

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS) GEA College - Center for Vocational Schools

GEA College - Centre for Vocational Schools (GEA CVS) was established in 2000, the first vocational programs were started in 2001 and the International Office was established in 2006. In this time, we developed a modest, but stable international partnership within Europe, especially with neighbouring countries from ex-Yugoslavia. As GEA CVS is a boutique vocational school, we take care to seek out and partner with institutions, who offer both similar programs (Economist, Business Administration etc.) and online education, as the majority of our programs are conducted fully online. Entrepreneurial mindset is a focal point during our education, and we wish to develop it in students and staff as well, which has an overall impact on the business sector and the society. The curriculum of Vocational Schools is mandated by national legislation and is predetermined, but we try to infuse it with entrepreneurial skills and mindset, by using different and innovative teaching methods and materials. We provide practically oriented education, with specialist lecturers, visiting professionals from business sector, case studies and business challenges. Our programs are fully accredited by the national quality agency (ETCS recognized). GEA CVS' vision is to develop into one of the best vocational schools in Slovenia, which will be achieved by fostering and strengthening international connections and continuous modernization.

Vocational Education in Slovenia is overseen by the Association of Slovene Higher Vocational Colleges (Association HVC) with GEA CVS being an active member. In 2019 an Internationalisation Strategy of HVCs was adopted, which we started implementing in our own internationalisation efforts. It names three goals:

- Strategic Development of International programs: Offer more for high-quality programmes for international, aim for excellence in study experience.
- Sustainable growth of HVCs: Internationalization of HVCs in all regions in Slovenia, with innovative study programs and growth in number of mobilities.
- Development of global citizens: Students acquire global knowledge and skills necessary to live, work and study at home and abroad, while HVCs offer strong links and partnerships for Slovenia. Consequently, citizens understand and support the benefits of internationalization of education.

Taking these goals of the IS HVCs into consideration and following our own vision, we devised the following projects, activities and goals within the Erasmus projects for our own Erasmus Policy Statement (ESP):

- Growing international student and staff mobility (KA1):

Improving and increasing the number of outgoing and incoming student mobilities. With a systematic approach to encourage and enable students mobilities, we will improve students' professional, social and intercultural competences and employment possibilities and improve student experience and empower them as active citizens on the long-term perspective.

Improving and increasing the number of outgoing and incoming staff mobilities, both for teaching and administrative staff. The most important objective in teaching and administrative staff mobility is to exchange and gain both new expertise and knowledge in respective staffs' fields. All mobility types are regarded as added value for the individual and for the Institution as well with a spill over effect on students and wider business sector and society.

- Further development of our international partnerships and cooperation (KA2, KA3):

Establishing new and strengthening existing partnership with HVCs from Program and Partner Countries. Historical and cultural closeness between Slovenia and other states of former Yugoslavia gives us an advantage in professional connections network and thus enables us to develop and expand current cooperation with HVCs from that region, with the objective to support the modernisation and internalization of vocational programs.

Developing partnerships which would enable us to start cooperating in KA2 and/or KA3 activities, together with other education and research Institutions, youth organisations and other relevant actors to contribute to achieving

the objectives of the EU policy in the field of vocational education and training, as well as the EU Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education and its successor.

- Development of intercultural competences, implemented throughout the activities outlined in the previous focus points.

Expected impacts from our participation in the Erasmus programs are:

- Impact on the individual: Knowledge and experience transfer will have a positive impact on individuals, by developing intercultural and language competences, establishing international networks, internationalization of knowledge, by extending and establishing the institution and region as open to international cooperation etc. This is regarded as an important added value for the European Union, as we are contributing to professional education and development of experts working in the EU and empowering them as active citizens in society.
- Impact on the institution: Increased number of mobilities will strengthen the international cooperation and enable all partners to implement new teaching methods and materials, knowledge and experience transfer amongst HVCs and amongst HVCs and business sector with high regard to modernization, consequently raising the quality of our higher education programmes. This interchange of ideas will have positive impact on Europeanisation and globalisation.
- Impact on the region: Regionally the impact will be shown through combined personal and institutional impact and position of our Institution as internationally connected and open, pro-European stakeholder, teaching a modern, practical and internationalized curriculum, promoting and enabling staffs' career and expert knowledge and strengthening civic engagement and active citizenship in the region. This also falls in line with our vision as becoming the best institutions for entrepreneurship in the region.

All our internationalization activities are implemented within the parameters of the ECHE principles, respecting in full the principle of non-discrimination; ensuring equal opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds, paying particular attention to those with fewer opportunities; ensuring full (automatic) recognition for satisfactorily completed activity of study mobility and traineeship in terms of all credits (ECTS) gained for learning outcomes, achieved during a mobility period abroad / a blended mobility; ensuring inclusion of satisfactorily completed study and/or traineeship mobility activities in the Diploma Supplement. GEA CVS charges no fees, in the case of credit mobility, to incoming mobile students for tuition, registration, examinations or access library facilities.

All relevant information pertaining to Erasmus projects are displayed on the website (the ECHE Charter, ESP, project descriptions, results, mobility calls, etc.), as well as on our social media profiles and additionally in our online classroom system (e-GEA College). Dissemination and reporting on the project results and impacts is achieved by regular staff and student meetings, monthly newsletters (to our Alumni, partners and other stakeholders as well as students and staff), official Institutional reports and strategic documents. As a smaller Institution we take advantage of close personal and professional connections between staff and students, and support personal knowledge and experience sharing. We support and encourage knowledge experience sharing between national and international students, and take great care to connect them in as many activities as possible.

We will respect and perform all terms and requirements of the implementation of international activities. Within this we will preserve the programme's quality. As evidently expressed the strategy brings forward the contribution of student and staff mobility and of participation in transnational cooperation, to the quality of our higher education programmes and student experience.


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