We share a sense of identity that focuses on quality, equal opportunities and inclusion and that makes our staff, students and alumni proud to be part of ESE. We have an international focus and combine top academic research with excellent teaching.

The Erasmus School of Economics is the natural choice for ambitious people who wish to study economics, for academics eager to contribute to relevant and challenging research, for alumni eager to learn and share their experiences, and for governments and firms seeking reliable advice.

By pursuing its three main principles: “Quality first”, “Integration of top research with top education” and “prime focus on economics”, ESE will ensure that by 2020, the School will have secured its place as a leading academic brand in economics in Europe.
Purpose

As an internationally renowned institute that contributes scientific knowledge to major economic issues and relies on the most recent insights into the discipline, the School strives to build its reputation. Therefore it wishes to advance the following objectives:

To create, disseminate and apply scientific knowledge in the field of economics, by thinking in scenarios in terms of achieving optimal solutions.

To shape the leaders of tomorrow by placing academic education in economics at the centre of our activities, providing challenging programmes that combine theoretical and practical expertise of our academic staff.

To make an impact on society, governments and firms by giving advice and opinions on contemporary issues of economic concern.
Key Objectives

To increase the number of research groups recognised internationally as outstanding in their field of expertise. The focal point in the near future is on behavioural economics, econometrics and management science, health economics, international finance, international markets, managerial economics and marketing.

To achieve a high level of excellence in teaching for (inter)national students in order to deliver confident, skilled and inquisitive graduates ready to embark on inspiring careers that make a significant contribution to society and bring out the very best in themselves.

To enhance national and international awareness of our research output and academic performance and to share knowledge and opinions by connecting with the media and by cooperating with the business community, social organisations, government institutions and society as a whole.

To develop genuine, lifelong and interactive relationships with our alumni, because we recognise that for our students, the first day at ESE signifies “the first day of the rest of their life”.

To create an energetic, inspiring and encouraging environment for our staff and students, in order to ensure that everyone can take full advantage of what ESE has to offer.

True to our Rotterdam roots, the School’s relationship with the city, the city’s industrial/port areas, the business community and the region as a whole, ESE wants to augment its engagement with the larger region of Rotterdam.
Recent assessment reports show an above average score for our bachelor’s and master’s degree courses and our research programmes, indicating that ESE is regionally, nationally and internationally recognised. The objectives expressed in the strategy documents “Winnen door Kiezen” (“Success through Choice”) and “A course made good” have largely been achieved. Compared to 2005, our standing is stronger and more consolidated, and we have a sound financial basis. It is a position to be proud of, but also a position which we firmly believe we can further expand upon. After all, it is important in the long-term (by 2020) that our School has a clear profile, enjoys recognition in the scientific community both nationally and internationally, helps shape the careers of students and top scientists, is rooted in society, participates actively in public debates and provides society and the business community with cutting-edge knowledge and insights. It is important that students, staff, alumni and other stakeholders want to be part of this dynamic organisation and help achieve the School’s goals together.

In many topics, the aspirations of ESE remain unchanged. The sharp focus on economics, the desire to achieve excellence (measurable by ESE’s ranking in the academic world) and a sound financial basis are permanent fixtures on our priority list. At the same time, we actively want to build on our reputation and increase our impact. These objectives demand a number of new ambitions. In this respect this strategic plan ESE 2020 gives an update of our mission, vision and goals, which are already described in more detail in the documents Winnen door Kiezen and A Course made Good.
Given the extended timescale of this strategic plan, the scientific vibrancy of the School and the dynamic world we live in, it is obvious that this strategic plan cannot offer restrictive activities or strict timelines for progress. Its purpose is to identify areas in which we can build on our strengths and it enables us to respond quickly and purposefully to opportunities as they emerge. Therefore, rather than describing every aspect of ESE’s policy in detail, this manuscript presents a general picture of our intentions for the coming years with regard to our academic aspirations.

No School can do everything. To enhance the ESE’s quality and reputation, a clear focus, education and research programs that builds upon our strengths and the selection of priorities are mandatory. Therefore we will focus on six priority areas (pillars) that will receive our full attention until the year 2020 at the very least. We believe that this strategic plan will prepare us for the next decade and enable us to take full control of our future.
ESE wants to focus on further strengthening the areas of research where we already deliver international quality, and the academic areas with demonstrated potential for rapid progress. So, we do not do everything, but concentrate on areas where our comparative advantage makes us among the best in the world. Part of our policy with regard to this goal is that the quality of the journals in which articles are published is much more important than the sheer number of publications. Furthermore we are sure that critical mass of faculty is essential for continued academic excellence.

In this respect we pledge to:

• nurture our available research personnel. The emphasis is not on augmenting their salaries, but by awarding them with extra MPhil and PhD tracks, creating opportunities to invite visiting professors, etc.;
• support academic staff in their efforts to obtain grants (process of identifying grants, draft proposals, negotiation process and project management instruments);
• stimulate talented individuals at various stages of their academic career by giving them the right opportunities and prospects (conferences, job markets, sabbatical abroad etc.).
• encourage established researchers to come to work at ESE, thus reinforcing the quality of the existing staff.
• develop partnerships with renowned schools and stimulate individual collaborations with top researchers.

ESE strives to increase the number of research groups recognised internationally as outstanding in their field of expertise. The focal point in the near future is on behavioural economics, econometrics and management science, health economics, international finance, international markets, managerial economics and marketing.
Actions
1. Recalibrating the research programs of ESE, taking into account the comments in the research review assessment.
2. Stimulating the recruitment of visiting staff on the priority research programmes and the researcher exchange to enhance the expertise of ESE.
3. Deploying SOC funds for the priority research programmes.
4. Enhancing the support regarding funding opportunities (NWO and FP8) in order to increase our external funds thereby bringing outstanding scholars and postdoctoral fellows to ESE for appointments for extended periods of three to four years.
5. Monitoring and if necessary elevating the standards for appointment and promotion of faculty and support staff to the level of our peers, across all organizational units.
6. Professionalizing ErasMIS in order to provide up-to-date information about our key-figures, by which we can create visibility for researchers worldwide, open up information about our scholars to a broader audience, and help the management to plan the future direction of ESE.
We will make every effort to recruit top quality and motivated students who want to develop themselves to their full potential in a research-rich learning environment. ESE reaffirms the priority it assigns to the quality in teaching. We continue to elevate the quality of our education, providing our students with enriched and challenging educational experiences, including the benefits that derive from ESE’s research reputation and capacity, its international links and our strong links with business and government. Our emphasis is on faculty who can share their excitement and expertise in research in the classroom. We will continue to encourage innovative practices in education. By using ICT supporting tools for instance, we will bring our education to a higher level, hence utilizing the capacities of our professors to the utmost. Apart from research-led teaching, (graduate) students are offered access to the thinking of visiting world leaders and academics through debates and public lectures from our alumni. The involvement of alumni in education provides a thriving and ever-changing environment, requiring continuous adaptation to new concepts, tools and technologies from the academic and business worlds.

ESE aims to achieve a high level of excellence in teaching for (inter)national students in order to deliver confident, skilled and inquisitive graduates ready to embark on inspiring careers that make a significant contribution to society and bring out the very best in themselves.
Actions

1. Increasing student demand, enrolment and retention from home and overseas markets, through the further development of a vocationally contemporary and relevant curriculum that optimises student recruitment.

2. Creating a clear focus in the bachelor programmes (both Dutch and English) of Economics and Business Economics and Econometrics and Operations Research.

3. Providing highly motivated students more opportunities to challenge and expand their intellectual capacities, especially in terms of increased breadth and depth.

4. Further strengthening a learning environment that emphasizes the process of intellectual inquiry, broad fundamental knowledge, the development of methodological, critical and communication skills.

5. After students have focused on a major we want to provide a broad foundation both in terms of content and methodology and expose them to leading-edge research and involve them in the process of independent thinking and intellectual inquiry that will serve them well throughout their lives.

6. We want to build up the capacity of students to communicate their knowledge and insights clearly and convincingly to a broad and diverse group of people.

7. Supporting and rewarding teaching excellence, and elevating the professionalism, visibility, and status of teaching and learning.

8. Enhancing the effectiveness of our (inter)national marketing by pointing out the attractiveness of our curricula and by providing thorough and accurate information about our academic programmes.

9. Systematically integrating the use of information technology into our programmes, so that all faculty and students can fully exploit new technology as an essential tool in teaching and learning.

10. Expanding training and support services to help faculty with curricular redesign, educationally sound pedagogical practices, and the development and deployment of information technology based courseware.

11. Integrating public lectures from our alumni in our education.
The engagement and collaboration of our researchers with the public, the business world, the government and the third sector (e.g. charities) is an important pillar in addition to academic education and fundamental research. By exchanging data, we can contribute scientific knowledge to society. Furthermore, it opens up new sources of funding (including follow-on funding). Knowledge transfer can also be stimulated by collaborative research, i.e. academic research undertaken in partnership with other universities or research organisations, the business world, the government and/or with the third sector. Partners can contribute cash and/or in-kind services (i.e. data sets and surveys). In order to increase the number of commercial activities generated by our faculty, ESE wants a closer link between the activities of our research groups and the activities of the limited companies within EUR Holding Ltd., while ensuring that ESE’s core tasks have positive benefits from the knowledge transfer.

ESE seeks to enhance national and international awareness of our research output and academic performance and to share knowledge and opinions by connecting with the media and by cooperating with the business community, social organisations, governments and society.
Actions
1. Expanding the ESE conference-cycle, realizing focused marketing and increasing the use of broadcast and print media, in order to generate additional visibility and revenue for the School.
2. Designing an ESE-website to address a wider audience with written information, podcast interviews and other material that our faculty has to offer concerning engagement with society (in a broad sense).
3. Deepening existing partnerships and establishing new collaborative junctures in both education and research.
4. Investing with research and education in the so called third sector, with focus primarily on processes that constitute the actual philanthropy value cycle, with particular focus on econometrics.
5. Hosting annually an academic conference in connection with the International Children’s Peace Prize and stimulating the initiatives of the Erasmus Education Fund
ESE’s relationship with its alumni does not end at graduation, nor do we want the relationship to develop solely in one direction. If proper care and consideration is given to both sides of the relationship, these bonds can last a lifetime. It is clear that the potential power of our alumni community is rooted in the actual quality of the student experience. In order to build meaningful and long-lasting relationships between students and ESE, it is essential that loyalty and connections are nurtured during the student’s time here. Therefore, before they graduate, ESE will ask national and international students about their life as ESE alumni and also request their input during the organisation of alumni activities. To strengthen the alumni presence at our School, we will ask them to actively participate in our programmes and events. We will also promote strategies and create facilities that allow students and alumni to interact, to discuss career development and to network. Furthermore, ESE will conduct an electronic student survey with regard to issues such as what type of alumni programmes would most appeal to young alumni, what types of communication methods and content would be of greatest value/interest, and reasons why they would recommend ESE.

ESE seeks to develop genuine and lifelong relationships with our alumni, because we recognise that for our students, the first day at ESE signifies “the first day of the rest of their lives”.

**Actions**

1. Conducting an electronic survey concerning our alumni to learn about the most effective communication means, the types of information alumni would be most interested in and the types of activities and engagement opportunities that would appeal to a wider range of alumni.

2. Creating online groups to facilitate social contact and networking events among alumni who have things in common (profession, academic field, geographical proximity etc.).

3. Obtaining tailor made data-management systems for our alumni relations.

4. Developing a long term relationship with our alumni by linking them to our student population and faculty.
For employees, students and alumni alike, ESE wants to provide an environment in which respect, equal opportunities, and diversity are promoted and everyone is encouraged to achieve their full potential. We want to create a sense of belonging and a culture in which the views of students and employees are highly appreciated. We encourage staff and students to undertake responsibilities associated with the School and to contribute to the greater Rotterdam area, on a voluntary basis or as a profession. In order to achieve a community based on these essential values, effective leadership within the School is a core principle.

ESE strives to create an energetic, inspiring and nurturing environment for our staff and students, in order to ensure that anyone can take full advantage of what ESE has to offer.
Actions
1. Seeking additional ways to celebrate and reward faculty and students for their scholarly achievements, recognizing them for the entire range of their contributions and accomplishments.
2. Extending the opportunity for committed students to participate in honours, master classes and other events at which ESE collaborates with the cream of the business community, government institutions and non-profit organisations.
3. Using the instrument of a career development plan to provide opportunities for staff members to develop their full potential, thereby enhancing their sense of personal fulfillment at work and their ability to take advantage of opportunities to develop their career.
4. Focusing on expanding knowledge, skills and awareness with regard to professional, personal and career development, by making readily available a comprehensive range of relevant and progressive training programmes, coaching opportunities and tools for our staff members.
5. Developing mechanisms, such as succession planning strategies, that enable academic staff and senior management to develop leadership qualities within ESE.
6. Boosting our efforts regarding the recruitment and well-being of our staff members, as well as the development of their career aspirations, by making use of a structured talent management programme that enables our line management to effectively manage the performance of our staff members.
7. Creating an inspiring and collaborative environment for our PhD students / young talented researchers.
8. Creating a talent programme for our support staff based on a series of career paths, including information about the skills, experience, and education necessary to succeed in particular career paths, and connections to other career paths.
9. Working on effective two-way communication and increasing staff involvement in implementing our strategy.
10. Arranging a variety of social activities at ESE for all staff.
11. Continuing our efforts to build on our diversity programmes (including recruitment, promotion and reward policies, the use of awareness training for our staff members and the incorporation of good practices into our processes).
12. Improving our management information system (making relevant management data more quickly and efficiently available in order to support and improve decision making).
13. Conducting periodic reviews and updates of our support systems to ensure that our processes remain clearly defined, well-communicated, effective and efficient.
True to our Rotterdam roots, the School’s relationship with the city, the city’s industrial/port areas and the region as a whole are of vital importance to ESE. We already have close relationships with a variety of (regional) organisations, although we recognise the need to enlarge the range of partners and stakeholders. These networks and alliances are vital to our research, our data collection, the broadening of our students’ experiences and the development of well-educated young people in the region. In accordance with our strategy to engage and communicate with regional stakeholders, we will establish a programme of regional stakeholder events.
Actions
1. Offering our stakeholders affordable housing in a good environment to attract our main target groups to ESE (Bachelor, Master, MPhil and PhD).
2. Continuing and expanding of research programmes into matters relevant to the region (transport, supply chain optimisation/planning, industrial economics, health etc.).