

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

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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]

The present identity of Erasmus University Rotterdam is based on its international and multicultural orientation, its entrepreneurial spirit and its outstanding academic performance in the broad areas of 'Health' and 'Wealth'. Its mission is to find answers to global social challenges in the fields of Health, Wealth, Governance and Culture drawing inspiration from the Rotterdam metropolis.

In the forthcoming university strategic period 2013-2018 the university aims to further expand on this identity by strengthening its profile as an advanced specialized research university, globally oriented in its education and research and attractive for talent from all over the world.

This ambition requires an ongoing internationalization and innovation of its education and research programmes. Erasmus University favors an integrated approach as the various aspects of internationalization and innovation reinforce each other. Academic staff is stimulated to be actively involved in international networks and partnerships in their field of expertise and to develop innovative educational concepts in line with EUR's identity. Current partnerships will be re-assessed on their additional value for staff and students and whether they are related to ongoing research cooperation. Recently also 'knowledge networks' are being established in EUR core areas enabling cross sector cooperation with industry, civil society and other educational sectors.

With respect to the internationalization of EUR degree programmes, steps are considered such as introducing 'international classrooms' with optimal student diversity, internationalized curricula and intercultural didactical approaches. The envisaged use of ICT based education methods will also support internationalizing EUR based programmes. Other options that are considered are: the expansion of the minor period up to 30 ECTS; additional international streams of BSc programmes to further international exchange, participation of guest lecturers, and extend the development of joint education.

The geographical scope of EUR's international strategy is global, as are the societal challenges EUR wants to find answers to. Based on EUR's educational and research ambitions, and taking into account socio-economic developments, EUR's international strategy is based on reciprocity and mutual academic interest between 'hubs' of knowledge worldwide rather than on strictly geographical parameters. Diploma and credit mobility mainly takes place between participating (EU) countries and between specific countries such as the United States, China, India, Brazil, Indonesia and countries in Latin America and Africa.

With respect to this student & staff mobility EUR schools are encouraged to create new opportunities for incoming and outgoing staff and students in those clusters with a low degree of internationalisation; e.g. by developing 'external windows' and international streams in current EUR programmes with partners abroad.

Impact on own modernisation and internationalisation

EUR is a long term promoter of emancipation in higher education. Just as the city and the region have evolved into a melting pot of cultures, so also the student population has become increasingly diverse. In the Netherlands the EUR has the highest percentage of students with a non-Western ethnic background (25 %), and it attracts large numbers of Bachelor graduates who want to get a more advanced degree.

The Erasmus University (EUR) considers diversity and internationalisation as a critical element of quality in education. However, the growing diversity of the student population also represents a challenge as some student groups perform less well and also drop out or switch more often. For various, sometimes cultural reasons these groups are also less represented in international education activities. Over the years the EUR has conducted a lot of research for discovering the factors that explain these discrepancies and several programmes were introduced to improve student completion rates and reduce drop-out rates. This resulted in the 'Nominal is Normal' concept from 2011 onwards, which combines activity-based teaching, serial programming, a fixed first-year standard and small groups.

The EUR expects to make optimal use of the three Actions included in the Programme, as these match with the main emancipatory goals of the EUR, and the EUR aims to further increase student performance, decrease drop-out rates, and attract new student groups in the framework of the Programme.

EUR favors the further development of joint education programmes, as they contribute to an improved educational quality, to internationalization of the curriculum, further network building, and to a stronger international profile of the university. New initiatives for joint education programmes at Bachelor, Master as well as at PhD level are being made by the individual EUR schools are being monitored and supported by an EUR

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]

EUR's strategy relates to the three Key Actions of the Programme in the following way:

Action 1 Learning Mobility of Individuals

The EUR intends to increase the level of incoming and outgoing mobility by integrating it into current and new programmes (embedded mobility, joint education), by linking it to ongoing research cooperation, and by developing alternative mobility arrangements (intensive programmes, blended learning, transnational traineeships) in order to stimulate specific groups of non participating staff and students to participate as well.

Action 2, Cooperation on Innovation and good practices

In addition to present partnerships aimed at joined education, EUR will engage in international transnational and cross-sectoral consortia. An option could be to build further upon the present Holland Programme on Entrepreneurship (HOPE), and to create with a number of strategic partners, including governance and corporate partners, structural linkages between private sector and the education sector.

The EUR foresees the increase use of ICT based education as it will enable online/blended mobility and can strengthen new forms of cooperation. Also based on its mission the EUR has a history of Capacity building in third countries, especially regarding the capacity building of formal and informal education institutions in vital areas. The EUR strategy foresees a further continuation of capacity building, preferably by making also use of innovative and ICT based education methods.

Action 3, Policy Reform

As a university with a pronounced social orientation and with a very diversified student population, it is a challenge is to improve the quality of education and the success rate of student groups such as students with a non-Western migrant background. The EUR will proceed implementing research and educational approaches that will increase participation in higher education as well as the completion rate of new (international) student groups.

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]

EUR's participation in the Programme will contribute to the 5 priorities of the European Union's modernization and internationalization agenda in the following way;

Priority 1; Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs"

The EUR is an emancipatory university located in the metropolitan multi-cultural Rotterdam region. Over the years a series of programmes were initiated to attract a broad cross-section of society into the university and to decrease discrepancies in study success and dropout rates between the various student groups. EUR aims to continuously further improve university access rates and study results for specific student groups. In addition the EUR plans to expand opportunities for post-initial academic education, both nationally as well as internationally, by launching flexible academic education and involving ICT based education.

Priority 2; Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

EUR's participation in the three Key Actions of the Programme as indicated above will contribute to the further strengthening of EURs present strong position regarding career perspectives of its graduates and the relevance and excellence of its programmes. Especially innovation by introducing ICT based education and internationalisation of curricula will further enhance quality and relevance of education for the current and prospective student groups.

Priority 3.Strengtening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

The EUR develops a series of opportunities for enabling more students and staff to gain additional skills and experience abroad, such as 'embedded internationalisation', more intensive engagement in joint education programmes, involvement in international partnerships and networks, and innovative degree programmes for attracting and circulating talented students.

Priority 4. Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

The EUR strengthens its best and most promising research groups trough targeted investments and by stimulating them to become engaged in cross-sectoral networks in which also local governance and the private sector are represented. In this way these research groups will develop their role as economic actors and increase the impact of their research.

Priority 5. Improve governance and funding

EUR's participation in the Programme will be coordinated with participation in other (national) education and research programmes in order to ensure maximum efficiency and complementarity. Further structural cooperation will be sought with the international private sector for financing joint education and research activities. This will also improve the labour market orientation of EUR's programmes and the career perspectives of the EUR students.

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