

Erasmus Policy Statement 2021-2027

Our strategy

Police University College (Polamk) aims to be a distinguished, top-level international university college in the security sector, supporting the mobility of students and staff. Participating in Erasmus+ is crucial in advancing strategic partnerships as well as the mobility and international competences of both students and staff.

Growing demands for the police profession and the changing security environment put pressure on police education institutions to provide police forces with officers who possess broader competences. Joint police operations, global threats, freedom of moving and networking, investigations on issues that cross national borders (e.g. terrorism, organized crime, radicalization, human trafficking, cybercrime) as well as multicultural and increasingly diverse societies mean that the need for police officers with international competences is growing.

As an organization, the Finnish police needs to develop their international competences and resources. Police personnel needs to have sufficient competence, as well as sufficient support, in using the instruments, channels and means of police cooperation within the EU and elsewhere. Police training and competence needs to be improved in partnership with EU Member States and other governments. To achieve these goals, it is important to lay out international career paths for personnel and develop and utilize international education programs already at the student level.

All these aspects need to be taken into consideration in police education. The changing security environment demands a higher level of international cooperation. It is important to understand the increasingly international aspects of policing as well as issues involving international crime. Multicultural aspects, intercultural communication and language skills need to be emphasized in police education. Participating in the Erasmus+ Program enhances all these capabilities in both student and staff.

Since 2014, the basic police education in Finland is a polytechnic-level degree which means that every police officer graduates with a bachelor's degree in police services. Expanding cooperation between European police education institutions promotes the development of police higher education within the European Education Area as well as encourages engagement in partnership with EU Member States and other governments to improve police training and competence.

Implementation

The Police University College's international activities include cooperation in education and between educational institutions and agencies providing law enforcement training, visits, exchange programs as well as research and development projects. The Erasmus actions at Polamk include student, staff and teacher mobility.

Bilateral Erasmus+ student exchanges started in the Police University College in the autumn of 2019. Currently, we have six partner institutions across Europe. We are continuously expanding our partner network, concentrating on higher education institutions in the law enforcement field. Participating in Erasmus + actions supports the Police University College's goal of being an international university college. By making possibilities for mobility visible to current and prospective students, staff and cooperation partners, internationality will become a more integral part of the institution's profile.

Student and staff exchanges are an effective and accessible way of living abroad and gaining international experience. Through mobility, our students and staff will gain important international competences crucial to the growing demands of the profession. Exchangees are able to participate in multicultural collaboration, build networks and strengthen the language skills required for performing and developing their functions as police officers. Students and staff will also show personal development in areas such as adaptability, problem solving, independence and social engagement. They gain knowledge on their own field as well as a different perspective on policing. Students and staff can also take into consideration

the impact and career opportunities of the increasingly international field of policing. For students, mobility is also a unique opportunity to experience living abroad. With these competences, the Finnish police is able to encourage international collaboration to combat crime, deepen their cooperation with international security agencies and cooperation partners, serve the increasingly diverse population better, and support an equal society.

Impact

Our goal for the Erasmus+ Program is to increase the number of both incoming and outgoing participants as well as strategic partners and to establish and develop the processes involved.

The target for the first half of the new program is to have at least 10-15 students and 8-9 staff or teachers partaking in exchanges every year (both incoming and outgoing). The goal is to establish the Erasmus+ exchange as a prominent option for every student and staff member. To achieve this, we are enhancing the emphasis on internationalization in student orientation, utilizing the experiences of former mobility participants, and developing the staff exchange processes as well as the recognition of them.

Enlarging the number of staff members participating in the program ensures that the knowledge gained remains in the organization and its impact is broader.

In our study offering for the incoming students, we continue to consider the feedback given by our international students. The feedback has been largely positive, but we continue to aim towards a high level of integration with our own students within the courses. This also supports our goals of effective internationalization at home. We also want to offer our teachers continuing support in teaching in a foreign language.