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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]

Our school fully shares the fundamental principles of the ECHE. In this sense, we are working to expand strategies for the modernization and internationalization of our institution. We want to increase the levels of results through cooperation with other higher education institutions in neighbouring countries and improve the quality of higher education in the European Union through mobility and cooperation without borders.

We are highly interested in the relationship with the business world, that is, in students' placement mobility programs. We have had experience in this sense when our students went to Finland on a students' placement mobility program supported by mobility grants given by the Generalitat of Catalonia.

Our selection criterion is completely objective and does not discriminate anyone because we choose students and teachers who wish to apply for an Erasmus scholarship taking into account their language skills and academic achievement. As we have stated above, at the beginning of each course we offer an informative talk about the ECHE and the centre provides the link where you can download the application form and all the information needed. Later, the committee of tutors of the courses with possibilities of obtaining mobility chooses the students.

To implement the strategy of participation, our school undertakes activities before, during and after the mobility program in the context of the entire academic community. By doing so, we give information about our institution, the operation of courses, the language used, the students' placement program, the number of ECTS credits ascribed and the standards of evaluation. This course we have relied on the technical support of the Diputació de Barcelona that organized a conference in our centre performed by a technician.

A small institution like ours has difficulty in getting new partners. However, we keep on looking for exchanges of students and teachers. Being aware of the current economic crisis, and due to this, we try to focus on places where living is not so expensive, and on nearby countries to make the displacement more economical. Considering what has been said, although we would like to extend our sphere of influence, we have initiated contacts with institutions from small towns like ours with similar studies in nearby countries such as France and Portugal. The search is done via email, phone and in person if possible.

However, we always carry a heedful research before signing an agreement. With the three partners we have at the moment: Oporto (Portugal), Tarbes (France) and Burträsk (Sweden), the agreements were signed after direct meeting between our institutions. Oporto was the result of information given in an Erasmus conference hold last year in Valladolid. With Tarbes we made mutual visits at the respective schools and in the case of Burträsk it was their own initiative. We received a delegation of teachers with whom we are starting an exchange of work proposals through short stays of students and teachers.

One of our main objectives is to increase the language level of the students and teachers of our school so a few years ago we joined a program set by the Department of Education of the Generalitat of Catalonia to get English courses in our centre taught by teachers of the EOI (Official Language School). With the same intention, two years ago our school established an agreement with UVic (University of Vic) for our students and teachers to study languages in the Language School there with considerable discounts on fees.

The other important aim our institution wants to achieve by means of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education is to collaborate in creating a common European educational system without borders that would unify higher education between countries of the European Union. We want to learn by knowing different ways of working in other academic institutions, diverse typology of courses, new pedagogical approaches, innovative resources, personal experiences ... in short, we want to get better as teachers.

It is clear that these objectives are reviewed and evaluated periodically to see if they are working, or else, they need to be reconsidered.

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 relation to the organization and execution of cooperation projects in education and training, our school will study in detail the projects in which we intend to participate.

We are currently waiting for the proposal the Burträsk School (Sweden) is working on. This centre is very interested in starting cooperative relationship with our city and particularly with our school, but they have just applied for their ECHE. Its aim is to facilitate students and teachers mobility. First they would come here and then we would go there. Being sensitive to the serious financial crisis in Spain, mainly regarding young people, they have offered to provide financial support. We commit to give full support to the entire academic community to participate in this project. As far as it is possible, we will try to contribute financially and, of course, there will be a wide broadcasting of the activities and their results on the website of our school.

This activity will take place once the Department of Education gives its consent.

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]

Our school is small and it is also affected by the impact of the financial crisis and so the number of students and teachers interested in requesting an Erasmus scholarship is not as high as we would like to. However, our school considers it is truly important to hold the Extended Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014-2020 as we are convinced that it will modernize and enhance the quality of our education.

We bestowed the ECHE not long ago and so we have little experience which means that we have not been able to develop all its benefits. Nevertheless, we are noticing an increasing interest from our educative community.

This year we are managing three mobility programs applications, two for students mobility and one for students' placement. We do not know if we will finally accomplish all of them, but we have already ensured the fulfilment of one with the execution of a final degree project which will be given broad publicity in our centre so as to increase interest in following courses.

There is also a teacher interested in taking part in a mobility program next course to present his doctoral thesis on the impact of the sensitivity in the creative strategies of contemporary design.

Although it is true that the High Degree in Design is equivalent to university studies, and thus the commonplace for the E ECHE application, we are desirous to reinforce the students' placement in foreign companies, especially in places where the impact of the financial crisis is not so severe. These countries (Germany, The United Kingdom, France...) may be a future professional career destination for our students, and thus encourage them to see the appeal of requesting an Erasmus scholarship.

We would also like to carry out teachers' incoming Erasmus mobility programs. By doing so, our Teaching staff could become acquainted with other ways of teaching and our educational community could be enriched by acquiring knowledge/experience and by the use of different languages in the classroom.

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