

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Erasmus Policy Statement

Pázmány Péter Catholic University (PPCU) imagines the implementation of excellence in education, research and innovation, in the service of social development along the lines of the eternal human values.

Our university is committed to maintain and train quality management, highly qualified human resources, multilevel communication and the sustainable cooperation between the different interrelated departments.

With the support of the Erasmus+ programme during the previous seven-year period PPCU has taken steps within a wider, long-term institutional strategy of internationalization. Internationalisation has appeared mainly in developing inter-institutional foreign relations, as well as increasing the number of international mobility, foreign language courses, joint international trainings, international research projects and international summer universities.

A solid base was built that includes the establishment of higher education collaborations, joint research programs with international institutions, attracts and hosts foreign students, academic and administrative staff, as well as encourages and helps our university citizens to gain professional experience abroad.

During the forthcoming years we are heading to the new area of simplicity, digitalization, inclusion and sustainability. While keeping those objectives and priorities that were declared by the formal Erasmus Policy Statement, PPCU is going to implement more specific activities in order to approach comprehensive internationalization.

One of the characteristics of the Catholic faith is to care about the greater community, serve the society, respect the environment and convey these commitments to our students. Therefore one of our priorities to endorse the students in their ambitions to act as active citizens to achieve the common good.

Referring to our flourishing history of participating in the Erasmus+ Programme, mostly in KA103, KA107 and KA203 projects, in connection with our institutional internationalization and modernization strategy we aim to contribute to the building of the European Higher Education Area.

In line with its scientific and foreign affairs policy PPCU intends to strengthen research cooperation primarily with Catholic universities particularly in Europe and the Americas, where these institutions have a long-standing tradition. Our collaborating partners are chosen according to similar disciplines with comparable institutional goals and researches, and their quality of education and services. In our partnerships we intend to provide the participants of the exchange programmes and other joint activities with professional and personal benefit. The mobility are based on our extensive international relationship - our students and tutors participating in mobility programmes currently have access to 200 universities. We have well-functioning bilateral agreements with European and overseas institutions: existing and gradually growing cooperation with American and, especially but not exclusively in the field of engineering and information technology, Asian universities. We established solid cooperation, especially in the latter fields of science, with Japan and South Korea (we are planning to build a relationship with Singapore), and besides engineering and information technology sciences also in the broader fields of humanities and social sciences with Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Armenia.

Our main objectives in regards of international mobility:

- Further increase the rate and quality of all four individual mobility forms: student learning, internship, academic and administrative staff, particularly reaching out for those with fewer opportunities.
- Improve the quality and quantity of joint research projects and multilateral inter-institutional co-operations, level-up the current partnerships: from mobility exchanges to joint research or joint training up to a multiple partnership in joint doctorate degree or other joint EU projects.
- Build stronger professional partnerships with different labour-market groups that lead to a higher level collaboration where labour market representatives come to teach and to supervise internship projects, to take part in the development of curricula or initiate start-ups while our students go for internship to the partner companies.
- Introduce innovation and development in education and training by establishing blended learning and e-learning courses.
- Take institutional measures towards implementing the European Student Card Initiative and promote the Erasmus+ App for prospective mobility participants.
- Raise the social sensitivity towards poverty and vulnerability of the people living with disability, environmental awareness and civic engagement of those involved in mobility, provide them with opportunities to exercise active citizenship in pursuit of the common good.
- Include international students in the University's alumni network.

To comply with the expectations, growing number of courses are available in international languages which currently includes approximately 800 courses at institutional level.

We enhance the scientific performance of our researchers by giving lectures and conducting research at the most prestigious universities in the world.

Academic staff strengthen their knowledge, linguistic and cultural experiences not only by the experience acquired abroad, but also by preparing and presenting courses in foreign language. Lecturers' activities in Erasmus+ Programme are recognized in their academic careers which results in increased motivation and satisfaction.

We intend to improve the opportunity for foreign lecturers and professors to visit our institution and provide lectures.

We take steps towards to increase the number of traineeship possibilities for both incoming and outgoing students. Our career centres continuously assist and inform students about such opportunities. The hosting institutions varies from recognized European university research laboratories to companies with reputation to innovative firms.

Mobility is regarded as integral part of the administrative staff's annual work schedule, encouraging them to participate in Erasmus+ staff mobility as the gained skills and knowledge would help them in accomplishing organizational responsibilities more simply and efficiently.

The annual individual call for application is announced by various means in order to reach out to those in special situation and with lesser opportunities. The evaluation methods are transparent in accordance with the institutional Equal Opportunity Policy. Special emphasis is placed on informing and preparing all our future mobility members before, during and after their travel. For this purpose we use different online ways of dissemination, and organize information days, orientation weeks and services with the active participation of the former scholarship holders.

We provide a high level service to interested international students with the intention to make procedures simpler and integration smoother: including up-to-date information, open communication, easy access to documents and extra services in English, e.g. personalised

mentoring network, psychological counselling and medical care. Our main duties include the foreign students' familiarization with our country's diverse culture and language.

Mobility Online System has been introduced in PPCU to manage Erasmus+ mobility programmes easy and efficient, which is the first step towards the Erasmus Without Paper project. The utilization of this tool significantly contributes to achieve the goal of making the administration transparent, coherent and simple. Learning Agreements, bilateral agreements, nomination and application procedures, transcript of records can all be handled digitally in this system as part of the European Student Card Initiative.

PPCU follows the Bologna Process, we apply the ECTS in order to increase the flexibility of our study programmes, making our educational system and procedure comparable for foreign universities and applicants. Recognition of international learning experiences remains an important principle. Its arrangement is regulated in the institutional Education and Exam Policy and supported by the faculty Credit Transfer Committees.

Another challenge ahead of us is taking our share from the Green Erasmus movement, since it is an indispensable step toward the modernization and internationalization process. We plan to implement environmentally friendly measures at institutional level, moreover, encouraging our incoming and outgoing students to widen their awareness about "green" good practices before starting their journey. Useful tips and know-hows will be shared on the website and in the handouts, as well as during various informative events.

Students who complete their studies in international environment are more open to the world, communicate better, and are sensitized to other cultures. Knowledge, experience and adopted skills gained during the scholarship period facilitate employment and career progress. The presence of international students with their unique perspectives and Hungarian students with international experience add to these values. This serves the purpose of inclusion, to create versatile interaction, communication and cooperative educational opportunities for all students. Building an open university atmosphere with the participation of several cultural traditions strengthens relationships between students of various origins, brings forth their common values, playing an important role in the internationalisation process. The international environment contributes to the development of individual multidisciplinary knowledge, improvement of modern and ethical strategic thinking and skills to solve state-of-the-art technical problems.

As our endeavour is both a quantitative and qualitative improvement, the Erasmus+ mobility participation supports the development of our institution and – in a more distant perspective – the whole higher education system. By the continuous development of curricula, focusing on the international demand, our institution stands its ground in the international higher education environment contributing to the development of the international cross-border cooperation and the qualitative international higher education.

The graduates, who participated in the Erasmus+ Programme during their studies, with their acquired competencies contribute to development of not only the Hungarian but the European economy.

PPCU represents the European culture, namely the heritage of the ancient knowledge and the theoretical basis of modern sciences, as well as the timeless values of the Christian message. Our institution is an intellectual workshop and also a community that far beyond its very special mission tends to train and educate professionals working on the rise of the nation and the homeland.

We believe that in Hungary and internationally we can continue and evolve our path to be that highly recognized and prestigious Catholic University which could serve the greater good.

Budapest, May 2020