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## 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]

Eskurtze Polytechnic is an organisation which offers both, compulsory and vocational training education, in three different fields: Commerce, Car Mechanics and Early Childhood Education. It has been awarded the ISO9001:2000 Quality Standard and nowadays follows the EFQM in its management procedures. Internationalisation is part of our strategic lines of development in two lines: at least %10 of our students go abroad for their practical training and we take part in at least two actions which involve the reception of foreign staff and students. We have taken part in mobility programmes since 2000, and all along the life of LLP.

Our partners are chosen according to factors as innovation, availability, compromise and responsibility in the programme and willingness to act as partners. We search for a sustainable cooperation of years, as it is the case.

Our more stable group of countries to work with are Finland, Germany and Italy, especially for Childhood Education, where the participation of our students is bigger than Car Mechanics. Students from Car Mechanics go to Italy too.

We have chosen a Nordic country (Finland) because of their different outlook on education, Italy because there is a great affinity in language and culture and it is the most chosen country for Spaniards, Germany because students have the opportunity to train in bilingual kindergartens, a reality similar to the Basque Country. In Finland we have a partner which is an institution like ours, which trains future educators and also sends us their students for their practical training in Bilbao. This institution helps us with all practical matters related to everyday life and the search of companies. Simonpuisto, a kindergarten in Ylivieska, has been our partner since 2007.

In Italy, which is a reference in Childhood Education, we work with public bodies as we consider there is more guarantee of good practices. Our partner is Il Glicine, a school in Agliana-Pistoia. There is a great affinity with this country in language and culture, and it is the destination most chosen of those who don't speak fluent English. Car Mechanics also choose Italy, but our companies in this field are not so stable as in Childhood Education due to the more unstable participation of mechanics in the programme.

In Germany, in Berlin, we have contacts with different kindergartens where Spanish is the second language. We have worked with these partners for several years now.

According to the number of participants and their choices, there is a small variation of partners, each year, but we are proud to say that our inter-institutional cooperation is solid and sustainable in time.

The objectives of these actions are to improve our students' jobs prospects, through providing more opportunities for students to gain additional skills through training abroad. Europe needs workers with the right mix of skills: transversal competences, digital skills, creativity and flexibility, with a solid knowledge of their field. This is our aim too. The target groups of our mobility activities are students, mainly women in their 20s in Childhood Education, and men of about the same age in Car Mechanics. We pursue excellence in line with our mission and strategic priorities which include internationalisation as a target that involves all our organisation.

Together with this, we want to encourage cross-border co-operation with companies abroad. These both fields benefit from this cooperation, we learn about which policies, ways of doing, entrepreneur strategies work and which don't.

As for staff training, there is a big demand from the Department of Early Childhood Education, to receive training in Hungary, where we have contacts with Pikler Institute, an international reference in Childhood Education nowadays. These contacts have made us change the contents of some of our subjects, and improve the relevance of our task. IES Eskurtze is a reference in the dissemination of these ideas, which we foster either through formal or informal education. There is a great demand of this knowledge among companies. The flexibility of our institution, the synergies of some staff attracted by the same impulse, have proved as the best driver to prepare the ground of growth in this sector.

As for incoming staff/students, we are present in all activities which are organised as contact seminars, to find prospective partners, especially those which are institutions similar to ours, with the idea of collaborating in other actions apart from mobility, related to innovation and the transference of knowledge. In this sense, we consider of great value our contact with our partners in Finland, Ylivieskan Ammatiopisto, an institution with the same professional fields as IES Eskurtze. We are willing to increase our participation in transnational actions, and this target involves all staff, management team, counsellor, departments, and administrative staff in our institution.

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]

After some years of participation, and having sent more than 70 students and 8 teachers either for their practical training or to receive training abroad, the purpose of taking part in international actions is part of our mission and strategic priorities in our annual plan. There are two indicators of this participation: at least %10 of students take part in mobility actions, and at least 2 actions which include reception of incoming staff/students or staff training. We have solid and stable cooperation with other institutions in Finland, Germany and Italy, and our students, especially in Childhood Education, are very well evaluated in the companies. There is a coordinator for the implementation of international projects who informs tutors, students, staff about the different options. There are two official ways for communication: general teachers meetings and the weekly paedagogic meeting. Tutors, teachers, the different departments make their proposals of students/staff to go abroad. There is a clear and transparent way of selecting participants. The learning agreement or the work plan defines the professional field, tasks, evaluation procedure, targets of the stay. 80 %of our partners are stable in cooperating with us, and well-known in advance. We support participants providing all information related to practical matters, flights, accomodation, local transport, linguistic and cultural training, and through permanent contact by phone or mail with participants and partners. We establish inter-institutional procedures to the implementation of staff or student mobility actions, always under the Erasmus Quality Commitment. As a receiving institution we also play an important role in the monitoring, evaluation, definition of the stay, search of meaningful companies, for incoming students or researchers, mainly from Finland, and in the field of Early Childhood Education or Health and Social Care.

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 - Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs

It is our aim to prepare students/staff who are skilled, knowledgeable and innovative. Vocational training attracts a broad cross-section of society into higher education, there is almost no drop-out of students in our classes, and we inform about study choices through a tailored guidance

2 - Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

Higher education, and especially vocational training makes great efforts to match the needs of the labor market and of individuals. Students gain additional skills when training abroad, professional and personal skills which will increase their job prospects. Staff can obtain first hand knowledge to respond to changing needs in the wider economy. The participation in trans-national actions attracts prospective students into our organisation. During open-day activities, many ask about the possibility of finishing their studies abroad, and make big efforts to have good marks to obtain one of these grandships.

3 - Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

Europe will need highly skilled human capital and articulate citizens. Students, as future workers, will need a mix of skills: transversal competences, e-skills for the digital era, creativity and flexibility and a solid understanding of their field. The target of %20 student completing a study or training period abroad by 2020 is also our institution policy. Learning mobility is every year more systematically built into our curricula, and there is an efficient recognition of the period abroad. We obtain first hand knowledge from our partners abroad and this is disseminated in our classes, either in formal or informal education.

4 - Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional Development

We keep in touch with business in our area, and this is a core activity in our institution: the organization of professional talks, continuous interchange of experiences. Mainly in the field of Childhood Education where there has been a great impact of the ideas of Emmi Pikler institute, locally and nationally. Thanks to our collaboration with this partner in Hungary we have improved our educational offer to students and professionals, and interchange it with colleagues in other parts of Spain.

5 - Improving governance and funding

We facilitate access to alternative sources of funding through the Basque Government. We truly believe that taking part in international mobility actions should be the possibility of any student/staff member regardless their economic situation, and making emphasis on the most vulnerable sectors of society.

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