committee, which advises the rectorate. Both existing & new partnership proposals are evaluated with the support of the academic contact person for the agreements. Based on the recommendation of the committee, the rectorate decides if an agreement will be signed/continued/cancelled. Incoming and outgoing student & staff mobility have been defined as a priority in the strategic project. Student exchange is encouraged and financially supported on all levels (1st, 2nd, 3rd cycle) either to take courses or to do research abroad. Internships abroad are supported, even though they are not an integrated part of the curricula; students do internships to acquire additional skills, competencies, and knowledge. Individual internships are becoming more important especially as incoming students often do internships at TU Graz. Staff mobility (both academic & non-academic staff) has also become a strong focus of TU Graz, and new funding schemes have been introduced. While non-academic staff is supported for short-term training abroad (up to 6 weeks), academic staff can receive financial support for both research and teaching stays abroad (up to 6 months); young researches, especially in tenure track positions, are encouraged and required to go abroad for a minimum of 6 months. In general, there are no restrictions at TU Graz concerning who can go abroad. All staff members are encouraged to make use of the various mobility programs. As far as double/joint degrees are concerned, TU Graz has strong ambitions to increase its participation. 2 joint degrees as well as 1 double degree program have been implemented. At the moment TU Graz is working on establishing several more joint/double degree programs with partners in Canada, Russia and China. Numerous steps were taken in order to support future development of them: guidelines, flow charts, and responsibilities in the development process were clearly defined, and additional funding will be available. Internationalisation at home will play a key role in the internationalisation project, as some students and staff will not be able to go abroad: PhD and master programs will be offered in English; incoming student and staff mobility is strongly encouraged. New mobility schemes (short term/ intensive programs, research projects) are being developed at the university to allow for more incoming students mobility. Students and staff at TU Graz will receive training in foreign languages and intercultural competence.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme. (max. 2000 characters)

Original language [EN]

In the framework of the strategic project for internationalisation, participation in international cooperation projects will be crucial; the university is defining goals for the project (offering the best education possible to students, preparing students for a global job market, trainings on foreign languages and intercultural competence, increasing the flexibility of staff and students, change the language of instruction to English master's and PhD programs, etc.); the goals are very ambitious, it will take substantial effort and highly committed international co-operation to implement these measures. In order to encourage institutes/ staff to get involved, additional funding will be available for mobility and organization, in addition the IRO and the F&T-House (research unit) provide support for the application process, implementation of the project, financial matters, etc. The rectorate will support project applications, especially if the project proposal supports the aims of the strategic project. Information on the project is, and will be communicated throughout the university, the aims will be made visible through various channels of communication. Implementation of projects will happen on central level and not just on faculty/ institute level in order to make the projects visible university-wide. Projects, especially projects in teaching, must not only involve individual institutes, but also the IRO to make sure that project information is available on central level. Support letters from the respective vice-rectors will ensure that no project application is handed in without the knowledge of the rectorate and the respective administrative units. Involving all partners at university level during the entire project duration will ensure commitment and a sense of responsibility for projects.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda\*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)

Original language [EN]

Erasmus is currently the biggest mobility/cooperation program at TU Graz, and the new program will continue to play a significant role in the internationalisation process. The priorities of the modernisation agenda will challenge/ influence future cooperation. Studies have shown that a large number of students work in order to finance their studies or to gain experience for future employment, that the student body in general is becoming increasingly diverse. The university must adapt to these challenges which are not unique to Austria; participating in the program allows to look at best practice models abroad, discuss challenges/ideas openly, and develop approaches and concepts to meet these challenges together with partners. A university must constantly thrive for quality in education, research, mobility; quality needs (self-)reflection, evaluation, assessment, revising, commitment, both on personal and institutional level. As the only university in Austria, TU Graz has successfully completed an external evaluation process & is working on an internal quality assessment. Different angles & international cooperation enable the institution and individual to analyse one's work critically. As TU Graz is in the process of changing the language of instruction to English on the master and PhD level, participating in the project will support the university in this transition process to ensure quality education in a foreign language. To enhance international mobility & quality, the university is focusing on partner search (sustainable university partnerships); partnerships based on trust allow to focus on the quality of mobility, to create the framework for successful, international experience both abroad and at home. TU Graz understands the importance to create an international body of students and staff, an international campus, which can be achieved through the program. TU Graz has reached out to businesses, both to talk about projects but also student & staff mobility; faculties & institutes have cooperated with businesses for a long time already. The university is committed to involve businesses in the development of university cooperation, adding them as partners to cooperation projects (visibility). Businesses have recently been involved in visiting programs abroad and in Graz; meetings have taken place to define needs on both sides. The dialogue enables to identify common goals, and thus projects for cooperation for both research and teaching. TU Graz is constantly working on guidelines and conditions for transparent funding. Outside funding (through projects, business-collaboration) is becoming increasingly important, yet combining national guidelines and guidelines defined by the project is often very challenging. Different rules may apply, yet project participation help to develop funding guidelines, and tools that make funding transparent to coordinators, the finance department, and also administrative bodies.

\* COM (2011) 567 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0567:FIN:EN:PDF>)

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## Endorsement of the application

*I, the undersigned, legal representative of the applicant institution,*

*certify that the information contained in this application is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. All Programme activities will be implemented on the basis of written agreements with the relevant authorities of the partner institutions;*

*agree to the content of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) application outlined above and commit my institution to respect and observe these obligations;*

*agree to the publication of the Erasmus Policy Statement by the European Commission*

Place: Graz

Name: B. Hofmann-Wellenhof Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 13/05/2013

I have read and accept the Privacy statement

Original signature of the legal representative of the Institution (as identified in section A.2 above)

Original stamp or seal of the Institution



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