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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]

In June 2012, the distinctive quality feature "institutional internationalization" was officially awarded to Wageningen University by the Netherlands-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO). We are the first university in the Netherlands to receive this. It implies that internationalization is recognized as an integral and organic part of our policy, quality assurance and decision-making structure.

In the coming years, Wageningen University will be strengthening its leading position with respect to both education and research. We will set up new, and strengthen existing collaborations in Europe, in emerging economies, and in developing countries, where issues in our domain are high on the agenda.

We aspire to be a major global player in our domain, with an international position and profile, with relevance for (international) society and industry, inspiring (Dutch and international) students and staff. We work on challenges requiring high quality research and education, with students, staff and partners from all over the world.

a) Partnerships

Partnerships play a key role in our international strategy. They should support our ambitions in education, research and innovation, raise our attractiveness for top students and staff, provide mobility options, and attain, maintain or strengthen our influential position in European and global networks. We cooperate with many universities and institutions globally, on a variety of organisational levels: university, science group, study programme, chair group or individual staff member.

In our policy to become an even stronger international player, focus in cooperation is important. We are working on a new partnership strategy, including an assessment framework for partner-choice. We will gradually focus on fewer partners in absolute numbers, while retaining those with high quality. We distinguish:

- Partnerships aimed at a specific activity in education or research (e.g. student exchange, joint educational programs, research projects)
- A selected number of preferred partnerships with internationally leading institutes and organizations, with whom we engage in a strong institutional collaboration.

We have a strong preference to operate with or within networks (e.g. the Euro League for Life Sciences, Agreenium, FESIA and Erasmus Mundus consortia), in addition to cooperation with individual institutions.

b) Geographical focus

We distinguish priority countries, requiring a proactive approach (All EU member states, Chili, Brazil, USA, Ethiopia, Ghana, Turkey, Russia, India, China, South-Korea) and focus countries where a reactive approach suffices (Canada, Mali, Mozambique, Ukraine, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, New Zealand, Japan).

These countries receive priority in a combination of aspects such as student recruitment, student exchange, tuition fee waivers, research cooperation and public private partnerships. This selection does not mean we are not active in other countries, but that institutional support is focused on a smaller set of countries in order to be more successful.

c) Most important objectives and target groups of mobility activities

Mobility in the final year of our BSc-program, is encouraged through our BSc-minor system. MSc mobility is usually achieved through individual initiatives of professors/students, or as part of a joint educational program. For our PhD-candidates, we design individual programs with - in most cases - mobility as an important component. Setting up European Graduate Schools is instrumental in facilitating PhD mobility. An institutional policy for (outgoing) staff mobility is being set up. We facilitate individual staff mobility of teachers as well as researchers, and we participate in related European programs.

We aim for balanced mobility of students as well as staff, by making reciprocity a prerequisite for setting up bilateral agreements. As this reciprocity is not yet achievable in all cases, we also look at the balance at an institutional level, i.e. by looking at the total incoming and outgoing mobility.

d) Joint educational programs

Joint education is important in our international strategy. It enriches the range and content of our programmes, facilitates recruitment of international students, increases mobility of students and enhances our international reputation. Joint

educational programs are undertaken for strategic reasons and with strategic partners in key areas for Wageningen University. This means strict rules and requirements on the quality of partners. Although it is our policy to set up joint instead of double degree programmes whenever possible, we still encounter many legal and practical difficulties, especially when collaborating in international consortia.

We currently offer 23 Joint Educational Programs, mostly with EU-partners. We are involved in 7 Erasmus Mundus consortia, offering 5 joint MSc, and 2 joint PhD programs

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]

Under the current LLP, we have in place a set of internal regulations and a framework for participation in projects under the program. This framework is updated yearly, and describes the conditions under which our departments can participate in a project, whether as participant or as coordinator. Main points:

- Initiatives preferably adhere to our strategic plan and our international policy priorities with respect to both research and teaching, with quality and added value as starting points.
- All education projects are carried out through the Education Institute, and therefore need approval of the EI-board and Examining Committee
- The proposed program must be consistent with Dutch law
- The academic quality of the proposal and of the partners must be sufficiently and demonstrably ensured
- Financing must be in accordance with the rules applicable within Wageningen University
- The rules regarding registration, admission, registration, examination and diploma and degree granting, apply

In addition, we have an advisory committee that supports all applications, and can provide financial support in setting up the initiative.

Wageningen University is pleased that the new Programme is being broadened in scope. We are already very active in terms of different aspects of the current LLP programme such as student and staff mobility, partnerships, joint educational programmes and international cooperation projects. The decision of the European Commission to open up the Programme to the world, i.e. create opportunities with third countries should be extremely beneficial since this matches the global orientation of our institution. The possibilities for setting up Knowledge Alliances also tie in with our ambitions towards co-innovation, which we perceive as education and research joining forces with business and governance. Wageningen University will not limit participation to certain parts of the Programme but endeavours to make full use of its' possibilities.

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]

We expect that participation in the Programme is essential in achieving the following policy objectives of Wageningen UR in relation to the priorities of the Modernisation Agenda. In return, the Modernisation Agenda, as well as participation in the Programme, will be instrumental in the modernisation and internationalisation of our institution.

1) Increase the number of graduates

- Enlarge access to our programs (recruitment policy, targeted financial support, outreach to underrepresented groups, advisory for prospective students)
- Reduce drop-out rates (study advisory, counselling services, binding study advice, "internationalization@home" as supporting policy)

2) Improve the quality and relevance of our education

- Improve content of programs through joint educational programs (based on complementarity of programs, courses, knowledge, expertise)
- Create distinctive and attractive top-quality joint programs, relevant for society & industry
- An "international classroom" that reflects the situation students will work in after their studies.
- Graduate school collaboration at European level (doctoral studies)
- Honours program for BSc students
- Development of 2 distance learning MSc programs (Plant Breeding; Human Nutrition & Epidemiology)
- All our programs are periodically reviewed by international peers from the professional field

3) Strengthen quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation, provide more opportunities for students to gain additional skills

- International mobility and international joint educational programs enrich the range of programmes offered at Wageningen University. This is in our view essential in offering our staff and students the possibility to attain the expertise and skills that they need to make a relevant contribution to (international) society and industry

4) Linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

- In line with the Dutch top sector policy: establish Public-Private Partnerships with (Dutch) multinationals, our local/regional Food Valley partners, major donors (Worldbank, FAO, ministries) and SMEs
- Valorisation of knowledge and entrepreneurship as part of the study programme: internships, Academic Master Cluster (multidisciplinary consultancy on real case-studies) as compulsory part of the MSc, modules for entrepreneurial awareness, Centre of Entrepreneurship/science incubator (StartLife)

5) Support excellence through effective governance and funding mechanisms

- Motivate and reward excellent teachers
- Participation in national Centres of Expertise and Centres for Craftsmanship. Example: the present 'Centre for Biobased Economy', financially supported by the government, HEI and the industry.
- We have been awarded the HR Excellence in Research logo
- High priority for operational excellence, ensuring effective organizational management
- Professional, centralized support of teachers & researchers

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