

Erasmus+ Policy Statement 2021-2027 (Overall Strategy)

The (VU) Vistula University's vision is "to be a university that best reads the challenges of the future. We want to be the first-choice university for those who have the ambition to acquire knowledge and conquer the world. We have a vision to be the leader among the best Polish private universities, highly rated by students and employers, recognized internationally, perceived as a valued scientific research centre that is at the forefront in selected areas of education and research."

VU as the leader of internationalisation in Poland, aims to maintain this position by increasing the international diversity of its student population, faculty, and administrative staff. Thus, we will continue our efforts to assure the positive impact of the internationalised student population on their learning experience. We will also take all available steps to take advantage of the Erasmus+ program to develop international research activities. Additionally we will develop an inclusive and multicultural work environment for our faculty and administrative staff. All of this will be supported by the extensive implementation of the new technologies supporting the research and learning environment, including mobility processes.

Internationalisation is important to the long-term sustainability of the University's unique position, both at national and international levels. In all our international activities, we recognise the importance of regular monitoring and evaluation, as well as benchmarking with peers, in order to inform and influence our future practice, policy, and strategy.

Programmes

Internationalisation will become a distinctive feature of all the VU programmes. We will achieve it through various educational initiatives, such as joint, double, and dual degrees, developed and delivered with our academic and business partners from both the Erasmus+ programme and partner countries.

We have high aspirations for our graduates to deliver employability skills, enabling them to successfully enter the job markets, and develop their careers. Across all our programmes, we will make innovative use of new information and communications' technologies, to enrich teaching and enhance the student learning experience.

We want to consolidate the international and intercultural dimensions of all of our study programmes, to re-inforce our distinctive features and competitive advantage. Internationalisation of our programmes will be reflected in:

- international content – international concepts and trends within the curriculum;
- international teaching materials – case studies, reports, assignments, mobile content;
- library resources, especially full-text commercial and open-access databases;
- events for intercultural integration – the events promoting the culture and tradition of various countries and regions, and expanding knowledge about the countries of origin of our students.

Students

We will seek to offer more diverse mobility opportunities to our students, and to include mobility as an optional element of an increasing number of study programmes.

We are committed to extend the range and nature of the opportunities we can offer our students, as optional credit mobility components of an ever-increasing range of degree programmes. This will include both study and work placements in programme and partner countries.

We want to provide a strong base, from which, students will be able to pursue an international career. This includes international skills and knowledge of European and international business environment. Ultimately, employers in the region will benefit from the skills of their staff.

VU expects to gradually increase the number of student mobilities over the forthcoming years. We will also make an effort to achieve a balance between incoming and outgoing exchange students.

We will actively promote international mobility, when recruiting new students (for example, at Open Days and Orientation Days) and to current students, through our network of programme co-ordinators, VU social media channels, newsletters, and posters around the University. On the other hand, we will take advantage of all possibilities to attract students from partner institutions to experience the VU's educational offer.

At the same time, we will demonstrate our strong, institutional commitment to equality of opportunities, offering additional assistance to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have successfully made arrangements with partner institutions, to enable students with disabilities to participate in Erasmus + exchanges. We will build on our experience to enhance and develop inclusive policies and practices, with regard to all aspects of student mobility.

Staff

We recognise that the key success factor in the area of internationalisation is the multi-national faculty, being able to conduct sound research and provide education for the diversified student population. Therefore, VU aims to attract foreign academic staff for permanent or temporary positions, and thereby increase our faculty and administrative staff's mobility. We will also integrate the foreign faculty and its staff in the life of the VU.

Mobility of faculty and administrative staff is a priority for effective partnership relationship management, support of co-operation projects, professional training, teaching delivery, and programme development. We will actively promote to staff the personal and professional development benefits of international mobility, and highlight the transferable skills and competences typically associated with this experience, such as cross-cultural communication and language skills. The number of staff participating in both academic and training mobilities is expected to rise gradually.

Partnership

VU will build its international reputation among the best higher education institutions in the world, by dynamic expansion of its international partnership network. Our strong and effective global co-operation will result in a growing number of top-quality education and research initiatives and partnerships.

Working with our current and future partners, and learning from them, will expand our knowledge and experience of other education systems and qualifications to facilitate admission, progression, recognition, exchange, and co-operation in programme development. Our international partnerships in both programme and partner countries, will also strongly support our faculty, staff, and student mobility, developments in teaching and learning, research and industrial relations.

The University chooses its partners, from a large network of partner universities, supported by the European Union. It also has experience in hosting international students and staff from Erasmus+ partner countries, such as: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, China, and Iraq.

Potential partners are selected using a number of criteria. These include:

- a. rankings in various international ranking systems, and the standing of the possible partner within their own country;
- b. strategic alignment or fit;
- c. overlap in academic profile with the VU;
- d. recruitment potential;
- e. advantages in terms of an international experience for VU students.

All successful partnerships are the result of a shared commitment to, and mutual benefit from the relationship. Our international partner institutions are diverse, reflecting the different needs and priorities of our partners' and our own faculty, staff and students. At the International Office, we encourage the development of academic-led initiatives and projects, disseminating information

about new opportunities, and promoting good practices in all aspects of our international operations and strategy. We actively disseminate across the institution, and to our local community and beyond, as appropriate, examples of the outcomes and benefits of our international partnership activity.

Vistula University plans to contribute to the European Union's mobility and internationalisation agenda by maintaining what has been achieved, and by improving the quality of higher education. We will support actions, aimed at increasing access to the social dimension in higher education, through the creation of flexible learning paths for part-time students and students with demanding family responsibilities. VU will increase geographical and inter-sectoral mobility, and will adapt their programmes and teaching methodology, so they are suitable for an international classroom, with both international and home students. We will intensify the links between research, education and business on an international level, in order to increase the number of higher education graduates meeting the needs of the business world and society. VU also intends to develop closer ties with selected partners, through double or joint degree arrangements, and teaching and non-teaching staff mobility. All learning, teaching, research or training visits abroad, will be integrated into students' and staffs' work load for the year, and if necessary, extra funding from VU's own sources will supplement the Erasmus+ grants.