

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Academy of Arts in Banska Bystrica is an art university that provides higher education in music, visual arts, theater and film in all three degrees types (bachelor, master, doctoral). Its main strategic objectives are focused on development and assurance of high quality art research and teaching. Together with its partners, which support its mission, it is big contribution to social and cultural life of the region and also cross-border. One of the main priorities is development of international cooperation with cultural and educational institutions abroad mainly focused on the European region. In the efforts to stimulate student and staff mobility, Academy of Arts joined the Erasmus program in 2004, attracting students and teachers from Europe and enabling home students and teachers to study and teach abroad and to experience other European cultures and educational systems. Various promotional activities have been done to encourage teachers and students to find a new partners institutions such as organizing information sessions which gives students and teachers information about possibilities of mobility, Erasmus students give presentations about their stay abroad to their peers and teachers after their return back home, promotional posters from universities placed throughout the school premises, EUC database research services for students and teachers. We build our partnership with the help of our students and teachers, because of that, mostly all our contacts are active. We also learn from students and teachers experiences, we discuss with them and analyze their final reports. From them we learn about academic and organizational capability of our partners. At the moment we have 56 active bilateral agreements with institutions from 17 countries. These agreements allow approximately 35 students per year to have a mobility experience. The number is not very big but we firmly believe that limited number of partners is better than a lot of weak ones. This strategy seems to be successful in the past so we would like to stay with it in the future.

In the past years the Academy of Arts was participating in all types of Erasmus activities which also helped to spread its artistic activities to bigger geographical area and strengthen the European dimension and facilitate intercultural communication in different European countries. In the period 2009-2011 Academy of Arts organized an Erasmus Intensive program, Intercultural Dimension in European Documentary Film Production which helped a lot in the efforts to promote European dimension in higher education, to reform curricula and advance academic services in our school and also in partner's institutions.

Objectives and target groups for the following years are:

1) To widen participation in projects (programs) which encourage mobility between the Academy of Arts and European higher education institutions and companies. Our goal is to offer at least 10% from the total number of students per year an European experience (practical placements or possibility to study in special courses not available at our university). We believe that, the mobility is assisting the student in developing their professional, intercultural, social and communicative competences, it also assists in search of, strengthening and comparing their own values, identity, appurtenance and the feeling of belonging to a certain community. Students benefit in particular from the fact that their artistic skills and talents can be developed and presented internationally. They get to know a new culture, environment and other educational methods and forms. They learn how to be independent and responsible and extend their language and creative skills.

2) To deepen discussion about curriculum with international partners to ensure an international standard. We believe that teachers mobility directly facilitate the exchange of best practices and know-how between institutions, while directly supporting innovation of teaching and art research. Therefore Academy of Arts encourages staff mobility, both to higher education institutions and work placements to maintain our European educational and business network. Education requires well-educated staff, that stays in touch with the pulse of the business and art research, which ensures the high quality of the programs offered.

3) To raise the number of teachers and students involved in work within multicultural groups, and to allow teachers to exchange views on teaching content and new curricula approaches in Intensive programs. We are convinced that Intensive programs transform our strong partners into strategic one. Within a short period of time it is possible to know whether it is worth to cooperate with the selected partner's institutions or not. We can also know whether partner's institutions can provide the people you can work with, rely on and trust them. The strategic partners help Academy of Arts in its mission and are solid ground you can build on.