D. Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

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]
METU’s mission statement underlines its devotion to the pursuit and application of knowledge for the social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological development of humanity and society through achievements in teaching, research and community service that are of highest international standards. As attested by over 400 active exchange or cooperation programs with universities and research institutions ranging from University of California in USA to Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands, METU surpasses the national universities in terms of depth and breadth of international ties. Moreover, the University is a member of many networks and associations dealing with international education and exchange such as EUA, EAI, CEASAR, SEFI, UNICA, UNESCO-International Association of Universities, Digital Education Network, and Black Sea Universities Network. METU actively participates in AIESEC and IAESTE summer internship programs. English as the language of instruction in all its degree programs has greatly facilitated METU’s efforts to accommodate international students and researchers. METU hosts over 1900 international students from more than 80 different countries studying toward myriad of academic degrees. METU has traditionally been a highly reputable institution in the Near East-Caspian Region. The developments following the collapse of the Soviet system have created an environment conducive for cooperation with the CIS and Central Asian institutions. In a relatively short time, the students from these countries have risen to comprise about 1/3 of the international student body at METU. The University’s “Centre for Black Sea and Central Asia” and “Confucius Institute” have played a very important role in organizing joint-research and bringing scholars from the region. The University also offers master’s programs in regional and area studies including Latin and North American Studies as well as Asian, Eurasian and Middle East Studies programs. One of the consequences of the tragic events of September 11 has been an increased demand for higher education in Turkish universities from countries in Middle East and Central Asia. Between the years 2002 and 2007, METU coordinated a nationwide project to promote and recruit qualified international students from these countries and to support the universities in the region for their capacity building. Due to Turkey’s historical and cultural ties with these countries, METU plans and expects to enhance these relations in the coming years, too. Furthermore, METU Northern Cyprus Campus, being the first campus of a Turkish University established abroad has been contributing to the internationalization of the University with its 1850 student population, since 2003-2004 academic year. The reputation of METU as a world-class teaching institution has made METU an attractive destination for exchange students and faculty. At the moment, each year, there are about 300 incoming and again 350 outgoing students. However, with the initiation of the Erasmus for All program in 2014 and with the availability of new funds supporting students, we believe, the number of both incoming and outgoing students from and to EU countries will increase. Moreover, Multana, a newly established exchange program initiated by the Turkish Higher Education Council covering all countries worldwide will be implemented starting from the academic year 2013-2014. With the adoption of this new frame of exchange program which provides two way funding for both sides of the exchange, the student and staff mobility numbers from and to all countries worldwide are expected to rise at METU. As METU strives to maintain a high quality of education by international standards, developing international joint degrees is one of the premier aims of the university. Starting from 2003-04, 4 joint first cycle programs have been initiated with State University of New York, USA. METU has launched 7 joint PhD programs with French universities. Currently, METU has 22 international joint degree programs 4 of which are joint undergraduate programs with SUNY; 6 of which are joint masters programs; and 12 of which are joint doctorate programs. A number of joint MS and PhD programs with selected universities in Europe are also under consideration. For detailed information, you may refer to the following link: http://www.metu.edu.tr/international-joint-degree-programs Under the METU Strategic Plan 2011-2016, it is indicated that in order to increase the diversification of graduate programs and enhance the success of international joint PhD programs, offering scholarships/financial support to students in joint PhD programs and supporting overseas contacts which aim to create a joint program are defined as strategies. Developing joint distance education programs with other universities and state and private sector institutions is another strategy defined in the Plan 2011-16.

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]
The below strategies are set forth in the METU Strategic Plan 2011-2016 regarding the organisation and implementation of cooperation projects:

Developing joint projects with national and international institutions (other universities, educational and research institutions, non-governmental organizations, local governments, etc.) in the area of public engagement, and ensuring the provision of the required administrative support by an office/unit set up to this end;

Establishing an "Innovation Fund" for academic units (having academic units develop projects for intended new programs, applications, collaborations, etc.);

Distributing the funds in a competitive manner among units after having a commission evaluate their feasibility and impact;

Enhancing, within the scope of the "Sustainable METU Campus Project, the environmental, societal and economic sustainability efforts initiated to enable METU to maintain the ownership of a model sustainable campus;

Facilitating student participation in projects which will support their social and personal development by utilizing the funds provided by EU projects (e.g. EU Youth, Leonardo da Vinci);

Creating opportunities for joint projects, and the like with students abroad;

Having the Learning and Development Office offer support services to faculty on learner-centered teaching methods such as project-based learning, cooperation-based learning and experience-based learning, etc.;

Effectively informing the academic staff on issues related to research through training, seminars, project writing workshops and information days organized by the METU Research Coordination Office;

Improving some of the services offered to faculty (writing project proposals, the administrative and financial management of a project, preparing the projects for inspection, finding project partners, etc.) through the enhancement of the communication and collaboration between the academic support units of the University and METU Technopolis Co.

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]

The policy objectives which are in parallel with the five priorities of the Modernisation Agenda that we intend to achieve as a result of our participation in the Erasmus Programme are indicated in the METU Strategic Plan 2011-2016. Certain changes are envisaged in the conditions under which our University will operate during the 2013-2016 term and beyond. We expect the globalization pursued in the sectors of higher education and research to increasingly continue. International competition and collaborations experienced among universities and research institutions in order to attract students, academicians, researchers and research funds will be the main theme in five years to come. Our university will have to adapt to international standards and expectations so that they can compete and become members of collaboration networks. As it is indicated in the METU Strategic Plan 2011-2016: "in order to make arrangements that would increase student interest in METU, making use of the opportunity of involvement in educational programs that are financially supported by the European Union (Erasmus, Erasmus-Mundus) as an incentive and stressing this in promotional activities in the process of having qualified students prefer METU programs" are pursued. Under the "Increasing the Effectiveness of the Educational Programs" subprogram of the Plan 2011-2016, "Improving the existing credit system in our University, if deemed necessary, taking the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) stipulated in the Bologna Process as a model; rendering the credit load of courses within our educational programs compatible with equivalent national and international programs" is defined as a sub-strategy. In order to expand lifelong educational services, "establishing an external assessment system in collaboration with the Council of the Directors of the Continuing Education Centers of Turkish Universities (TUSEM) and European CEC networks; (therefore) having METU CEC undergo external evaluation" is defined as one of the strategies in the Plan 2011-2016. METU plans to facilitate student participation in projects which will support their social and personal development by utilizing the funds provided by European Union projects (e.g. EU Youth, Leonardo da Vinci) under the objective of "increasing the social and cultural interaction of the students" in order to realize the institutional support for the personal development of students as a goal.

Endorsement of the application

I, the undersigned, legal representative of the applicant institution,

... certify that the information contained in this application is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. All Programme activities will be implemented on the basis of written agreements with the relevant authorities of the partner institutions;

... agree to the content of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECH) application outlined above and commit my institution to respect and observe these obligations;

... agree to the publication of the Erasmus Policy Statement by the European Commission

Place: Ankara     Name: Prof. Dr. Ahmet Acar     Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 15/05/2013

☑ I have read and accept the Privacy statement

Original signature of the legal representative of the institution (as identified in section A.2 above)

[Signature]

Original stamp of seal of the institution

[Stamp]