

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

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The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy 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 Sapientia College of Theology of Religious Orders is an integrated institute of several religious orders. Its aim is to be the center of theological studies for religious orders in Hungary. The main purpose of the College is to provide high quality theological training based on Catholic faith and morals, in observance of church and state law, feeding on the spirituality of orders teaching in the College as well as to give a platform for research on the theology of religious life.

In the year 2000, the three religious orders now responsible for the College, the Hungarian Benedictine Congregation, the Hungarian Piarist Province and the Franciscan Province of Our Lady of Hungary united their centuries-old theological colleges under the name 'Sapientia College of Theology of Religious Orders'. It is an aim of the College to rely on a wider basis among religious orders: the faculty includes members of seven other religious congregations, and a total of 15 congregations are represented among the students. This brings along an international network of contacts which we are trying to build on.

Theological training in the College prepares religious candidates for the priesthood and provides theological, catechetical, and pastoral-assistant training for religious brothers and sisters. The College is also committed to train lay people who wish to serve the church and the society.

a) The College furthers cooperation with other institutions and aims at continually improving its activities. The Sapientia College offers both BA and MA programs within the framework of the higher education standards created by the Bologna Accords, and undivided study programs (theology, teacher training), as well as correspondence courses. Studies are recognized according to the European Credit Transfer System.

In international partnerships, the Sapientia College seeks institutions with a related course offer: theological faculties, training of teachers of religion, protection of children and of the family. The management board of the College decides on the establishment of professional relationships with partner institutions on the basis of the variety of courses offered in a foreign language. In the case of a new partnership agreement, our College prefers that the host institution show readiness to participate in a bilateral student and teacher mobility programme. The establishment of new agreements of cooperation is favoured by the internationality of religious congregations present in the faculty members of our College.

At the moment our College offers courses only in the Hungarian language, so those students who are fluent in Hungarian form the majority of visiting students. However, we receive also teachers who use foreign languages and we assure appropriate forms of translation in their courses.

b) It is our primary objective to maintain and to deepen the agreements of cooperation that have been in place with top-level professional workshops of the European Union (Leuven, Párizs, Bécs, Lyon etc.). These lines of cooperation assure that our students and instructors remain in contact with current issues and methods of theological research.

We consider it as an important strategic objective to develop contacts with those higher education institutions of the Central and Eastern European Region that offer similar types of formation (Slovakia, Romania, Croatia). These forms of cooperation favour not only the students of Hungarian language living in neighbouring countries but extend to the language of those countries as well. It is our contribution to mutual understanding among nationalities in the region. We are working on joint degree programmes with institutions in neighbouring countries.

Among forms of student mobility, the most important target group is identified in students of the first cycle, but those of the second cycle are also highlighted. Since our College is not in a position to offer doctoral studies, there is no cooperation on this level.

Please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme.

If not applicable, please explain (max. 2000 characters)

Original language [EN]

The strategy of our institution for the organisation and implementation of international cooperation projects within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme is based on the following principles: (1) our College is ready to enter such projects with institution on similar level and field of research; (2) our College is open to collaboration with institutions other than higher education institutions, with our preference lying in the field of religious education, child and family protection and pastoral counseling; (3) our College is especially open to collaboration in the area of Catholic social teaching, reflected in terms of present-day economic and social situations.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on the modernisation of your institution. Please refer to each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda *and explain which are the policy objectives you intend to pursue.(max. 3000 characters)

Original language [EN]

Our participation in the Erasmus+ Programme is expected to exert an impact on our College in all five priorities of the Modernisation Agenda, although in varying degrees.

I. Increasing attainment levels: student mobility programmes will enhance social and market opportunities of under-represented groups. Students will acquire new horizons and personal contacts in their fields of study, thus reducing drop-out percentage. This is especially important in our post-graduate courses among young adults. We are working on how to help our students to better integrate their studies abroad in their progression routes.

II. Improving quality and relevance: student and instructor mobility is expected to raise graduate employability by way of improved language skills, an increased knowledge of methods and resources in theological research and a deeper sensitivity to international environment. Exchange programmes will motivate and reward excellent teachers. Since quality improvement is our primary concern, this priority is especially relevant for us.

III. Mobility and international co-operation for quality: our participation in Erasmus+ will bring along a greater mobility and will make our programmes more flexible. We pledge to put in place an efficient recognition of studies abroad. We expect that our co-operation with Faculties and Colleges of a similar background will provide further insights to improve our course offer.

IV. Strengthening the “knowledge triangle”: in our specific field of theological education it is still unusual to speak about the interaction between research, education and innovation. However, we have seen the beneficial effects of bringing these aspects closer together. A better knowledge of foreign learning environments increases efficiency in teacher training. We expect that student and instructor mobility programmes will make the participants as well as the institution itself more sensitive to innovation.

V. Creating the right governance and funding conditions: our College is relatively small and is not over-burdened by heavy systems of governance. It has proved efficient in selection and organisation processes. We have also found that Erasmus offers a favourable funding for successful student and instructor mobility programmes.

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