

ERASMUS+ Policy statement

Taken from Section D of Erasmus charter application

Internationalisation and management of international cooperation is a substantive part of the wider VERN 2020 Strategy. VERN' 2020 strategy represents the strategic framework and serves to elaborate on the main strategic guidelines and activities for VERN' University of Applied Sciences in the long run (until the year 2020). Following this document, it is our intention to work on internationalisation through strengthening international references, international exchange and improvement of education quality in several areas: bilateral agreements, multilateral cooperation, Erasmus co-operation and EU funded projects and programmes all with the aim to enhance mobility of students, researchers and staff.

The primary goal of VERN' international strategy is full academic integration in international, European and global area and development of internal capacities and resources for development of international mobility and inclusion in international context (human, expertise, financial and organisational). Specific goals of strengthening of mobility, increase of international cooperation, internationalisation of education and integration of international and intercultural dimension in all study programmes.

The process of research of partners can be divided into two categories of research. The first one is attendance at the international thematic conferences, seminars, workshops and other similar events aimed at sharing knowledge, experience and expertise in the area of higher education. The second one is desk research focused on the search for partners in complementary areas. We contact potential partners, express our interest in cooperation in selected areas and in potential EU funded projects. The geographic area of our interest are primarily the countries of the European Union and the EU accession countries, although more and more interest by students has been registered for a wider global market (US, Asia etc.). One of the most important objective of our mobility activates is to increase the level of exchange of knowledge and mobility of all target groups via improvement of procedures, level of internalisation of our institution, level of networking and the quality of study programmes. The most important target groups of our mobility activities are both students and teaching/non-teaching staff.

We currently have no ongoing double/multiple/joint degree study programmes. Nevertheless, it is our aim to develop a joint degree programme with possible partners from the region and the EU, depending on the forthcoming opportunity for financing of such a programme. International cooperation will be implemented through international academic cooperation (multilateral cooperation) with the aims of establishment of joint degree studies and inclusion and active work in international platforms or consortiums of international academic cooperation.

A strategy for the field of international cooperation projects in teaching and training is envisaged to be implemented through the processes and procedures established by the International cooperation office. We aim for continuous education and development of personal and professional competencies (academic, expert, scientific and research and teaching competencies) of the VERN' teaching and non-teaching staff. International projects in teaching and training will be built on the principles of the previous teaching methodology workshops that aim at developing the professors' competencies to actively participate and contribute to the achievement of the vision, mission, values, and goals of the conceptual and curriculum framework of the University.

Teacher mobility (lecturing in another state, participation in seminars, conferences, professional training, etc.) and administrative staff mobility (professional courses and conferences abroad) have been enabled through Erasmus and Grundtvig programs and VERN' has been actively involved in these initiatives having in mind improvement and increase of the mobility numbers till the year 2020. The results achieved by the individual mobility have been the preconditions for international cooperation projects with strategic partners.

The university has developed and submitted few international projects within the framework of Erasmus multilateral projects and Leonardo da Vinci Programme which enable cooperation between the adult education institutions and higher education institutions from EU and non-EU countries. Once the projects start to be implemented they will be a solid base for building up new project proposals with international partners under the Programme.

Entrepreneurship remains VERN's strategic orientation and it becomes a concept strongly integrated within the innovative and entrepreneurial-oriented system of our university. VERN' offers a wide range of courses on different subjects, from business to art, while its business efficiency and social responsibility strongly contribute to its integration in the social context. Moreover, in the 2010-2020 period special attention will be paid to creating adequate internal resources for the development of scientific and research activities. All the above mentioned contributes to increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers needs.

In order to improve the quality and relevance of higher education VERN' created Alumni club that has been created for the purpose of maintaining communication with former students, using their knowledge and experience for advancing the university's teaching, academic and business potential, supporting the needs pertaining to their lifelong education and career advancement, and encouraging the development of joint business opportunities. Furthermore, innovative models of entrepreneurial education encourage a greater variety of study models and enable access to necessary knowledge and skills both within full-time and part-time educational programs.

Strengthening quality by encouraging mobility and cross-border cooperation has been implemented through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, Erasmus mobility of students, teaching and non-teaching staff. This academic mobility program aims to improve the cooperation between European universities, harmonizing academic qualifications, increasing student and lecturer mobility, encouraging better cooperation between universities and the economy, and developing and sharing innovative teaching practices. At the same time, the ECTS system allows easier acceptance of mobility and the transfer of points acquired during the stay abroad.

Regarding the knowledge triangle, VERN' will create competence development centres which are part of the university's development periphery and network, serving for the development of business competencies of students and professors, and complementing the teaching process through the realization of market projects, direct cooperation with businesses, and through international networking and researching. The competence centres will be founded in cooperation with business

and academic partners. Further building of the knowledge triangle is enhanced by organization of different forums and other types of events aimed at wider public, VERN' students and alumni who have the opportunity to build further the cooperation with the SMEs and other economic subjects in Croatia.

VERN' is an active member of the university and academic community. As a private institution of higher education, it advocates public character of higher education, availability of higher education to anyone meeting the clearly defined academic criteria, equality in selecting top-quality higher education; transparency and flexibility of higher education financing sources (regardless of whether the funds come from the state budget, scholarships, own or family income); active support for higher education by granting student scholarships (state and private) with clearly elaborated criteria.