

MEGATREND UNIVERSITY BELGRADE, SERBIA

B

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

B1. Erasmus+ activities included in your EPS

In order to facilitate the evaluation of your current application form, please tick those Erasmus+ activities that are part of your current Erasmus Policy Statement:

Erasmus+ Key Action 1 (KA1):

Study between Programme Countries:

Programme Countries - Student incoming mobility

Programme Countries - Staff Incoming mobility Programme

Countries - Student outbound mobility Programme

Countries - Staff outbound mobility

Partner countries - Study between Partner Countries:

Partner countries - Student incoming mobility

Partner countries - Staff Incoming mobility

Partner countries - Student outbound mobility

Partner countries - Staff outbound mobility

Traineeships:

Traineeships - Student incoming mobility

Traineeships - Staff Incoming mobility

Traineeships - Student outbound mobility

Traineeships - Staff outbound mobility

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Erasmus+ Key Action 2 (KA2):

Strategic Partnerships

Knowledge Alliances

Capacity Building Projects

Erasmus+ Key Action 3 (KA3):

KA3 Projects

Jean Monnet Activities

Jean Monnet projects

B2. Erasmus Policy Statement: your strategy

Please be aware that your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect your intended involvement in Erasmus+. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future you will have to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your respective National Agency accordingly.

The Institution agrees to publish this overall strategy (all three parts of the Part D) on its website within one month after reception of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education from the EACEA.

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:

Original language [EN]

International strategy of Megatrend University is described in the official document "The Strategy of Internationalization" (<http://en.international.megatrend.edu.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/The-Strategy-of-Internacionalization-of-Megatrend-University.pdf>), in which we state that our strategy is:

Integration of the educational system of Megatrend University into the global world trends in the field of internationalization of higher education, in the region of EU, Western Balkans, China, Iran and Latin America.

Through this statement, we defined what our university wants to achieve in the upcoming years, and what are the regions with which we want to cooperate the most. It is our main goal to deepen even further cooperation with countries that are in the above-mentioned regions.

Ever since the establishment of Megatrend University, it has been working and cooperating with many European Universities, so applying for Erasmus Charter is a logical step in that direction. This Charter will enable us to strengthen our capacities, modernize study programs, apply for international projects and our way of working. Besides that, Megatrend University has been working with Universities in countries of Western Balkans for many decades, so the aim is also to strengthen those relations. We will achieve this by having more incoming and outgoing students, applying together for cross-border projects and intensifying scientific relations. China and Iran are new targets in our strategy. Chinese Center at MU was opened in 2012, and Iranian Center in 2016. Through these specialized centers, MU wants to improve the cooperation between Serbia and China/Iran especially in the academic field but also in the field of culture, science, technology etc. The main aim is to have more language studies, more cultural activities and signed agreements with universities that will enable better mobility and better scientific cooperation. Cooperation with Latin America will be used for further development of Geoeconomic faculty, which is at the moment project coordinator for this region. For that purposes, besides organizing scientific and expert conferences, the impact will be also on strengthening MU cooperation with business entities (students practice in those countries and business projects) as well as with universities from this region.

The process of choosing an academic partner in different regions is motivated mainly by the programs that those universities have. Universities that are compatible with ours or have programs that are similar to ours are those that we prefer to work with. It is our belief that by using this approach we will achieve better results – we can have better students, professors, and nonacademic staff mobility, we can have more scientific projects together, organize more conferences together, learn more from each other. At the moment university has a lot of contracts on the academic level (<http://en.international.megatrend.edu.rs/partner-universities-and-institutions/>), but we want

to give special attention to the new partners coming from EU and West Balkan. As a university that has been the oldest private university in Serbia, we believe and we know that only through good international cooperation university can develop and progress. First of all, it is important to strengthen the potential of our university professors and teaching assistants. That cannot be achieved if they do not communicate and have cooperation outside of Serbia. Their mobility is of utmost importance. The second thing that is important is the mobility of students, and especially students at the bachelor studies. There are a couple of reasons for that: not all of them can afford to go and study abroad; some of them never went abroad; they lack international experience; they will have less opportunity to find a job unless they have international experience. As a university that follows its students after they finish their studies, for us, it is important that they find a good job. By implementing this kind of programs, such as Erasmus+ is, we are giving them not only opportunities for better student life but better quality of life after finishing studies. The third goal is to increase staff mobility. Most of our non-academic staff never went to any university abroad to see how their colleagues work and what can they improve their work. Since joining Erasmus network in 2015, we saw that through the mobility of our staff we achieved great results, in terms of their initiative, language capabilities, motivation to improve their working results.

With all types of mobility programs we can also achieve one more goal, that is important as a previous one, and that is cross-cultural tolerance. It is necessary to state that learning, understanding and accepting different people, societies, and cultures are also part of our dedication, and mobility programs are essential in that sense. Erasmus+ program will help us to increase the level of cross-cultural tolerance and cooperation through courses, mobility programs and, workshops.

MU is supporting nondiscriminatory policy, for its staff, students, and partners. We believe that all people deserve equal opportunities, and that is something that we promoted since the establishment of our University.

Both buildings in Belgrade campus (main campus) are made to give the opportunity for students with disabilities to study, and we support their effort to have a higher education degree and be an equal member of our society. With joining Erasmus community we want to increase the number of incoming students with disabilities.

Regarding joint programs MU has two so far:

1. Joint international doctorate in the field of Economics and Management of Natural Resources that was launched in 2008 among our university and LUM (Italy) and China Three Gorges University (China)
2. Joint Ph.D. studies of Computer Sciences with the University of Primorska, Faculty of Mathematics, Science and Information Technology, Koper, Slovenia (Fakulteta za matematiko, naravoslovje in informacijske tehnologije, Univerza na Primorskem, Koper, Slovenia).

Even though we have two joint programs in Ph.D. studies, it is our aim in the next period to have joined programs on bachelor and master studies, because we do believe that the mobility of students in those two groups is larger.

Please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme.

If not applicable, please explain:

Original language [EN]

Megatrend University established in 2013 a specialized center – Center for project management that has an aim of creating, realizing and implementing the projects in various fields. The Centre for Project Management is acting in accordance with the distinctive business strategy of MU and has a purpose of deepening and strengthening the three decades long cooperation with our partners. Through its project functions and activities, the Centre is also acting as a support to the teaching, scientific research and student activities at the university.

The main purpose of this Center is coordination of project activities within our university: projects from Tempus, Erasmus+, Ministry of education of the Republic of Serbia, and all other projects that are connected with different business partners. The Director is in charge to choose, plan and control all projects and to identify those that are fulfilling the overall strategy of MU, including Erasmus Policy Statement. Rector of Megatrend University monitors the results of Center for Project Management, in order to achieve overall Strategy of university.

Each project has its team leader that is concentrated on one project. Team leaders are in charge of their projects, and they report to the Director.

Center for Project Management already defined its actives and they are:

- Informing timely and regularly all the employees about all open project competitions
- Providing help in fulfilling application forms
- Cooperation with partners in country and abroad
- Capacity building in order to develop university capacities
- Organizing workshops that are dedicated to informing the public for applying for domestic and international projects
- Managing evidence and monitoring project activities
- Providing administrative support – time and financial planning, organizing meetings etc.

Under the Erasmus+ project this Center along with International Cooperation Department conducted Key Action 1, which is concentrated on the mobility of students, professors, and non-academic staff. It is our plan to develop with our partner's KA1 Placement, KA2 and, KA3 when Serbia becomes program country within Erasmus+ program.

Besides this Center, International Cooperation Department is involved in all international projects, and it has a supporting role. The administrative staff of International Cooperation department acts as a provider and supporter of many actives that CPM organizes.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on the modernisation of your institution.

Please refer to each of the priorities of the renewed EU Agenda for higher education as well as the goals towards a European Education Area* and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue:

Original language [EN]

Following the recommendations in Agenda for the Modernization of Europe's Higher Education system, Megatrend University will do following things in order to modernize its system of education:

1. Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs

Megatrend University according to the specification of Ministry of education implemented Bologna process into practice in 2005, and our university accepted that policy fully. We have been doing everything that Ministry declared, in order to give our contribution to the modernization of higher education in Serbia. By implementing those measures we improved the success ratings of finishing studies, more students are attending master and Ph.D. studies, we modernized programs, books and gave the opportunity for young talents to work at our university. Also, in our programs, we included: the connection between theory and practice through case study analysis, visiting of scientific-technological parks and hiring young talents (master and Ph.D. students) at our university.

By doing that already, with the implementation of Erasmus Policy Statement we want those rates to improve even more. Available workshops, academic networks, mobility training, new literature, research funds, the mobility of students and professors will for sure help to elevate our quality and efficiency.

2. Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

With the improvement of regular studies, MU has been for many decades helping students to study at home, for those who could not afford to study in big cities, by establishing specialized teaching centers in small towns.

In the next period, MU wants to improve that teaching method by accrediting online studies. At the moment MU has accredited three distance learning programs of bachelor studies, but we want to have more of them and also to have master studies online. It is our belief that by now many households in Serbia/Western Balkan countries (BHS)¹ have adequate computer equipment, so we can have more distance learning students. This would give the opportunity to many students who work at the same time while studying, many single parents and disadvantaged student opportunity to acquire bachelor/master studies diploma. Also, we want to have master studies in English online, and in that way, we can have more international students who are studying at our university. Through Erasmus+, we will gain knowledge from our partners how to implement those online programs in English.

3. Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation

At the moment MU is not satisfied with a number of students that have some kind of practice/study abroad, and it is one of our main goals to improve that, as it already stated in the strategy. The main reason for that problem is finance, and with the implementation of programs of Erasmus+ (but also through other specialized centers at our university), we hope that many Megatrend students in the future will have the ability to spend some time abroad. Regarding the EU, we implemented all requested things to eliminate all barriers for the mobility of students, never mind if they are switching from one program to the other in cross-border cooperation, or they need to have a transcription of grades and ECTS credits.

¹ Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro

4. Making the knowledge triangle work: Linking higher education, research, and business for excellence and regional development

With Center for Life Long Learning (that not only educates students and adults but is also providing working practice in companies) and Center for Project Management, MU has have made basic steps in order to make knowledge triangle work. Some results are achieved, but they can be even better. Erasmus+ program will give us the opportunity to see how our partner universities are doing that, and give us the knowledge about how to improve those relations, especially on an international level.

Regional development is very important to this university and we opened one of our faculty in the region that is having economic difficulties. It was our aim through our faculty to increase the number of graduate students in that region, and we have been doing that consistently. But what is lacking is the opportunity for those students to actually get a job. One of our future projects would be to increase the employment rate in that region, by giving students support and opportunity to apply for cross-border projects, which will help them to find a job.

5. Improving governance and funding

Models of public-private cooperation (projects) have been very interesting in the last couple of years, and many Governments are supporting that kind of cooperation. It is proved that sometimes Governments do not have enough funds to run state projects, and sometimes state projects lack professional management In order to be efficient.

MU as a private university has a cooperation with different state bodies and administration, and so far that cooperation had some problems but in the end, it was successful. What we want to improve is our cooperation with private entities and institutions, so we can have better results in that field.

* COM (2017) 247 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0247&from=EN>) and COM (2017) 673 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0673&qid=1516270826179&from=EN>)