



REKTOR

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS) 2014-2020

Szczecin University's international strategy forms an integral part of the "Szczecin University Development Strategy 2012-2020", where international cooperation, partnerships and alliances are explicitly named among the key factors enhancing the quality of its research and teaching. With reference to the quality of research, international partners of Szczecin University are chosen for their compatibility of academic profile and their distinctiveness in the specific area of research that is of particular interest to the academia of Szczecin University. The US aims to form alliances and build research teams for projects that would improve US know-how and competitiveness as a research centre. With reference to the quality of teaching, the choice of partners is determined by the compatibility of study programmes that guarantees the recognition of results obtained during periods of student mobility. Furthermore, it also increases the possibility to benefit from best practices to develop innovative and efficient teaching methods, and to add new content to the existing study programmes offered by the US faculties.

Geographically, the majority of US partners are located in participating countries, but there are also partner HEI's and institutions in Asia (Russia, China, Taiwan) and the USA. Szczecin University will continue to strengthen the scope of cooperation with existing partners, with an aim to use the funding possibilities of the Programme to enhance cooperation with partners from non-participating countries.

Szczecin University will participate in all types of student and staff mobility available in the Programme. In terms of target groups benefiting from mobility to partner institutions, the main objectives for the mobility of 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle students for the purpose of study is to provide them with the opportunity to get access to elements of academic knowledge that are not directly offered by US. In this way, student mobility also extends the US offer of study programmes and increases its attractiveness as a HEI. The 3rd cycle students also have the opportunity to conduct research abroad and consult their PhD thesis assumptions and methodology with the academia at partner HEIs. The mobility for placements, aimed at students of 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle, is to provide students with the opportunity of a semi-work experience, serving both to verify their academic knowledge against the requirements in a real working situation, and to acquaint themselves with these requirements. The aim is also for outgoing students to improve their language skills, either by further increasing the level of competence within the language they have been learning at US for the purpose of mobility at the partner HEI or institution (mostly English), or by learning a new language for the purpose of communication in the host country. The objective for academic staff mobility for teaching and training purposes is to both enhance the quality of teaching methods and facilitate cooperation in research areas through the exchange of knowledge, ideas and good practices with colleagues from partner HEIs. It should also serve as a supportive measure for the development of curricula and so further facilitate possible internationalization of the study programmes in US, in particular by increasing the number of courses taught in foreign languages. The US administrative staff participating in training mobility aims to learn about the structures of the partner HEIs and education systems of their host countries, thereby adding to the development and improvement of administrative procedures, financial solutions and other supportive measures that make US

internalization smoother. Additionally, all mobility participants will increase their general awareness of the differences between their countries' cultures, thereby making their communication with colleagues from partner HEIs easier.

Szczecin University will continue to engage in international partnerships with HEIs, research centres, enterprises, local authorities and other institutions for the implementation of educational and research projects funded under the Programme. A particular focus will be put on projects involving direct cooperation between US, partner enterprises and business centres, with an idea to connect academic knowledge and practical approaches in the development of study programmes.

The hitherto organizational structure and supportive measures will be applied in the division of tasks and responsibilities involving project participation; the appointed project coordinators/delegates or individual researchers will be responsible for submitting applications, project management, the reporting and dissemination of results, while the IRO and European Project Department will act as supportive and advisory bodies and will supervise in terms of adherence to the general rules of particular cooperation projects. They will also provide information concerning open calls related to the Programme. Before implementation, all projects are to be registered by the European Project Department according to internally devised rules and checked against financial feasibility and personnel capacity. The actual implementation is also to be preceded by a needs analysis defined in the US strategy. Within the Finance and Accounting Department there is a unit whose tasks are fully assigned to provide administrative support in handling finances and expenditures of EU and non-EU cooperation projects.

By this participation in student and staff mobility, both outgoing and incoming, and implementing projects focused on the relationship with the business environment, the US will improve the quality of its study programmes both in terms of academic content, practical relevance for the international job market and an increase in the teaching skills of its staff. It will also facilitate the development of the modules/study programmes offered in foreign languages (mostly English).

Also, due to exchange of knowledge and good practices with the relevant colleagues from the partner HEIs, the US will be able to implement projects within the framework of programmes that previously were beyond its reach due to a lack of competences and experience.

The US students will have the possibility to improve their competitiveness on the labour market by increasing their language competences, academic knowledge, awareness of professional requirements and flexibility adopted during their mobility period abroad.

Additionally, US staff engaged in cooperation projects will gain access to the innovative research solutions and tools applied by the partner HEIs and institutions, thereby improving the quality of their research work.

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