

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

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The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts) 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 first priority of the international policy of BME, formulated by the rector in 2008, is student exchange. BME is committed to increase the level of its international activities with the aim of increasing the level of participation in mobility programmes, and increasing the number of international students and staff coming to BME. This expansion must be realized in a way, which enhances the academic and research potentials of BME, without the loss of quality of education, without lowering standards. The targeted group of our mobility action based on this main principle should be the students in the second cycle and third cycle. This is the target group which is currently underrepresented in our mobility activities. To achieve this, BME encourages faculties to create full Master level programmes in English which are open for Hungarian BME students as well. Parallel to this academic development, partnerships must be formed to support these plans. The extension on one hand can be based on our long existing regional partnerships with Central European academic networks and on our well established European cooperation (e.g. ATHENS Network, see in next answer box), while on the other hand BME should open new channels towards the rest of the world. One possible direction is to find partners for establishing double degree Master and Phd programmes through the T.I.M.E. Association (a network of about 50+ universities, www.time-association.org), where BME is already very active (member of Advisory Committee), participant in joint programmes (e.g. TIME double degrees, TIME TESS summer school). We can also rely on the double diploma programme N+I (National + International, www.nplusi.com) a network of more than a hundred HEIs and enterprises. We will also continue our joint work with our currently running Erasmus Mundus project partners (e.g. EWENT project- Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine) and we will participate in Mundus-type EU Programmes more intensively. Our new Brazilian exchange programme within the Science Without Borders Programme could be also the beginning of a long-term cooperation, attracting more and more South American students to study at BME. We are also open towards China, Middle East (Saudi Arabia), Far East (Vietnam). For this, we have to create a positive learning environment for the incoming students, improving our student services and making our courses more international, involving Hungarian students as well. Young faculty members should be motivated to be active in international education, giving them opportunity for short study visits and teaching mobility within EU Programmes. A new generation of academics should be trained to meet the hopefully growing needs of our international teaching duties. The main target group of our staff mobility programmes therefore should be our young faculty members. This internationalization of BME can also be helped by receiving more foreign staff members for short visits and teaching mobility using this opportunity financed by EU Programmes. Engineering education, natural sciences and economics needs to focus more and more on practical skills development, quality work-experience should have a more important role in our degree programmes. This can be helped by the work placement mobility within EU Programmes. To ensure the quality of this type of training periods BME faculties should establish long term cooperation with companies offering trainee positions, gathering information about the nature and the quality of the tasks offered for the trainees. This kind of partnership building can be started by analyzing the hundreds of placements carried out so far within EU programmes and by using the existing, mainly research oriented company-university cooperation as well. To ensure the quality of these foreign practical trainings it is desirable to establish personal contacts, to create a double mentoring and evaluation method (company - university) similarly to such solutions at companies based in Hungary.

However student mobility is declared the first priority in the international strategy of BME, it contains other very important elements as well. BME is a member of 12 international networks, among which there are worldwide organizations (AUF- network of French speaking universities. www.auf.org, iNEER, International Network of Engineering Education and Research, www.ineer.org), general European organizations (e.g. EUA, European University Association, www.eua.be), European organizations oriented towards engineering education (SEFI, European Society for Engineering Education, www.sefi.be, CESAER, Conference of European Schools of Advanced Engineering Education and Research, www.cesaer.org) and regional organizations (4TU - technical universities of Bratislava, Budapest, Prague, Vienna and Cooperation Platform of Central and East European Metropolitan Universities of Technology- 11 HEIs of capital cities).

If applicable, please describe your 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. (max. 2000 characters)

Original language [EN]

BME is committed to increase its participation in international cooperation in teaching and training projects under the EU Programmes. There are a number of such programmes currently running, ranging from offering one-week short courses in cooperation with the ATHENS Network (<http://tutor.nok.bme.hu/sandwich/general/athenshonlap.htm>), twice a year, which was originally an Erasmus IP but became a long term activity of 14 European universities with about 4000 students/year participating in total, to 2 week-long summer schools (Erasmus IPs) in cooperation with other universities (e.g. TESS: http://www.time-tess.eu/en/documents/TESS_poster_2013.pdf) to 1-2 semester long exchanges (besides EU we have active exchanges within Australia, Singapore, USA, ...) and finally to 4 semester-long double degree agreements (within the T.I.M.E, N+I Network). Teaching and training projects are organized by faculties and except for some central programmes (ATHENS, T.I.M.E) they are also initiated by the faculties. BME's central administrative unit provides administrative and logistical assistance and also helps in the student-university communication. It is a priority for BME to support such activities and to disseminate (for example through the weekly international reports) results to show it as an example for all faculties. The most complex task is to establish a double degree programme, which is the competence of the organizing faculty. The creation of such a programme often requires high level decisions, changing existing regulations. BME is committed to help the faculties in this complex process. The BME Erasmus and Exchange Office also gives support for its former graduates, implementing Leonardo da Vinci mobility, especially for fields (e.g. architecture) where the job market is the hardest hit.

To summarize, BME is planning to participate in all mobility actions under the new Programmes, continuing many of its activities and opening up for new community actions.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)

Original language [EN]

1.priority: The Programme helps in reaching the strategic plan of increasing the internationalization of the university. On one hand BME can attract more international students and researchers with the help of EU financing and on the other hand having a higher level of international opportunities (teaching, training and research) will attract more Hungarian students. Increasing the number of engineering graduates is also a national priority in Hungary. Without internationalization, universities will loose in the competition on a global higher educational market, so participating in the Programme is not just an opportunity, but a must for BME. Those non-EU students who can be reached through partnerships and academic cooperation helped by EU support are also potential future actors in the economy of EU, including Hungary.

2.priority: Educational teaching and training programmes, double degree cooperation give a chance for the actors to have an insight into how others are operating, curricula and methodology can be compared, routines have to be changed. The very nature of these partnerships is flexibility and innovation, exactly what a typically slow reaction institution needs.

3.priority: Hungary changed its higher education to 3-cycle system after the Bologna Declaration. Old curricula were changed, typically more content was included in the first cycle, which made it more difficult to participate in mobility during that cycle, if the earned credit was not accepted. This already had a positive effect on the old credit acceptance policies, to accommodate the needs of students. Cross-border cooperation makes the curricula differences visible, but the Programme induces more flexibility and more careful planning. BME aims at maintaining bilateral agreements with high standard partners (based on past experiences), whose credits will be naturally accepted regardless of the differences. Diploma equivalence has already been solved, any first cycle diploma entitles its holder to apply for a second cycle program at BME, regardless of the issuing institution. Cooperation also forces HEIs to make their education transparent and available in foreign language, this is true for BME as well.

4.priority: Participating in foreign practical training programmes naturally includes companies in the educational process. BME aims at improving the planning, mentoring and evaluation of this mobility. A more intense communication is needed between the academic and the business actors, evaluating the skills required and the skills attained before and during the placement. This must have an effect on the educational process. We have past experience in alternating ("sandwich type") training in cooperation with the industry.

5.priority: Alternative financing options need to be explored in the training programmes, Involving the business sector in the training content will make them act as a stakeholder. BME plans to establish long term company partnerships to reach this goal.

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