

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain A) how you choose partners, b) in which geographical area(s) 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 participate in the development of double/joint degrees. (max. 5000 characters)

Medical University of Lodz was established in 2002 by joining 2 universities: Medical Academy in Lodz and Military Medical Academy. Thus, the University has had a long tradition of educational and research work.

Medical University of Lodz has been participating in the Erasmus Programme since 1999 (since 2002 as the Medical University of Lodz). In the first year we signed four bilateral agreements with European universities (University Claude Bernard Lyon01, Catholic University of Nijmegen, University of Murcia, University of Elche) and we sent 11 students to complete a part of their studies abroad. The first two universities are former partners with whom we had cooperated within the program TEMPRA (Lyon) and TEMPUS (Nijmegen). From the next year we found new partners and the number of outgoing students increased. In the academic year 2003/2004 Medical University of Lodz expanded its range of educational studies in English in medicine (2 different study programs) and dentistry, which resulted in the significant increase of the number of bilateral agreements for the exchange of students. In the academic year 2009/2010 Medical University of Lodz received Erasmus Extended University Charter allowing the launch of a new form of mobility: students mobility for three-month placement training to universities and institutions. Since 1999 378 Medical University of Lodz students have been to foreign universities and 88 students have attended three month placement training . 118 students from foreign universities came to Medical University of Lodz. 12 teachers went on mobility trips to teach classes, and 48 employees participated in training mobility in European institutions. At the moment we have 44 bilateral agreements signed with universities from 18 European countries, and yearly 39 students go abroad to study and 27 students arrive to Medical University of Lodz from partner institutions. Most bilateral agreements have been established with universities in Spain (9), France (5) Germany (5), Belgium (3), Netherlands (3) and Italy (3). The knowledge of foreign languages among the students of the Medical University (English , German, French and Spanish) indicate the countries in which we were looking for partners. The biggest number of Spanish universities is caused by the fact that Spain is a country which sends and receives the highest number of Erasmus students and its universities are eager to sign the agreements.

The growing popularity of the Spanish language among students of the Medical University as well as some compatibility between Polish and Spanish study programs is also of significance. Many of our students are interested in going to British universities, but due to strict procedures for obtaining partners for cooperation and policy oriented at commercial

studies they are not willing to cooperate. However, the agreements with universities in countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia let students study in English. The fact that the school curricula of these countries are the most compatible with the programs implemented in the Medical University of Lodz is also significant.

Bilateral agreements for the mobility of teachers and staff are the result of the transformation of existing contacts and genuine cooperation.

The Policy of the Medical University of Lodz concerning the acquiring of partner universities is focused on creating the widest choice of mobility for students and staff and is compatible with the development strategy of the University for 2011-2020, which emphasizes the internationalization of the university as an essential part of its modernization and adaptation to the changing reality of Europe and the world. Medical University of Lodz has not defined any particular geographical priorities for partnerships. We look for our university partners among the universities of corresponding profiles to meet the needs and expectations of our students and staff. We are interested in the high level of teaching, especially in English, and research work at partner universities. Providing long term cooperation in terms of mobility, research and teaching for all three cycles is the main objective of our effort. Partnership should be based on mutual interest, mobility balance and reciprocity.

UM cooperates with 150 teaching and research universities from around the world. As a part of the acquisition of valuable strategic partners outside the European Union UM has started the cooperation with two leading universities in the United States - the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and MD Anderson Cancer Center (MDACC) Houston, Texas.

This is the beginning of active initiative of the Medical University of Lodz, whose aim is to lay the foundation and opportunities to develop effective international cooperation by the research groups of our university and effectively applying for international grants. We plan joint projects with research groups from both the universities, the preparation of joint grant applications, included in the upcoming Horizon 2020 program, the exchange of researchers and academics, training mobility and international doctoral studies.

Another our intention emerging from institutional strategy is also the establishing of a sponsorship scheme for a university in one of developing countries.

We plan to increase the number of teachers and students in all cycles taking part in mobility during the Programme Erasmus period.

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organization and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme (max 2000).

The aim of UM is to use the existing partnership agreements included in the framework of Action 1 of the Erasmus Programme to establish the cooperation in the framework of Action 2. Emphasis will be placed on the quality of the exchange and its availability for students, teachers and administration staff.

The organizational changes in recent years allow to promote the internationalization of the

Medical University of Lodz, and create the network relationships and share the examples of good practice. The central units of UM such as Analysis and Strategy Office, Department of Assistance Programmes, Foreign Affairs Office, Section for International Research Programs, Center for Innovation and Technology Transfer facilitate and coordinate the planning, preparation and submission of proposals of international research and teaching projects and support project management, conducting financial accounting and reporting. We intend to exploit the potential of these units to initiate cooperation projects under Action 2 of the Erasmus Programme.

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

“If Europe is not to lose out to global competition in the fields of education, research and innovation, national higher education systems must be able to respond effectively to the requirements of the knowledge economy.”

MU plans to contribute to the European Union’s modernization and internationalization agenda by improving the quality of teaching and by intensifying the links between education, research and business on local, country and international level in order to increase the number of higher education graduates meeting the needs of the business world and society. The collaboration with other universities and main institutional actors in Lodz region leads to providing the local community with well-qualified employees and experts whose work our region will benefit from.

The following achievements document the University’s strong commitment and the contributions that have been made so far:

1. The implementation of the Bologna Process has been one of the University’s main strategic goals. During the past years Medical University of Lodz restructured all degree programmes according to the principles of the Bologna process. Among others MU implemented the unique study programme with the financial support of EU structural funds (Operation Success Project).
2. Medical University of Lodz has established cooperation agreements with 150 partner universities.
3. As one of the largest providers of university education in the field of medicine and medical sciences in Poland, Medical University of Lodz educates internationally competent experts with labour market relevant skills.
4. In order to start the process of internationalization and facilitate the mobility of students Medical University of Lodz has introduced teaching in English in the field of medicine and dentistry.
5. Medical University of Lodz significantly improved its teaching facilities by opening the Educational Center of the Medical University co-financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund under the Infrastructure and Environment Programme.
6. The ECTS system has been implemented.

7. MU increases the chances of employment for its graduates by employing competency-based curricula, training placement mobility and career counselling.