



Silesian University in Opava

Opava, 7th January 2014

Erasmus policy statement (Overall strategy 2014-2020)

Institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy:

a) how we choose our partners,

b) in which geographical area(s),

c) the most important objectives and target groups of our mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles),

d) how our institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees:

Enhancement of the international character of all its activities is one of the long-term objectives of the Silesian University in Opava (SU). We try systematically to promote collaboration with foreign institutions, establish joint and double degree programmes, and increase the number of outgoing as well as incoming students and staff members while sustaining the maximum quality of all types of mobility. For profession-oriented study programmes, similar objectives apply to student and





staff traineeships as one of the main tools of cooperation with the business and public policy sectors.

a) Choice of partners: SU systematically strives to select carefully its mobility partners in order to ensure maximum quality of the internationalization its academic activities. We already have long experience with most of our partners, with collaborations dating back to other mobility programmes and only later getting covered by LLP. When approaching new partners, important role is played both by their academic quality and by their suitability from the point of view of student's career opportunities after graduation. The decision on the choice of a new partner is done on faculty level after assessment by specialists in the envisaged areas of cooperation. Existing partner agreements are subject to regular assessment based on feedback from mobility participants, concerning especially the quality of courses, academic culture and general conditions during the visit at the institution, as well as on monitoring visits. When appropriate, search for new partners is conducted instead of prolonging the existing agreements.

b) Geographical areas: Several aspects come into play concerning the geographic location of our partner institutions. One of these are the specifics of the individual programs of study, which e.g. makes institutions in Italy natural partners for students of Italian studies, or in Germany and other neighbour countries for students of Czech history. Another one is the strengthening of collaboration with higher education institutions in our region; this is one of the objectives of the recently founded Progress3 Consortium, constituted by 12 universities from Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. However, the most important criterion is the existing or potential level of academic and research collaboration with the institution in the field of study. As a result, our partner network is distributed over





a wide geographical area comprising most EU countries, as well as a number of respected higher education institutions outside EU.

c) Target groups: SU supports both study and training mobility starting from the bachelor (first cycle) and especially master (second cycle) student level. Likewise for doctoral (third cycle) studies, where it is one of the long-term objectives of SU to achieve that every student spends at least one semester at a partner institution abroad. Realizing its benefits for all target groups, SU has been supporting student mobility also from other (non-Erasmus) sources for the last two years, and intends to maintain this support if feasible. While staff mobility is considered to be equally beneficial, as a means of career development, boosting of international contacts and awareness of the university abroad, and integration in the academic sphere within EU, student and staff traineeships remain in general less extensive among the mobility types at SU.

d) Double/multiple/joint degrees: A joint supervision programme (co-tutelle) at the third cycle (doctoral) level is available at SU with a partner in Germany, while a full double degree programme is being established at the first cycle (bachelor) level with a partner in Finland. A joint degree programme at the second cycle (master) level is prepared with a partner in Slovakia. Establishment of further programmes of this type is under consideration.

The ultimate goal of the overall Erasmus strategy is to: create a network of reliable, efficient and attractive partners for both student and staff learning mobility, taking into account the specifics of individual study programmes and with reasonably balanced geographical distribution; increase the number of outgoing learning mobility students in all cycles; foster the development of joint degree and similar programmes, as a tool to enhance outgoing as well as incoming





student and staff mobility; enhance cooperation, using the Erasmus Programme or other funding opportunities, with partners for traineeships.

Our 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:

The Silesian University in Opava has actively participated in other LLP projects recently (Grundtvig, Erasmus Intensive Programmes, Tempus, Leonardo), though mostly in the role of a partner, who was invited to participate thanks to previous successful collaboration in other activities of that kind. The projects realized within these programmes concern the area of economical sciences, knowledge transfer across EU member states, innovation and internationalization of study programmes, multicultural team work, and more. Maintaining our level of participation in similar international projects in teaching and training remains our institution's priority, and we perceive our previous and existing collaborations with partner institutions within Erasmus Programme as an excellent basis for building this kind of project collaborations also in future.

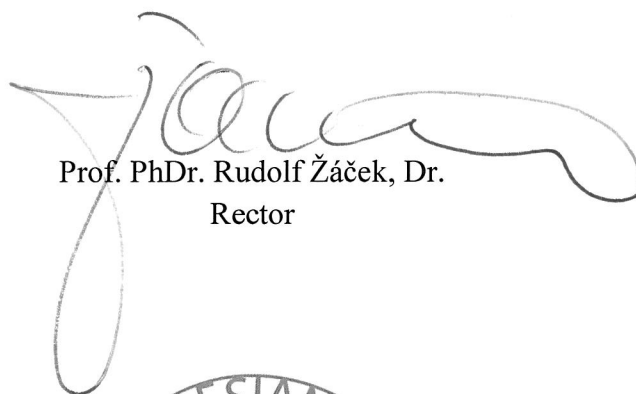
Expected impact of our participation in the Programme on the modernisation of our institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve:*

We expect the following impact of our participation in the Erasmus Programme in terms of the policy objectives described above, corresponding to the priorities of the Modernization Agenda:





1. Improvement of learning, scholarly and professional skills of mobility students, leading to higher attainment levels and increasing their employability after graduation.
2. Contributing to the professional development of researchers via staff mobility, as well as to better doctoral training through learning mobility to renowned research centres at partner institutions in relevant fields of study.
3. Increasing the quality of education through mobility, reaching the 20% proportion of students who have completed a study or training period abroad at least in full-time doctoral (third cycle) programmes.
4. Enhancement of cooperation with business and other "practice" sector partners for traineeships.
5. To the extent feasible, use especially the staff and doctoral student mobility as a means of enhancing the professional and leadership skills, thereby contributing to our institution's better human resource management, autonomy and governance.



Prof. PhDr. Rudolf Žáček, Dr.
Rector

